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Summary

Poland is a widely known example of a successful systemic transformation in the 20th century. Despite the internal voices of criticism concerning the lack of completely settling accounts with the communist period, Poles seem to value the peaceful and negotiatory character of the 1989 transition. Today Poland is well-rooted in the community of democratic states – being an important member of the European Union and an ally of the United States – and can share its experience with other countries striving for democracy. For many countries that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Poland serves a clear illustration of the fact that democratisation is attainable and that it contributes to modernisation and the prosperity of the state and its citizens.

Democratic changes in Poland would not have been possible without considerable Western assistance which – effectively implemented over the course of many years – has born its fruit at a deciding moment. The support from Western countries covered such areas as human rights protection, freedom of the press, political pluralism or citizen participation. The present report discusses selected mechanisms of the effective implementation of democracy assistance in Poland in the 1980s and 1990s. It also presents recommendations for democracy activists which can be adopted in other places in the world in such a way as to enhance the chances for a successful negotiated transition to democracy.

Introduction

The promotion of democracy has been one of the most important tasks of the United States' foreign policy for a long period of time – not just during the presidency of George W. Bush.[1] These issues became especially important during the 1980s, the crucial phase of the "Cold War." The establishment of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in 1983, which aimed at supporting democracy in the world, was a step toward the liberation of many countries from communist oppression and the introduction of functioning democratic systems. Poland was the largest beneficiary of American assistance. At the same time Poland is one of the better known examples of Huntington's "third wave of democratisation" that started in the middle of the 1970s and lasted until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

There have been numerous studies of the Polish experience in the transition to democracy highlighting its main characteristics. An important feature of the Polish transformation was its peaceful character, which can be traced to the "Solidarity" movement and the Catholic Church teachings. Another Polish "trademark" is the idea of "round table" talks, in other words, a specific way of conducting negotiations between regime authorities and the democratic opposition. As Samuel Huntington noticed, a state where the initial transformation was conducted in a peaceful way, without bloodshed, can face further challenges and obstacles associated with the democratisation process much easier.

The process of democracy consolidation that was taking place in the 1990s was one of the first projects of democracy promotion in the post-Cold War world.[2] This consistent process was possible, first of all, thanks to the constant support of the United States, but also to the growing support of the European Union through both closer co-operation and membership prospects. The issues of democracy promotion from the beginning of the 1990s started to play a more important role in the policy of the European Union on both the community and intergovernmental level. Respecting and

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[1] See W. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776*, New York 1997; T. Smith, *America's Mission*: *The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*, Princeton 1994; B. Bailyn, *To Begin the World Anew: The Genius and Ambiguities of the American Founders*, New York 2003.

[2] See J. Kopstein, "The Transatlantic Divide over Democracy Promotion," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2006, p. 86.

promoting democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law started to be regarded as the main priority of the EU's development and neighbourhood policy as well as of the Common Foreign and Security Policy subject to intergovernmental decisions.[3] The Polish example shows the significance of the democratising effect of the European Union on its neighbours. What is more, it also makes clear that the US and EU can complement each other's activities and further co-ordination of their efforts can be very beneficial for the effective support of democratic processes in different parts of the world.[4]

The 1990s proved to be the times of democracy.[5] Never before did so many people enjoy the right to vote as well as basic civil liberties as then. According to the Freedom House reports, at the end of the 20th century two thirds of the world's population lived in countries that were partially or fully free. Democracy became a synonym of the proper and desired regime; and the idea of human rights – inscribed in the UN charter – turned out to be an informal world constitution. For many people it became clear that the international order – the political and economic stabilisation of the world – is possible only thanks to the existence of democratic states whose authorities respect human rights. Democracies are less prone to disputes and wars, more open towards compromise and co-operation, and more engaged in the activity of international organisations.[6]

However, making democracy a set of universal principles to be respected by all the states as well as promoting them in the world is often met with criticism and accusations of cultural imperialism of the Western states.[7] Some speculate that other cultures may give birth to forms of democratic regimes that are different from the Western liberal type. Promoters of democracy, however, draw attention to the fact that their activity has nothing in common with imposing the Western cultural model and liberal value system. They

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[3] See M. Emerson (ed.), *Democratisation in the European Neighbourhood*, CEPS, Brussels 2005; T. A. Boerzel, T. Risse, *One Size Fits All! EU Policies for the Promotion of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law*, Workshop of CDDRL, Stanford University, 4-5 October 2004.

