

COURAGE

Cultural Opposition: Understanding the Cultural Heritage of Dissent in the Former Socialist Countries

Country Reports



POLAND

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Table of Content

- 1. Introduction** 4
- 2. Politics of Memory in Poland** 5
 - 2.1. The Institute of National Remembrance: Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation 5
 - 2.2 Cultural Opposition in the Institutional Context 9
- 3. Analysis of the Collections in the COURAGE Registry** 11
 - 3.1 Typology 12
 - 3.2 Funding..... 18
 - 3.3 Operators 19
 - 3.4 Time frame 20
 - 3.5 Users..... 22
 - 3.6 Stakeholders..... 23
 - 3.7 Impact of collections 24
 - 3.8 Networking..... 25
 - 3.9 Obstacles and challenges 25
- 4. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations**..... 26
- 5. Bibliography, Further Readings, Annex** 29

1. Introduction

The history of opposition in socialist Poland is internationally associated with the turbulent decade of the 1980s: the shipyard strikes, expanded net of samizdat publishing, the activity of the “Solidarity” Trade Union and Catholic Church support, and ultimately: defeating the socialist regime. Apart from this strictly political activity, the Polish opposition in Western Europe is also associated with the intellectual circles, thanks to the émigré circles activity - writers, philosophers, artists, and actors continued to leave the oppressive system and seek freedom in the West (usually supporting the opposition activity from outside). Therefore, it seems that the topic of cultural opposition in the socialist Poland is quite well-recognized internationally, and even more so locally. However, the discourse tends to concentrate just on some aspects which makes it difficult to fully recognize other oppositional phenomena.

For example, the heritage of the “Solidarity” movement serves as political legitimization, institutional basis, touristic product, and a never-ending argument in barren socio-political debates evolving around the arguments of “who was who in »Solidarity«; was he or she at all in the movement or how can one go into politics without this experience”. Polish Presidents, Prime Ministers, and top politicians started their careers in the opposition and built their political capital on fighting the socialist regime. Numerous of today’s most important decision makers – now strongly divided into two parties – come from the same milieu. The “Solidarity’s” success shaped the Polish post-transformation reality. A specific ideological system, based on the merge of patriotic activism, democratic values, religious (Catholic) beliefs and intelligentsia circles stepped into power – both in terms of symbolic power, and the direct impact on the politics of memory and the way of portraying the opposition. As an important part of public discourse, the topic of opposition under socialism is well explored, however, it predominantly tends to concentrate on one of the many paths in the trajectory of oppositional past.

Thus, in this seemingly well-described research area, COURAGE proved to have a lot to investigate into. Most of all, researching cultural opposition under state socialism meant looking deeper than the prevailing narration, expressed mainly through presenting the heritage of dissent with samizdat publications and protests. New approach required focusing on the borders between *political* and *cultural* activity. Bearing in mind that those two spheres of social world are ultimately intertwined, we asked ourselves¹ whether all the dissent efforts had some political agenda. Eventually, we were able to recognize that the discourse related to the “Solidarity” is also monopolizing the image of the cultural diversification under state socialism, which especially in last decades offered much more than just a choice between

¹ Besides the author, the Polish COURAGE research team was composed of Hanna Gospodarczyk, Xawery Stańczyk and Piotr Szenajch.

official and intelligentsia culture. Moreover, even though intelligentsia-inspired opposition was itself strongly diversified in terms of form – activists of the democratic movement used to organize illegal lectures, concerts, art exhibitions, film screenings, theatre plays – the content was quite monothematic and concentrated on the similar problems of Poland’s independence and freedom. It should be finally recognized that besides the patriotic and democratic cultural activity, there were numerous subcultures and phenomena which were essentially counter-cultural, however, they did not directly focus on fighting the system, like music subcultures or artistic neo-avant-garde. Their goal was rather connected to the freedom of expression, not strictly to the systemic changes. It should also be noted that there were many nonconformist groups without any agenda whatsoever (like punk groups) or being against any institutionalized movements (like the anarchists). This is the activism absent in the public discourse, yet well-represented in preserved collections.

2. Politics of memory in contemporary Poland

2.1. The Institute of National Remembrance: Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation

Since recent history and the opposition under state socialism are the elements of an on-going political arguments, they have a real impact on what elements and which heroes of the history of dissent are underlined in the public debate. Depending on the government, the funding for historical and cultural institutions is differently distributed; different institutions and figures get public recognition. What is interesting, the two inter-changing political forces, the Civic Platform [*Platforma Obywatelska*] and the Law and Justice [*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*] parties, despite coming from similar post-“Solidarity” environment – have a distinctly unlike approach towards commemorating the history of opposition in Poland. Since the Law and Justice party stepped into power in 2015, a more martyrdom vision of the past has been forced, with flourishing of monuments and memorial boards all over Poland – emphasizing one side of oppositional environment and keeping silent about the other one. Let the example of current conflicts between the ex-opposition members be the annual celebrations of signing the September Agreements of 1980 – which are organized separately by the former “Solidarity” groups who are unable to unite even for this special commemorative day.

Political changes influence important research and cultural institutions, which is well presented on the example of the Institute of National Remembrance: Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation, the most important public body acting in the field of politics of memory. The institution was founded with the parliamentary act in 1998²,

² The Parliament that voted for creating the institution was dominated by the former “Solidarity” members who formed the party of “Solidarity Electoral Action” [*Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność*].

as a state body appointed for multiple tasks within the historical policy, including research, educational, archival, investigative, popularizing and vetting activities. After an intensive period of preparations, it started to operate in 2000. From the beginning the Institute of National Remembrance was developed as a powerful institution, generously and continuously financed by the government (its operations do not depend on grants which is rare for the Polish research and cultural institutions). Its vast operations are handled by the head office in Warsaw, as well as 11 branch offices in other larger Polish cities and 7 delegations in smaller ones. Currently the archives of the Institute, gathered in the Office for Dissemination and Preservation of Archival Records, contain over 90 kilometers of files. What is especially meaningful, the Institute took into possession the documents created and gathered by the former secret services – and in a way inherited its political legitimacy³. According to the parliamentary act the institution's goals include for example⁴:

- Collecting, processing, analyzing and sharing the documents left after the Polish People's Republic's secret services, produced between 22 July 1944 and 31 July 1990; as well as all the documents left after the Third Reich and USSR, from the period of 8 November 1917 – 31 July 1990, concerning: Nazi crimes, communist crimes, Ukrainian nationalists' crimes, and political repressions against Polish citizens;
- Educating the public within this thematic area;
- Organizing commemorative celebrations;
- Protecting "the good name" of Poland and the Polish Nation.

Institute of National Remembrance collaborates closely with the State Archives, veteran organizations, historical associations, scientific institutes, and foreign agendas involved in research and commemoration of recent history, especially the history of Central-Eastern Europe.

Throughout the years, a certain duality within the Institute's functioning may be pointed out: there has been many controversies around its changing authorities and engagement in ongoing politics, yet, the institutions has always continued to carry out extremely important historical studies, research projects, and archival works. Let us focus first on narrative structures used in official events and dissemination activities, which cause the fact that the Institute of National Remembrance hardly ever loses the public attention.

During the first years of operating institute's narration seemed quite radical in criticizing the socialist past, not taking into consideration problematizing this issue. It based its actions on

³ The Institute received the materials left after civil and military state security institutions, including e.g. the Security Services of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Military Information, regional commissions and courts, prosecutorial and punitive institutions.

⁴ Journal of Laws 1998 No. 155 position 1016.

quite direct reminders of the traumatic events: persecutions, imprisonment, suffering – in the extreme cases associated rather to the Stalinist period, rather than the last decades of the Polish People’s Republic⁵. It left little space for questioning the transformation, and seemed to influence collective imagination using black-and-white arguments. Opposition leaders were presented as heroes, dissent actions as undeniable bravery. The Institute’s actions came down to prevent the possibility of collective amnesia about the horrors under state socialism⁶.

The main day-to-day task of the Institute may be described as archival work which in practice means storing and processing the documents. Thus, the institution has been dealing with an issue of accessing the classified files. Since 2007 the documents may be accessed by the people mentioned in them in any role (and their relatives), as well as by the researchers and journalists, although with certain limitations. However, before it was not a public right to get an access to those documents, not even to own files of the interested party. The issue of declassifying the files most visibly entered public debate in 2005 when a rightist journalist Bronisław Wildstein shared in the media a list of 162 000 names mentioned in the documents of secret services. A document, obtained in unclear circumstances from the Institute of National Remembrance, without knowledge and consent of the institution, became known as the “Wildstein list” and had wide repercussions, both in terms of funding and managing the Institute and in the public discussion on settling with the socialist past. As the list did not state what was the role of a person mentioned, it became a basis for unjust accusations and slandering. In result, more than a decade after the transformation, the question of lustrations became an important, widely discussed social issue. Janusz Kurtyka, director of the Institute between 2005-2010, was “a supporter for deep vetting and de-communization”⁷. In 2006 the “lustration act” was appropriated by the Parliament and the Institute of National Remembrance was once again given a very important role which included handling a vetting process of the public figures⁸.

In the turbulent decade of the 2000s the Institute was still close to the simplified narration of black-and-white oppositional past. Socialist times were presented as the era of state persecutions and bravery of dissent activists. The martyrdom narration of the Institute of National Remembrance changed in 2010, after Łukasz Kamiński had been chosen as its president. For the 10th anniversary of institution’s opening a conference “Without Leniency” [*Bez taryfy ulgowej*] was organized in Lodz in 2010, where numerous scholars presented a critical approach towards past operations – they were judged as being too politically involved

⁵ See: the first issues of the official magazine: *Bulletin of the Institute of National Remembrance*, e.g. No 2 (2001) or No 3 (2001).

⁶ However, it might be argued that such approach is also likely to cause social trauma and makes it harder to cope with the difficult past. See: Sztompka, *Cultural Trauma*.

⁷ Klich-Kluczevska, “Goodbye Communism”, 9.

⁸ Journal of Laws 2006 No. 218 position 1592.

and not sufficiently research-focused⁹. Soon afterwards the institution started to apply a softer approach towards settling with the past. It started to develop its image as a modern research center, participating also in various cultural events (exhibitions, film screenings, popular science publications, etc.), and even publishing educational board games for the younger audience. It seemed that to some extent the institute ceased to be a flash point in a public debate.

However, the political changes in Poland in 2016 greatly influenced the *modus operandi* of the Institute. With a new president stepping into office, many staff members were dismissed, especially the younger employees. The editorial board of the Institute's periodic magazine "Memory and Justice" was almost completely replaced with new members. Institution seems to be used directly to perform the goals of politics of memory, very often in quite controversial way.

As it was already mentioned, the involvement of the Institute of National Remembrance in the public discourse should never undermine its impressive activity within the field of recent history, including the history of opposition. The institution engaged in countless research and educational activities. It has been incessantly engaging in activities such as: organizing conferences, conveying research, processing historical document, digitalizing archives, publishing scientific works and historical books, conducting queries (not to mention performing many public duties related to lustration issues). To show the scope of addressed issues within the subject of cultural opposition it is definitely worth mentioning for example:

- A research project "Authorities of the Polish People's Republic towards the artists, journalists and scientists" led by Sebastian Ligarski. It is one of 14 Central Research Projects, huge scientific undertakings which are conducted non-stop by the Institute's workers, and co-workers from other research centers and universities. This particular project discusses the state security's interventions and influences in the cultural circles¹⁰.
- An educational project "A year of independent culture" completed in 2009-2010 in several Polish cities in a form of lectures, film screenings, exhibitions. It introduced to a wider public the topics of the late 1970s and the 1980s such as underground post, independent literature, artistic photography, street performance, underground radio, etc.
- A book series "In the cultural circle of PPR" [*W kręgu kultury PRL*], separately discussing different spheres of culture under state socialism.

⁹ The transcription of the conference was published in: Czyżewski et.al., *Bez taryfy ulgowej*.

¹⁰ The findings are discussed in the series of publications, see for example: Ligarski and Majchrzak, *Nadzorcy*.

2.2 Cultural opposition in the institutional context

The history of the Institute of National Remembrance illustrates how Poland has been dealing with its socialist past in an institutional way. According to Barbara Klich-Kluczevska, after the transformation the Polish elites (researchers or decision-makers) were not calling for historical settlement and lustration processes¹¹ – partly because many politicians came from the post-communist circles, and partly due to following the rule of putting past behind the “thick line” (*gruba kreska*), which was insisted on by the new Prime Minister of a contract government, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, in his exposé in 1989. However, in the late 1990s a need for lustration and proving that he or she was not a part of the regime became a crucial factor of political legitimization, probably in relation to the growing polarization of political parties which came out of one environment of the democratic opposition. It may be said that founding of the Institute of National Remembrance was a repercussion of a social need to deal with the socialist past and to bring a notion of “historical justice”. In the delicate matter of historical policy the Institute proved to be a dangerous and controversial tool influencing the image of the past, but also current political beliefs¹².

The particular status of the Institute of National Remembrance, a well-funded national institution with a high social esteem, shows how much conscious the Polish authorities are towards the heritage of ancient regime. However, the common knowledge rather associates the “cultural opposition” with a certain type of intelligentsia culture, with some political agenda and usual connection to patriotic and Catholic values, and relating to the practices of a high culture in a traditional understanding (like classic literature, theatre or painting). Such sphere of dissent activity was appropriated by political elites. Grzegorz Ekiert and Jan Kubik described the problem in the following manner in the late 1990s: “(...) the preoccupation with elites, party systems, and the relationship between political and economic changes has resulted in considerable gap in democratization literature”¹³. As they point out, even in the academic environment used to exist a sphere of the marginalized cultural phenomena. Those counter-cultural activities which have never entered mainstream – like punk music, artistic neo-avant-garde or LGBT movements – are the phenomena which were particularly interesting for the COURAGE team in Poland. As it turned out, collections containing counter-cultural heritage were relatively easily accessible and well operated, despite functioning apart from the main discourse.

There are various means of accessing collection of cultural opposition and they mostly depend on the type of cultural phenomena, as well as on the type of the stakeholders which operate them. The easiest to access are the documents in the public institutions, as (with some

¹¹ Klich-Kluczevska, “Goodbye Communism, Hello Remembrance”, 37-57.

¹² Klich-Kluczevska, *Ibid*; Stola, “Poland’s Institute of National Remembrance: a Ministry of Memory?”, 45-58.

¹³ Ekiert and Kubik, *Collective Protest and Democratic Consolidation in Poland, 1989-93*, 9.

restrictions) they are obliged to share their materials for the research purposes. As it was already mentioned, the Institute of National Remembrance received all the documents left after the secret services. Like in most of the other post-socialist countries, with transformation just round the corner, many documents were destroyed by the officials or transported to the Soviet Union. However, plenty of documents were left in various state offices – they are now easily accessible in the State Archives, a net of public archives which connects agencies in over 70 Polish cities. Many of the documents and memorabilia are now available in various museums (like the European Solidarity Centre, Museum of Modern Art, Polish Rock Granary or the Modern Museum Wroclaw) and their archives. The general trend seems to be characterized by the accumulation of materials by the state institutions which buy them from private owners or receive them through donations. However, there are also numerous private initiatives that operate in an institutional manner, as museums or galleries, and which depend on grants or own entrepreneurship. In most cases their collections consist of rare original materials, which were obtained through personal connections. Usually, founders of such private associations and foundations are the former activists themselves. A special case is made by the people who keep home archives full of unique memorabilia left after their (or their relatives) activity in socialist times. Those stakeholders are very eager to talk about their collections, however they tend to be the hardest to reach. As they do not focus on disseminating their materials, many of their collections remain unknown. It was COURAGE's great effort to reach such stakeholders and make their archives public.