[4] See R. D. Asmus, L. Diamond, M. Leonard, M. McFaul, "A Transatlantic Strategy to Promote Democratic Development in the Broader Middle East," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2005; M. McFaul, "Democracy Promotion as a World Value," *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2004/2005.

[5] Such a thesis is put forward by P. Śpiewak – a sociologist and historian of ideas, who currently is a Civic Platform politician. See P. Śpiewak, *Obietnice demokracji [The Promises of Democracy]*, Warsaw 2004, p. 7.

[6] See N. Sharansky, *The Case for Democracy: The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny and Terror*. Public Affairs, 2004. According to the author of the popular bestseller in Washington, it is better to be a neighbour of a democracy that hates us than a dictator that appears to be our ally. The chances are slim that a democratic country will wage a war against us, whereas a dictator can easily turn us into an enemy, even if just to uphold his power.

[7] J. Grey strongly criticises democratic messianism in his book *Al Qaeda and What It Means To Be Modern* (in P. Śpiewak, *Obietnice demokracji*, p. 17).

claim that it is only dictators who benefit from anti-democratic attitudes that emphasise cultural differences and their incompatibility with democracy when they try to justify their power. Democracy promotion does not serve private interests and strategic goals, but protects people against abuses of power. There is no hidden imperialism here, because the ultimate aim is to give the citizens full freedom of decision-making about the fate of their country.

It goes without saying that Poland's successful democratisation after 1989 is related to the determination of Poles as well as the country's cultural proximity to Western European tradition. Yet, in Polish political discourse there are numerous voices that question the "round table" philosophy of the changes in the 1990s. Some Polish politicians and public intellectuals aim to re-evaluate the efforts of the negotiators from the "Solidarity" camp. They accuse the main transition architects of consolidating the community of private interests and of "conspiracy" between parts of the communist authorities and the democratic opposition. They undermine the heritage of the round table and demand immediate "settling accounts" with the past – both before and after 1989.[8]

There is little likelihood that the radical model of transformation postulated by them would have achieved its goals. Such a form of transformation would rather have led to social disorder and a lack of stabilisation. The **model of negotiated transition**, as applied in Poland after 1998, introduced a lasting democratic regime characterised by functioning political pluralism, freedom of expression, lack of discrimination based on nationality, ethnicity, or religion, a system of protection of human rights, and the rule of law. For this reason, particular attention in this report is paid to ways of successfully implementing the assistance coming from Western countries in Poland, which helped to achieve the aims of negotiated transition. Thus, the report is not an academic study of the last twenty years. It is rather meant to illustrate how the West was able to assist in creating a favourable climate for the Polish negotiated transition, as well as how Poles rejected revolutionary and radical methods for the benefit of compromise. The chosen set of good practices can be a Polish export product helpful in reflecting upon the ways of peaceful systemic transformation and democratisation of public life in other places in the world.

In order to present examples of the effective implementation of the Western aid as well as the Polish experience of successful democratisation of the country, the authors conducted a number of interviews (February-May 2005) with prominent decision-makers, experts, and opinion-makers of the

[8] See A. Smolar, "Radykałowie u władzy," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2-3 September 2006.

1980s and 1990s. Among these persons there were representatives of the democratic opposition and the communist regime authorities, the main actors of the transformation after 1989 as well as social scientists who have conducted research on the processes of transition (see Biographical Notes).

The answer to the question as to which factors are key to determine the success of democracy in a given country has been sought for a long time. It appears that the institutionalist tradition, which has dominated from the second half of the 20th century and explains the success of the representative government system by structural and procedural solutions, has failed in the face of different historical experiences. It suffices to mention the failure of democratic projects in inter-war Germany and Italy or the unsuccessful emulating of the US institutional solutions by the Latin American countries in the 19th century. The establishment of democratic institutions alone will not ensure a functioning democracy.