Summarizing the context of Polish collections, it must be stated that the field of dissent heritage is extremely diversified. The phenomenon of cultural opposition as such is well-known of in Poland, however it is often seen in the context of the democratic movement and intelligentsia culture. The heritage of opposition under state socialism is an important part of current politics; the state archives and cultural institutions dealing with recent history are a subject of constant interest of the decision makers. Thus, they are highly funded from public money, and their expositions and archives are generally open to the public. However, there are also numerous private initiatives disseminating collections whose stakeholders have never decided to cooperate with public institutions (for various reasons which will be discussed in further part of the report). They strive to get some support for their activity from various Polish and international grants, and operate mainly within the net of personal connections. Lastly, there are countless anonymous owners of private archives who often do not even recognize the historical value of their collections and therefore – they are not present in the scope of cultural opposition. It was a huge part of COURAGE duties in Poland to reach those yet unknown stakeholders and encourage them to share their collections with the wider audience.

3. Analysis of the collections in the COURAGE Registry

Before presenting the actual analysis it is necessary to characterize the thematic field of cultural opposition in Poland. As it was already presented, the subject is prevailed by the heritage of the patriotic and democratic activity, through empowering the narrative structures referring to the “Solidarity” movement, and religious and intelligentsia vision of cultural practices (understood mostly as high culture, in a traditional terminology of social sciences). However, especially during last decades of the Polish People’s Republic, one could observe a proliferation of subcultures and alternative cultural practices.

Since the 1970s alternative subcultures started to develop on the outskirts of cultural opposition which earned them a name of the “third circuit” [trzeci obieg] – because of their existence outside both official culture and the environment of the “Solidarity”-related democratic movement (known as the “second circuit”), concerning mostly politically engaged samizdat and socio-philosophical publications¹⁴. The music scene was entered by more and more bold rock bands, with Jarocin festival being organized annually since 1970¹⁵. In the end of the decade punk subculture flourished. Numerous punk bands were formed in the bigger cities, gaining popularity among the youth with their loud music, energetic concerts, and intriguing image in the times of unification and dull clothing. The art world was enriched by neo-avant-garde, with the visual artists like Zbigniew Libera and the KwieKulik duo (Przemysław Kwiek and Zofia Kulik) who explored new ways of expression in conceptual and performative art¹⁶. Alternative theatre was expanded by Jerzy Grzegorzewski and Tadeusz Kantor. All those artists and musicians entered into dialogue with the existing standards of beauty, aesthetics and normality forced by the official culture. Many artists became problematic for the authorities and were often persecuted, due to constant undermining of the regime’s authority. Many exhibitions, performances and concerts took place in semi-official venues, and were organized through the net of connections within “second” and “third circuit”. In the 1980s new social movements were created. They openly criticized or even mocked the system, like the anarchistic Movement of Alternative Society (*Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego*) formed in 1983 in Gdansk or the Orange Alternative (*Pomarańczowa Alternatywa*) which throughout the 1980s gained a huge popularity with their ridiculous performances and graffiti executed in Wroclaw, Lodz or Warsaw¹⁷. With rock bands entering mainstream and official radio charts, alternative music was further developed, offering not only punk, but also genres like ska, reggae or new wave. Polish cultural opposition under socialism offered much more than just engaged art and patriotic culture. There was a whole

¹⁴ Pęczak, *Mały słownik subkultur młodzieżowych*, 96.

¹⁵ Polish Rock Collection, including the history of Jarocin festival, is described here: <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n14266>

¹⁶ [http://cultural-](http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n57244&type=collections)

[opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n57244&type=collections](http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n57244&type=collections)

¹⁷ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n29277>

spectrum of cultural activities questioning the state of affairs and challenging the establishment.

3.1 Typology

The Polish team faced various difficulties when deciding on the collections to be described. With the extensive field of cultural opposition in Poland it was obvious that it will not be possible to keep the quantitative representativeness within framework of the project. It was decided to balance the amount of better known collections (concerning more often described activities) with those containing the heritage of less famous artists and activists. Therefore, it might be said that the idea was to maneuver between the “second” and the “third circuit”. However, since the underground activity of the democratic social movements is thoroughly described and commemorated (e.g. by the institutions like the Institute of National Remembrance), we decided to focus on the “Solidarity”-related materials in a specific way: by understanding their political agenda as a general context, and contemplating the cultural and artistic side of applied phenomena. In this way we were able to recognize for example “Solidarity” posters and badges in a framework of *cultural* opposition – as a visual identity of the movement or an artistic expression of the creators.

The following collections have been described throughout the project¹⁸:

- Aniela Mieczysławska Raczyńska Collection
- Archive of the Alternative Theatre
- Archive of the Studio Theatre
- Archives of National Commission of the Solidarity Trade Union
- Archives of Weeks of Christian Culture / Artists’ Priesthood
- Artists’ Archives of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
- Barbara Fatyga Archive
- Collection of Association of Documentalists “The Road”
- Eastern Archive of the KARTA Centre
- Erazm Ciołek Papers at the Hoover Institution
- Eustachy Kossakowski Archive
- Exchange Gallery
- Exhibits of European Solidarity Centre
- Film Archive of the Video Studio Gdansk
- Film Notations of European Solidarity Centre

¹⁸ Several collections were published after this report had been written, therefore they are not included in the analysis. Excluded are the collections of: Barbara Fatyga, Tomasz Sikorski, Paweł Konnak, Radio Free Europe, Zbigniew Libera, as well as the émigré collections of Erazm Ciołek, Aniela Mieczysławska Raczyńska and the British Library.

- Filmoteka of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
- Fuck 89 Collection
- Institute of National Remembrance Archives
- Jerzy Ludwiński Archive
- Kowalnia Archive at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
- Krzysztof Skiba Private Archive
- KwieKulik Archive
- Lodz Kaliska Archive
- Museum of the Orange Alternative
- National Film Archive – Audiovisual Institute Collection
- Paweł "Końjo" Konnak Private Archive
- Photographic Collection of European Solidarity Centre
- Piotr "Pietia" Wierzbicki Collection
- Pitch-In Culture Archive
- Polish Performance Archive of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
- Polish Punk Collection by Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons
- Polish Rock Collections at the Polish Rock Granary
- Polish Section of the Radio Free Europe
- Poznan Anarchist Library Archive
- Queer Archives Institute
- Solidarity Collection at the British Library
- Tadeusz Rolke Archive at the Museum of modern Art
- The Archive of the Opposition in KARTA Centre
- The Archives of Transition 1989-1991
- The Oral History Archive of KARTA Centre Foundation
- Theatre Gardzienice Collection
- Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Art on the Street
- Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Biennale of Spatial Forms in Elbląg
- Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Dziekanka Workshop
- Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Mospan Gallery
- Tomasz Sikorski Collection on P.O. Box 17 Gallery
- Trasa W-Z Archive
- Underground Postage Stamps of Michał Guć
- Wojciech Zamecznik Collection at the Archaeology of Photography Foundation
- Zbigniew Dłubak Collection at the Archaeology of Photography Foundation
- Zbigniew Galicki Photographic Collection
- Zbigniew Libera Archive

Collections of cultural opposition make a very diversified matrix of information.

They vary from one another considering their thematic scope, time lineout, organizational structure, archiving practices, openness towards the public and financial possibilities. However, described collections share some features and may be grouped based on the:

- Type of ownership: private and public
- Content:
 - Democratic opposition (samizdat, persecutions, internment, visual identification)
 - The fine arts (painting, performance, graphics, experimental music)
 - Music, lifestyles, subcultures
 - Theatre, film, photography
 - Minorities (ethnic, sexual)
 - Religion (the Catholic Church)

Ownership

In terms of ownership there is a predominance of public collections, but this might be very misleading as many of described entities come from the same institution or owner (which proves that a quantitative analysis does not make much sense in regards to this report). There is a general trend of absorbing private collections by the public organizations, however the idea of personal archiving and disseminating own materials stands strong within the group of private stakeholders – especially those who were personally engaged in the events documented by their collections. Therefore, we can observe several forms of private ownership: there are associations, foundations, and informal ownership (which has never been institutionalized). In some cases private and public institutions founded collections on similar topics independently from one another. Institutions' goal is to document forms of cultural opposition in Poland and preserve its heritage. Private owners founded their collections for similar reasons, however there is an element of personal history and emotional engagement involved. Frequently the private collections were founded “coincidentally”, through accumulation of materials coming from own activities. Interestingly, among private founders there are only two groups (the Association of Documentalists “The Road”¹⁹ and the

¹⁹ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?lang=en&uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n29172&type=groupsandorgs>

Archaeology of Photography Foundation²⁰). All the others were founded by individuals (who nevertheless benefited from the help of some friends and coworkers).

Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution is centered around the Polish most important cities in the history of cultural opposition, that is: Warsaw, Gdansk, Krakow, Wroclaw, Lodz (with the most collections present in Warsaw – due to the fact that the most important public cultural institutions are situated in the capital city). There is a single collection operated from the country side (a collection of Artists' Priesthood, owned by the retired priest²¹).

Size of collections

The collections of public institutions are very big and constantly growing, as all of them are in the process of acquiring new items and expanding their archives. The biggest collections are owned by the institutional heir of the past regime: the Institute of National Remembrance which keeps over 90 kilometers of files (and a huge set of artefacts related to the persecutions and the democratic movement). A huge set of documents is also kept in the State Archives (over 345 kilometers), however they are dispersed within the net of 33 archives and 41 external branches, and therefore should be treated separately as multiple collections. Big and diversified collections are owned by major Polish museums: European Solidarity Centre, Modern Museum Wroclaw, Museum of Modern Art – all of them, apart from holding exhibitions, put much effort in archival work and digitalization of their materials.

Private collections are much smaller for obvious reasons, like having limited storage space, funds and dissemination possibilities. Moreover, the content of those collections usually come from a personal engagement of the founders and is based on the materials from his or her own activity under socialism. Such collections are usually expanded through private connections with other former activists. However, there are private collections which managed to gather very big archives and share them effectively with the wider audience. The best example is probably the Museum of the Orange Alternative, but the Lodz Kaliska Archive has an impressive amount of materials as well. Both of them operate as private foundations, ran by individuals, and gather tens of artefacts (publications, painting, brochures, clippings, memorabilia), film materials and hundreds of photos.

²⁰ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?lang=en&uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n11685&type=groupsandorgs>

²¹ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n5966&type=collections>

Collections' content

The most common type of the archived materials are the paper ones, which means grey literature and underground publications (samizdat). In case of the "second circuit" (referring mostly to the topic of the democratic movement) it means illegal books (censored or banned), newspapers and magazines, manuscripts, leaflets, bulletins, brochures, posters. Many collections contain both materials printed on paper and ready for dissemination, as well as the tissue-papers used for copying the publications. This type of materials may be found in every collection that refers to the topic of the "Solidarity" movement, democratic changes, intelligentsia culture, human rights and national movements. Many written documents are also a part of the archives related to the neo-avant-garde, as they often include artists' memoires, notes or theoretical essays.

Among the "third circuit" collections, the paper materials are also the most typical content, in the form of zines referring to the punk music (collections of Piotr "Pietia" Wierzbicki²² or Polish Punk by Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons²³), but also less frequently in a form of manifestos or written programs (Museum of Orange Alternative or the Fuck 89 collection²⁴).

Based on a criterion of frequency the next type of materials are the visual materials, mainly photographs. There are some collections composed almost solely from photographs and negatives (collections of the Documentalists "The Road", the Archaeology of Photography, Eustachy Kossakowski, Tadeusz Rolke). All of the museums and other public institutions possess separate photographic archives, and many smaller collections include some photographic documentation apart from other materials. The photographs are sometimes accompanied by some video materials, however it is not that frequent. There are several types of video materials, such as film notations (recorded interviews) in the collection of European Solidarity Centre in Gdansk²⁵, film documentation (original footages) – from the happenings of the Orange Alternative, or some performances (Polish Performance Archive²⁶). Vast video documentation of the protests is available in the Video Studio Gdansk archive. There are some produced films – found in the archives of the Video Studio Gdansk, European Solidarity Centre,

²² <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n11744&type=collections>

²³ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n16681&type=collections>

²⁴ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n55412&type=collections>

²⁵ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?search=notations&lang=en&uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n2686&type=collections>

²⁶ <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n57244&type=collections>

the “Roads to Solidarity” Foundation, and in the biggest amount: in the National Film Archive – Audiovisual Institute.

The next common type consists of the physical objects: artefacts and memorabilia, which make an extremely diversified category. There are objects used to show support for various movements or subcultures that exist in many copies and may be found in numerous collections: badges, pennants, banners, etc. A very interesting example of this type is made by the underground postage stamps described on the basis of Michał Guć’s collection. Furthermore, there are also some truly unique things, like those coming from the internment camps, as well as the clothing pieces or personal objects that belonged to activists and artists.

Finally, the last type is composed of a special case of material objects: the art works (paintings, graphics, sculptures, artistic photographs, designs, etc.). It is a vast set of materials, as the Polish team focused a lot on the artistic environment of neo-avant-garde in the 1970s (which was an important phenomenon nation-wide). Many of art pieces are in the archives of the described museums: the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and the Modern Museum Wrocław. There are also some collections of the creators who themselves built up their archives (not all of them decided to donate or sell their art). The art works are kept in their original form, so they are very diversified in their form, however more and more of them is also available in the digitalized form (which is more common in case of the public institutions).

The main topics covered by the collections may be grouped in the following way (accordingly to their frequency)²⁷:

1. Initiatives for the democratic changes:
 - Democratic opposition;
 - National movements;
 - Human rights;
 - Independent journalism;
 - Peace movements;
 - Social movements;
 - Surveillance;
 - Survivors;
 - Party dissent.
2. Alternative lifestyles and underground culture.
3. Art:
 - Avantgarde and neo-avantgarde;

²⁷ The topics were worked out during the process of describing collections. Thus, the categorization and the used terms were prior to this report.

- Fine arts;
 - Visual Arts.
4. Theatre.
 5. Youth culture and student movements.
 6. Music.
 7. Film.
 8. Religion.
 9. Environment.
 10. Minorities.

As presented above, the most popular topics of collection are related to the democratic changes, social movement and persecutions of the activists. This was to be expected in the country of protesting traditions and the heritage of “Solidarity”. It was usual for the artists and culture personalities under socialism to engage in various movements and support social postulates, and therefore – experiencing some repercussions. This is the very core of intertwining between the spheres of culture and politics. Items related to the topics of freedom or democratization may be found in most collections.

Alternative lifestyles and underground culture refer primarily to the music and artistic subcultures (like punks in Warsaw or artistic bohemia from Lodz). Art topics divide into fine arts, and more progressive genres like modern visual arts and neo-avant-garde activities (conceptual art, performance, *post-art* concepts). Youth culture and student movements stay in close relation to the topic of music (rock, punk, reggae, ska), but also anarchistic initiatives (Fuck 89, Poznan Anarchist Library), mail art, protests and street performances (Orange Alternative). Theatre and film topics are connected to searching for the new ways of expression (experimental and alternative theatre) and taking the risk of raising the subjects “inconvenient” for the authorities. Also, some film topics refer to the documentation practices, more available since the 1980s. The least frequent subjects, present in only a few collections, are religion (Catholic), minorities (LGBT) and environment (ecological movement).

3.2 Funding

The biggest supporter of the collections is the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage which funds not only public institutions, but also supported several private collections. The sum given to the museums and cultural centers changes every year, as it is annually adjusted to the recent priorities of the Ministry and the government. Therefore, this is a very fluent issue, highly dependent on the judgement of the decision makers. However, public institutions operating the collections on cultural opposition are funded from several sources which correspond with different levels of authority. The good example is the European Solidarity

Centre which benefits from several supporters. Its creation was co-funded with a big EU grant (European Regional Development Fund) in 2010 and ever since it has been supported by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Pomeranian Voivodeship, as well as the bodies not dependent on the government: the City of Gdansk, present „Solidarity“ Trade Union and the Solidarity Centre Foundation. Therefore, it seems that for an active public institutions, which act as a multi-purpose cultural center, there are many possibilities to get support (from the central and local authorities). However, it must be once more underlined that the decisions on funding are quite volatile.

As for the private collections, there are some examples of getting financial support, most commonly through the programs of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, and in less frequent cases from municipal authorities or public cultural institutions (e.g. Lodz Kaliska). However, support for private collections is never constant. It is always targeted on a specific goal, like digitalizing and disseminating owned materials (e.g. Museum of the Orange Alternative) or organizing some artistic events (e.g. Lodz Kaliska). Moreover, none of the private collections described have ever benefited from some international grants (like EU). Furthermore, in case of private collections the biggest support does not seem to be of financial nature – they mostly benefit from donations of private owners who give away their memorabilia. As a result, private stakeholders have big and varied collections, but they constantly experience lack of funds, necessary for digitalization, dissemination and storage. Quite many collections are taken care of solely from the private funds of their stakeholders.

As a special case here should be mentioned the KARTA Centre which leads an extensive archive of social documents and has a status of a public benefit organization. It is a non-governmental foundation, however it has been operating for decades and managed to earn high public esteem in the field of culture and research. Therefore, the KARTA Centre is regularly supported from the state funds.

3.3 Operators

The operators of collections may be divided into two groups: there are public and private ones. Among published collections 17 are operated by public operators and 16 by private ones. Public operators are the cultural institutions, officially founded as: museums, archives, institutes and theatres. However, all of them fulfil several duties, including: archiving, exhibiting, disseminating, organizing cultural events, educational projects, conducting research queries, organizing conferences, etc. Most institutions have special department to deal with all those tasks, however in some cases the staff is required to do a vastly multi-tasking job (e.g. in the theatres). Thus, despite relatively good funding that the public institutions get, their staff is often unhappy with working conditions (especially in the archives,

as their employees deal with the biggest number of items). The most of the executive workers of the public institution dealing with described collections are well-educated, holding Masters diploma or, in several cases, a PhD. There is a strong pressure on organized cataloguing (expending inventories) and digitalization of the collections, however the biggest obstacle is the deficiency of staff which is burdened with other tasks. The most available online archives may be found on the websites of the Museum of Modern Art, European Solidarity Centre, Modern Museum Wroclaw. More and more documents are also digitalized in the State Archives and the Institute of National Remembrance, although they are not as much available online, as rather in the institutions' libraries. It is most common for the public institutions to have inventories and online data bases (except for the theatres).

Private operators divide into registered associations or foundations, and unregistered (not institutionalized) individuals. Polish law differs associations from foundations by several characteristics. In general, the associations are less official and refer to a group of people joined by the common interest or purpose. Foundations additionally assume that the initiative will try to gain some funds and thus reach chosen goals. Therefore, the foundations are of more socially "active" nature. Among 16 private collections only 1 is run by an association (Association of the Documentalists "The Road"), 6 by foundations and 9 by individuals (who act as owners, operators and stakeholders in one person). This shows that there is some reserve in the environment against institutionalization of the collections. As we found out during the seminar organized in April 2018 by our team, it is most commonly connected to the fact that there are numerous private operators who pursue completely different careers or deal with their collections as a hobby. Their attitude is not professionalized. However, many of them (e.g. Piotr Wierzbicki, Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons, Karol Radziszewski) make an excellent work disseminating the collections and digitalizing their content with own resources (because as the non-registered initiatives they cannot apply for funding, even if they wanted to). On the other hand there are some operators who do not have any intention to share with the wider audience, like Michał Guć or the anarchists (from Fuck 89). Regardless of that, all the private operators suffer from insufficient funds, time resources, and often they lack proper archiving space – which results in keeping the collections in own homes, however some do it intentionally. The foundations have difficulties with getting grants and very rarely employ any workers. The successful ones used the funds mostly for digitalization, creating their websites, and less frequently – to share their collections in the Internet through data bases.

3.4 Time frame

The average date of founding collections is 1999 (counting together both private and public ones). It seems that during the first years of transition, a social euphoria of tasting what was not available before and a preoccupation with building a new order have caused some

reluctance towards dealing with the past²⁸. Little was done towards organizing the institutional way of dealing with the collections on political opposition – let alone on cultural opposition. A decade later some sobriety came which was accompanied by the rising disagreements between the politicians coming originally from the same oppositional circles. Some crucial events preceding the transformation, like the “Round Table talks” (*Okrągły Stół*) started to be questioned²⁹. Such atmosphere influenced a need to take care of the recent history heritage. The late wave of establishing public collections came in the late 2000s and even later, when many multi-media cultural institutions were founded and developed as tourist attractions (like the European Solidarity Centre, Museum of Modern Art or the Modern Museum Wroclaw).

Many private collections were founded much earlier, in the 1970s (Weeks of Christian Culture, Exchange Gallery, Polish Punk), and most of them were founded in the 1980s (like the collections of: Michał Guć, Karta Centre, Krzysztof Skiba, Piotr Wierzbicki or Fuck 89). Those early collections were started in a “natural” and rather unintentional way - from keeping documentations on the current activities of owners and stakeholders. From personal, home archives they were gradually developed into fuller collections. It took longer for the group initiatives to organize collective collections, probably due to the fact that it required establishing legal entities (foundations of Łódź Kaliska, Orange Alternative, Archaeology of Photography, and the Association of Documentalists “The Road”).

Private collections refer almost entirely to the 1970s and 1980s, as those were the decades of an extensive proliferation within alternative cultures and dissent activities, and therefore – it was the period which in Poland interested the COURAGE team the most. The 1970s, known as the “Gierek’s epoch” (*epoka Gierka*), were a decade of a relative prosperity and cautious opening towards the West. This let the society enjoy some forms of leisure activities – treated by the authorities as the “safety valves”³⁰. New cultural phenomena appeared in the Polish People’s Republic. Punk groups emerged, rock festivals expanded and the artistic neo-avant-garde explored new forms of expressions. The “third circuit” activists operated not through confrontation with the system, as rather through disregarding its existence.

More confrontational attitude is observed in the collections from the 1980s. As it proved out, the 1970s’ prosperity was done on credit, which had huge economic consequences. The Polish society entered the 1980s with disastrous shortages and social anxieties. A brief success of the political opposition, crowned with the “Solidarity” Trade Union official registration, was abruptly ceased with introduction of the martial law and mass arrests in 1981. It is visible in the collections’ content that all those events had a great influence on the cultural opposition.

²⁸ Klich-Kluczevska, *Ibid.*

²⁹ Lipiński, “Mitologizacja czy dyskursywna reprezentacja?”

³⁰ Pęczak, “Badanie Jarocina: 1983–1984” ; Zieliński, *Scena rockowa w PRL: historia, organizacja, znaczenie.*

It showed that there is space for change, especially since the regime's power was weakening every year. Dissent activists and artists pushed the boundaries of allowed behavior and tested the limits of the authorities.

3.5 Users

There is very limited data on the number of users of the described collections, so there is little sense in describing the quantitative aspect. The private owners do not tend to keep track of the number of visitors and the case of public institutions is more complicated, as in most cases the available data is counted based on sold tickets (e.g. in the European Solidarity Centre). This means that we can only gain some knowledge on one type of institutions' activity, like the exhibitions or screenings with paid entrance, but there is little data on the number of people who visited the archives, came for lectures, participated in festivals. They are usually taken care of by different departments and there is no cumulative data on the visitors.

There are several types of users which depend on the collections' topics, but also on its direct availability. The collections on phenomena which are less commonly known nation-wide (conceptual art, punks, underground postage stamps, experimental theatre, queer activity) are usually visited by academics. Private operators share their collections mostly with the local researchers, whereas the public institutions often convey some queries for the foreign ones. This is probably connected to the better dissemination and availability of the public collections. The exception is the KARTA Centre which is a private foundation very popular also with international research parties. The topics related more closely to politics (democratic opposition or social movements) are also frequently explored by journalists. The collections documenting the socialist reality are also used for research by the consultants of the film and theatre productions.

As it was already mentioned, the availability of the collection greatly increases the number of visitors and the diversity of the audience. The first factor here is having a permanent location and long opening hours. This is of course far more typical for the public institutions, however the foundation of Archaeology of Photography successfully runs a permanent gallery in its headquarters. Having a permanent exhibition space attracts tourists, and some of the public operators managed to become one of the most important touristic destinations in their cities (European Solidarity Centre in Gdansk, Modern Museum in Wroclaw, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw). Permanent space allows also to organize various dissemination events attracting the wider audience: festivals, lectures, tours, film screenings, educational projects. Another factor increasing the number of users is having an online content (or at least the data base).

Apart from most of the public collections, a successful example of sharing the collection online is the virtual museum of the Orange Alternative³¹.

To summarize, the number and types of visitors strongly vary among the collections, however it might be said that generally in case of private collections the most common audience are the researchers and journalists, and in public collections the audience composes of: researchers, journalists, tourists and school groups.

3.6 Stakeholders

It is very hard to describe some general features of the stakeholders as one group, as they very strongly differ from one another. Stakeholders are state institutions, public figures and private people; they have different motivations, different level of engagement in everyday operations and play various roles.

However, there are some common features which might be described. First of all, if a collection received some funding, an institution which delivered it becomes a stakeholder. The most frequent one is the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Apart from supporting the collections financially, the state stakeholder do not intervene in the operator's day to day business – it rather requires some reports after the funding period. Other type of stakeholders are public figures, recognized personalities of culture and politics – people who engaged in cultural opposition. Many of them donated their own home archives and memorabilia to public operators (mostly museums), and some are members of the institutions' boards. Another group of stakeholders are the employees of the institutions – operators of the collections. Usually they are too young to have been personally engaged in the oppositional activity under state socialism. They are well-educated (holding a Master degree or a PhD) professional specializing in the field of alternative culture or recent history.

What connects private stakeholders is that every one of them is personally connected to the events documented in the collections - they documented them, co-organized or actively supported. The most important remark that should be stated here concerns the stakeholders of the smaller private collections. In all cases they play all the important roles by themselves: they are owners, operators and supporters; they deal with dissemination, digitalization and organization. It's a multi-tasking job which rarely is treated as a profession, rather as a long-life passion. All of those people (like Piotr Wierzbicki, Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons, Michał Guć, Krzysztof Skiba, Waldemar Fydrych, Zofia Łuczko) personally engaged in the dissent culture and they have made it their mission to preserve its heritage, and to present cultural diversities

³¹ <http://www.orangealternativemuseum.pl/#homepage>

of the 1970s and the 1980s from their own perspective – not through the narrative offered by the institutionalized politics of memory.

3.7 Impact of collections

Again, the topic of cultural opposition is no novelty in Poland, however it has been overshadowed by the stories of the strictly political dissent initiatives and persecutions. The success of the “Solidarity” Trade Union is one of the biggest Polish accomplishments recognized worldwide and therefore – a big opportunity for tourist attraction which is used well in Poland, especially by the Gdansk authorities. It seems that the collections on cultural opposition related to the democratic movement and social protests are used as touristic attractions in the museums - even though sometimes rather as an addition to the expositions on political opposition (like in the case of the European Solidarity Centre, visited by masses of international tourists). Many works from some of the art collections also serve as attractions in the museums, however for less “massive” tourism, more specialized locally oriented (in Museum of Modern Art or Modern Museum Wroclaw). An interesting case is made by the Polish Rock Granary, holding a very thematically narrow exhibition – focusing on the history of rock music and the Jarocin festival – which nevertheless operates with a big success. In general, most of the collections took part in some exhibitions or festivals, but very often they were just some small events, accompanying the thematic-events, like the conferences (organized e.g. by the Institute of National Remembrance). It is often a frequent case that the collections are showed to a very focused audience, and not to a general public.

Apart from being touristic attractions (mostly in the public institutions), the collections serve some other purposes, related to research, education, artistic inspiration, etc. Especially the archives like the KARTA Centre and state institutions are often used for queries. Professionals (journalists, researchers) also frequently use the photographic collections for their work.

It must be stated that in the case of private collections, an often cause for keeping the archives is not to introduce them to the audience, but rather to preserve the memory of past events. Some of them are just fulfilling their passions. Therefore, there are little initiatives to advertise collections. They are often limited to running some sort of a website (like a Facebook page). Apart from the art works, which function within different rules, the collections’ content is hardly ever used to capitalize on it, which illustrates two things: the scope of the stakeholders’ intentions and the notion that the items documenting the cultural opposition are not attractive collectibles or do not have much monetary value due to their multiplicity.

3.8 Networking

As it was stated above, some of the stakeholders do not care for their collections to be publicly recognized. Thus, they do not search for institutional support or networking opportunities. However, many of the stakeholders know each other personally, as they come from the same social circles or participated in the same events in the socialist times. Those relations are mainly of a private nature and do not reflect on professional cooperation. The environment of private stakeholders of cultural opposition is not as much a scheme of networking practices, as rather an unofficial net of helpful connections.

On the other hand, there are stakeholders who undertake very effective cooperation initiatives, like Karol Radziszewski who managed to show his Queer Archives on several international exhibitions around the world. Moreover, a bit different practices are visible in the registered foundations and associations, as they also employ younger staff members who do not base so much on own experience, but rather try to use the funding opportunities and dissemination possibilities.

As the materials shows, the public collections are ran by institutions which recognize the advantages of networking and regularly cooperate with each other in various projects, as well within some coalitions (like the Open Education Coalition). Museums are also in constant partnership with other state and municipal institutions, as well as the media.

3.9 Obstacles and challenges

The obstacles encountered by the stakeholders mostly refer to the lack of resources: in the form of money, space and time.

The money problems are more frequently experienced by the private stakeholders. Some private collections are operated solely with the private funds of their owners, who do not even have an intention of applying for support. They treat operating the collections' as their hobby or after-work activity. The other reason for the lack of funds within private collections is the fact they many of stakeholders do not officially register their activity – and thus they cannot apply for funding. The money problems are most severely experienced by the foundations, which except for taking care of collections, additionally have to find funds to cover the rent and salaries. In most cases they operate from project to project, whenever they manage to get some public funding, and in-between they rely on private donations which allow to cover the operational costs of keeping a minimal staff and working conditions.

The situation of public institutions is much better, however it does not mean that those institutions do not experience funding problems. Some of them are jointly founded by different levels of governance, but some are state institutions, funded centrally. They are able to cover the regular operating costs, nevertheless, those institutions also have to function on a “project to project” bases. After applying for funding they may be given funding for completing some initiatives, which are crucial for their development: only through projects they can convey new dissemination, educational or research ideas. It means, that some goals may be only realized using additional funding. This brings some instability in the field and often limits the institutions’ possibilities to the traditional ways of archiving and exhibiting.

The exception in the scope of public institutions is the Institute of National Remembrance which was already described at the beginning of this report. The institution gets stable and high funding for its operations. Such distribution of resources shows how politically important this institution is – as an organization performing the politics of memory it is a helpful legitimization tool for any government.

In terms of time and space resources, the obstacles met by private and public stakeholders are experienced equally often, however, they occur in different proportions and for different reasons in those two cases. Many private operators pursue careers in different fields and therefore have little time to handle the collections. Foundations operate with limited staff and cannot afford additional initiatives (which would be helpful for dissemination purposes). However, the workers of public institution also experience burdening with work, especially the workers of the archival departments of the museums, which have to deal with an enormous amount of documents and objects, at the same time dealing with digitalization, queries and other duties. The archiving spaces only in single cases are seen as sufficient – the problems with keeping the collections is a common problem. In case of institutions and bigger collections, insufficient archiving capacity causes problems with proper organization of the collection and difficulties with finding proper items when they are needed. In case of the private collections, their content tend to invade the living space of their owners, as they usually keep them in their own houses which makes it difficult to catalogue all the items.

4. Conclusions and policy recommendations

The experience of the Polish team within COURAGE might be distinguished by the fact that the field of cultural opposition under state socialism was not as much explored, as rather approached from a different perspective. Because the subject is quite well described in social and historical sciences, we have less discovered new phenomena, but rather managed to reach and describe some new examples and manifestations. In the collections descriptions we question the existing narration and read the events, activists and items in a new context. The

cultural factor of preparing the systemic changes is often overshadowed and not properly represented in public narration of the transformation. Hopefully, switching the focus onto the cultural aspects will add a new perspective for interpreting the socialist reality – so eagerly described as grey, dull, and monotonous. Some signs of the new paradigm are already visible in Poland, as the year 2017 was celebrated as a “Year of Polish Avant-garde” through a series of cultural events organized by tens of museum, research institutes, theatres, and galleries in numerous cities³². The neo-avant-garde scene under socialism was an important part of those celebrations.

As much as it would help to form some conclusions, it is not possible to identify what are the best and the worst practices in dealing with collections on cultural opposition. It is connected to the fact the extensive group of social actors in this field, recognized as stakeholders, are an extremely diversified set of entities and represent unlike interests. Good and bad practices are seen differently by the policy makers, public institutions, foundations, emotionally engaged private owners – yet alone by the historians and theoreticians, audience or former activists.

It seems that the clashes of different visions may be expressed through the problem of institutionalization of the collections. After recognizing the importance of this issue, in April 2018 we organized a seminar for private stakeholders³³ to discuss their attitudes (as the perspectives of public stakeholders and the policy makers was readable from available sources). It turned out that they have plenty of reservation towards handing their collections into the institutions’ repositories, and even towards cooperating with public museums, galleries and archives. Their reluctance referred for example to the belief that:

- their collections may be misused (e.g. by journalists or for political purposes);
- items will be kept in archives and never displayed;
- they have sufficient exposure possibilities (thanks to the Internet);
- the collections will lose the opportunity to be ever displayed as a whole entity.

Interestingly, the above remarks are the opposites of what is commonly believed to be the perks of institutionalizing collections, like gaining a better access to the items for the public or good exhibition and dissemination opportunities. It seems that the crucial issue is the lack of trust towards institutions. In spite of the fact that some of them were highly appreciated by the stakeholders, for the reasons mentioned above they would not like the institutions to be operators of their collections. The unspoken, yet easily recognizable was also the notion that no institution is able to get to know a collection equally well as its creator. Therefore, our

³² <http://rokawangardy.pl/>, 16.10.2018.

³³ All of them were individuals who never registered their activities: private stakeholders, fulfilling the role of creators, owners, operators and sole supporters.

biggest recommendation is to solve the issue of public distrust, induced by problems of fluid working staff (discontent with mediocre salaried and excess of work) and unstable funding – strongly depending on the governments' changes.

Recommendations

Based on the problems recognized within COURAGE the following issues should be addressed by the policy makers:

1. Communication between stakeholders.

Both public institutions and private owners seem to be communicating in parallel circles which depend on personal relations and knowledge. As a result, the stakeholders may experience the same problems or exploring the same subjects, but they do not know about each other. Information on workshops, conferences, and even funding is not easily found by all the parties interested. The solution would be to create a digital communication platform.

2. International possibilities for private owners

Private owners do not use foreign funding or international networking channels, probably because they have little (or no) knowledge about such possibilities. It would be advantageous for them to organize some workshops or information meeting.

3. Little trust towards public institutions

Private owners do not want to share their collections with public institutions, because they are afraid of misuse or the possibility that the materials will be forgotten. Cultural institutions need stable funding to build up the trust of the private stakeholders.

4. “Cultural opposition” in school curriculum

As the consultations with high-school teachers proved, the topic is very interesting for the youth, yet absent in the school program – which is a part of a bigger problem of neglecting the last years of socialist Poland in schools due to the extended teaching program. Some extracurricular educational projects may be organized based on COURAGE materials.

5. The value of private archives

Due to the extensive underground publishing culture in the last decade of socialism there is still a huge number of publications and tissue-papers in the hands of private owners. Very often people do not recognize the historical value of their private archives, which consists of old leaflets, posters, photographs or samizdat publications. There is a need for a social campaign raising awareness to this issue, before the materials will be lost forever.

6. Maintaining the COURAGE Registry

The Registry is a helpful tool to diminish a dispersion of the collections. It would be beneficial for the stakeholders to maintain the Registry (or in a worse case to build a

new one) and create the tools enabling them to use the platform by themselves. The materials would be preserved and the mapping of cultural opposition would continue.

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Act from 18 October 2006 on disclosing information about the documents of secret services from 1944-1990 and the content of those documents [*Ustawa z dnia 18 października 2006 r. o ujawnianiu informacji o dokumentach organów bezpieczeństwa państwa z lat 1944-1990 oraz treści tych dokumentów*]. *Journal of Laws*, 2006 No. 218 position 1592 [Dz.U. 2006 nr 218 poz. 1592].

Annex:

List of Collections:

1. Aniela Mieczysławska Raczyńska Collection
2. Archive of the Alternative Theatre
3. Archive of the Studio Theatre
4. Archives of National Commission of the Solidarity Trade Union
5. Archives of Weeks of Christian Culture / Artists' Priesthood
6. Artists' Archives of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
7. Barbara Fatyga Archive
8. Collection of Association of Documentalists "The Road"
9. Eastern Archive of the KARTA Centre
10. Erazm Ciołek Papers at the Hoover Institution
11. Eustachy Kossakowski Archive
12. Exchange Gallery
13. Exhibits of European Solidarity Centre
14. Film Archive of the Video Studio Gdansk
15. Film Notations of European Solidarity Centre
16. Filmoteka of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
17. Fuck 89 Collection
18. Institute of National Remembrance Archives
19. Jerzy Ludwiński Archive
20. Kowalnia Archive at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
21. Krzysztof Skiba Private Archive
22. KwieKulik Archive
23. Lodz Kaliska Archive
24. Museum of the Orange Alternative
25. National Film Archive – Audiovisual Institute Collection
26. Paweł "Końjo" Konnak Private Archive
27. Photographic Collection of European Solidarity Centre
28. Piotr "Pietia" Wierzbicki Collection
29. Pitch-In Culture Archive
30. Polish Performance Archive of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw
31. Polish Punk Collection by Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons
32. Polish Rock Collections at the Polish Rock Granary
33. Polish Section of the Radio Free Europe
34. Poznan Anarchist Library Archive
35. Queer Archives Institute
36. Solidarity Collection at the British Library
37. Tadeusz Rolke Archive at the Museum of modern Art
38. The Archive of the Opposition in KARTA Centre
39. The Archives of Transition 1989-1991

40. The Oral History Archive of KARTA Centre Foundation
41. Theatre Gardzienice Collection
42. Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Art on the Street
43. Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Biennale of Spatial Forms in Elbląg
44. Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Dziekanka Workshop
45. Tomasz Sikorski Collection on Mospan Gallery
46. Tomasz Sikorski Collection on P.O. Box 17 Gallery
47. Trasa W-Z Archive
48. Underground Postage Stamps of Michał Guć
49. Wojciech Zamecznik Collection at the Archaeology of Photography Foundation
50. Zbigniew Dłubak Collection at the Archaeology of Photography Foundation
51. Zbigniew Galicki Photographic Collection
52. Zbigniew Libera Archive

List of Described Organisations and Institutions:

1. "Solidarity" Trade Union [*Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność"*]
2. Academy of Movement [*Akademia Ruchu*]
3. Academy of Theatre Practices Gardzienice [*Akademia Praktyk Teatralnych Gardzienice*]
4. A-Cyclists Group [*A-Cykliści*]
5. Alternative Theatre [*Teatr Alternatywny*]
6. Archeology of Photography Foundation [*Fundacja Archeologia Fotografii*]
7. Archives of National Commission of "Solidarity" Trade Union [*Archiwa Komisji Krajowej Związku Zawodowego "Solidarność"*]
8. Artists' Priesthood [*Duszpasterstwo Środowisk Twórczych*]
9. Association of Documentalists „The Road” [*Stowarzyszenie Dokumentalistów "Droga"*]
10. Association of Polish Art Photographers [*Stowarzyszenie Polskich Artystów Fotografików*]
11. British Library [*Biblioteka Brytyjska*]
12. Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland [*Kancelaria Prezydenta RP*]
13. Chancellery of the Senate of the Republic of Poland [*Kancelaria Sejmu RP*]
14. City of Culture Foundation [*Fundacja Miasto Kultury*]
15. City of Lublin [*Miasto Lublin*]
16. City of Warsaw [*Miasto Warszawa*]
17. Committee for the Defense of Workers [*Komitet Obrony Robotników*]
18. El Gallery in Elbląg [*Galeria El*]
19. European Network for Remembrance and Solidarity [*Europejska Sieć Pamięć i Solidarność*]
20. European Solidarity Centre [*Europejskie Centrum Solidarności*]
21. Film Archive Foundation [*Fundacja Archiwum Filmowe*]
22. Foksal Gallery [*Galeria Foksal*]
23. Freedom and Peace Movement [*Ruch Wolność i Pokój*]

24. Gardzienice Theatre [*Teatr Gardzienice*]
25. Gazeta Agency [*Agencja Gazeta*]
26. Gdansk City Council [*Rada Miasta Gdańska*]
27. General Headquarters of State Archives in Poland [*Naczelna Dyrekcja Archiwów Państwowych*]
28. History Meetings House [*Dom Spotkań z Historią*]
29. Hoover Institution [*Instytut Hoovera*]
30. Independent Publishing House NOWA [*Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza NOWA*]
31. Jarocin Regional Museum [*Muzeum Regionalne w Jarocinie*]
32. Józef Piłsudski Institute in London [*Instytut Józefa Piłsudskiego w Londynie*]
33. KARTA Centre Foundation [*Fundacja Ośrodka KARTA*]
34. "Kowalnia" Studio of Audiovisual Space [*Pracownia Przestrzeni Audiowizualnej „Kowalnia”*]
35. Krakow Anarchist Federation [*Krakowska Federacja Anarchistyczna*]
36. Lodz Kaliska [*Łódź Kaliska*]
37. Lower House of the Parliament of the Republic of Poland [*Niższa Izba Parlamentu RP*]
38. Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of Poland [*Ministerstwo Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego RP*]
39. Mospan Gallery [*Galeria Mospan*]
40. Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw [*Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie*]
41. National Commission of the "Solidarity" Trade Union [*Komisja Krajowa Związku Zawodowego „Solidarność”*]
42. National Digital Archives [*Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe*]
43. National Film Archive – Audiovisual Institute [*Filmoteka Narodowa – Instytut Audiowizualny*]
44. Open Education Coalition [*Koalicja Otwartej Edukacji*]
45. Orange Alternative Foundation [*Fundacja Pomarańczowa Alternatywa*]
46. P.O. Box 17 Gallery [*Galeria P.O. Box 17*]
47. Pitch-In Culture [*Kultura Zrzuty*]
48. Polish Catholic Church [*Polski Kościół Katolicki*]
49. Polish Film Institute [*Polski Instytut sztuki Filmowej*]
50. Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum [*Instytut Polski i Muzeum im. Gen. Sikorskiego*]
51. Polish Library POSK in London [*Biblioteka Polska POSK w Londynie*]
52. Polish Radio [*Polskie Radio*]
53. Polish Rock Granary [*Spichlerz Polskiego Rocka*]
54. Polish Section of the Radio Free Europe [*Polska Sekcja Radia Wolna Europa*]
55. Polish Social and Cultural Association [*Polskie Stowarzyszenie Społeczno-Kulturalne*]
56. Polish Society of Authors and Composers [*Związek Polskich Autorów i Kompozytorów – ZAiKS*]
57. Poznan Anarchist Library [*Poznańska Biblioteka Anarchistyczna*]
58. Queer Archives Institute
59. Repassage Gallery [*Galeria Repassage*]
60. Rozbrat Collective [*Kolektyw Rozbrat*]
61. Security Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Poland [*Służby Bezpieczeństwa Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych*]
62. Shoah Foundation [*Fundacja Shoah*]
63. State Archives in Poland [*Archiwa Państwowe*]

64. Studio Theatre [*Teatr Studio*]
65. The Zbigniew Raszewski Institute [*Instytut Zbigniewa Raszewskiego*]
66. Theatre of the Eighth Day [*Teatr Ósmego Dnia*]
67. Video Studio Gdansk
68. Wrocław Contemporary Museum [*Muzeum Współczesne Wrocław*]
69. Zachęta Lower Silesian Fine Arts Association [*Dolnośląskie Towarzystwo Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych*]

List of Persons Researched:

1. Anderman, Hanna
2. Anderman, Jan
3. Anna, Stefanicki
4. Bachynsky, Leonid
5. Barańczak, Stanisław
6. Bereska, Henryk
7. Bieliński, Konrad
8. Błazek, Zygmunt
9. Boguta, Grzegorz
10. Borusewicz, Bogdan
11. Borzych, Jacek
12. Brejnik, Edward
13. Brzozowski, Andrzej
14. Buchwald, Dorota
15. Bugajski, Ryszard
16. Bułhak, Ewa
17. Charaszkiwicz, Edmund
18. Chełstowski, Walter
19. Chojecki, Mirosław
20. Chwałczyk, Jan
21. Ciołek, Erazm
22. Dąbrowska-Lyons, Anna
23. De Koning, Jacques
24. Dłubak, Armelle
25. Dłubak, Zbigniew
26. Dzieciołowski, Mirosław
27. Fatyga, Barbara
28. Fedorowicz, Jacek
29. Filipowicz, Tytus
30. Flis, Stanisław
31. Fydrych, Waldemar Andrzej
32. Gajewski, Henryk
33. Galicki, Zbigniew
34. Genyk-Berezovsky, Kost'
35. Giedroyć, Jerzy

36. Gluza, Zbigniew
37. Gnoiński, Leszek
38. Grupińska, Anka
39. Grzegorzewski, Jerzy
40. Grzegorzewski, Zbigniew
41. Guć, Michał
42. Hayder, Adam
43. Hojak, Maciej
44. Iwanowska-Ludwińska, Małgorzata
45. Janiak, Marek
46. Janiszewski, Tadeusz
47. Jankowski, Henryk
48. Jarosz, Robert
49. Kaczmarek, Damian
50. Kantor, Tadeusz
51. Kieślowski, Krzysztof
52. Kisiel, Ryszard
53. Konnak, Paweł
54. Kossakowski, Eustachy
55. Kośnik, Jerzy
56. Kowalski, Grzegorz
57. Kowalski, Zbigniew
58. Krymarys, Witold
59. Krzencessa-Ropiak, Monika
60. Kulik, Zofia
61. Kwiek, Przemysław
62. Kwietniewski, Andrzej
63. Ledererová, Elzbieta
64. Libera, Zbigniew
65. Lisowski, Piotr
66. Ludwiński, Jerzy
67. Łuczko, Zofia
68. Matuszkiewicz, Maria
69. Michalski, Krzysztof
70. Mieczysławska Raczyńska, Aniela
71. Mikina, Ewa
72. Milewski, Wacław
73. Miller, Krzysztof
74. Mirola, Zenon
75. Monkiewicz, Dorota
76. Mydlarska, Anna
77. Niewęłowski, Wiesław
78. Nowak-Jeziorański, Jan
79. Onyszkiewicz, Tymoteusz
80. Partum, Ewa
81. Paruszevska, Julia
82. Pisarski, Grzegorz

83. Platt, Dobrosława
84. Pluta, Sebastian
85. Ptaszkowska, Anka
86. Raczak, Lech
87. Radziszewski, Karol
88. Rajch, Adrianna
89. Regulski, Jerzy
90. Robakowski, Józef
91. Rodowicz, Tomasz
92. Rolke, Taduesz
93. Ronduda, Łukasz
94. Rzepecki, Adam
95. Siekierski, Maciej
96. Sikorski, Tomasz
97. Skiba, Krzysztof
98. Sobocki, Leszek
99. Sobolewski, Wojciech
100. Staniewski, Włodzimierz
101. Suchcitz, Andrzej
102. Szczepańska-Rzeszutek , Jolanta
103. Szkuta, Magda
104. Szmaglik, Leonard
105. Szymański, Marek
106. Światło, Józef
107. Świątecka, Grażyna
108. Świdarska, Hanna
109. Świetlik, Andrzej
110. Terlecki, Marian
111. Themerson, Franciszka and Stefan
112. Toeplitz, Jerzy
113. Wancerz-Gluza, Alicja
114. Warpechowski, Zbigniew
115. Wasążnik, Michał
116. Wielogórski, Andrzej
117. Wierzbicki, Piotr
118. Wierzchoś, Dariusz
119. Wojciech Zamecznik's Family
120. Wójciak, Ewa
121. Zajączkowski, Arkadiusz
122. Zamecznik, Wojciech
123. Żurawski, Mateusz