On the other hand, the source of success is often attributed to socio-economic factors (R. Dahl, S.M. Lipset) or socio-cultural factors (A. de Tocqueville, G. Almond, S. Verba). The proper functioning of representative democracy depends on the level of affluence, education and the compatible political tradition of a given society.[9] This approach questions/belittles the significance of effective political changes, bestowing a label of a fixed inherent capability to life in a democratic system on every society.

With regard to this never-ending dispute led by both theorists and practitioners of democracy, all possible variables determining the future of a given democratic system are taken into account. Yet, the experience of Western organisations long active in democracy promotion around the world allows one to single out certain areas where development is strictly connected with the success of democracy in a given country. To name just a few: the institution **of free elections, the rule of law, a functioning system of human rights protection, civil control of the army, political pluralism, free and independent media, citizen participation, and economic reforms**. In these particular areas Poland has skilfully employed both its own experience and the assistance offered by the West. It has become a normal European state, which – despite the burden of transformation – has thus far managed to adhere to democratic principles.

[9] See R. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton 1993.

Recommendations for Democracy Activists

The following conclusions and recommendations are aimed to highlight some key tools from the toolbox of democracy promotion and assistance, which have proven (in the authors' opinions) particularly useful in the case of Poland. They are primarily addressed to both internal and external actors of the democratisation process. The recommendations have been grouped into those which might be applied to "pre-1989" types of situations (e.g. Belarus) as well as "post-1989" situations (e.g. Ukraine). A separate cluster of recommendations refers to the crucial period of negotiating the transition from a non-democratic to democratic political regime.

I. Recommendations for democracy activists under authoritarian regimes

- The strategy of promoting democracy under authoritarian regimes should encompass both the democratic opposition and the authorities with the aim of creating favourable conditions for negotiated transition. It should aim to strengthen moderate elements on both sides of the struggle for democracy.
- Poland's experience in the 1970s (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Final Act – 1975) demonstrates the effectiveness of the rhetoric and policy of universal human rights. Democratic states should pay renewed attention to the idea of human rights in ideological disputes with representatives of authoritarian regimes. Efforts should be made to bind such states by international conventions, such as the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights, the International Pact on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights. At a given moment oppositional groups may use these kinds of arguments in their critiques of the authorities. By the same token, only those individuals and groups should be eligible for pro-democracy assistance who approve of the idea of universal human rights.
- International organisations, such as the Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and especially the European Union, should strengthen their pro-democracy agendas. In particular, there is a need for further reform and increase of the scope of activity of the already existing EU programmes, such as the European Initiative for Democracy

and Human Rights (EIDHR), to make them more decentralised and better adjusted to challenges of a "pre-1989" type of political context.

- European democracy promoters should consider the establishment of the European Foundation for Democracy, whose mode of operating would be based on the best practices of the American National Endowment for Democracy (NED).
- The international community should employ the so-called "conditional approach" with regard to the "facade" democratic institutions (the constitutional court, ombudsman) in authoritarian states. When a puppet court, tribunal or electoral commission issues at least one decision that shows its independence from the authorities, this act should be followed by support from corresponding external institutions (e.g. the Conference of European Constitutional Courts).
- Visits of politicians from democratic countries and the representatives of international organisations should include meetings with the democratic opposition. Such meetings enhance the legitimacy of the opposition both within the international arena as well as in their countrymen's eyes. They create an image of a serious political force that can exercise power despite the lack of a lot of prior experience. Also foreign diplomatic representations should stay in touch with and invite both members of the ruling regime and members of the opposition. By doing so, they may become platforms for informal interaction between both groups.
- Academic scholarships and fellowships as well as study visits for democracy activists and selected representatives of some government institutions help to prepare future democratic political and economic elites. After returning to their countries, such persons will occupy important positions in the world of business and politics. Their familiarity with the functioning of a democratic society will have an important influence on the process of democratic consolidation.
- Assisting independent (clandestine) publishing houses and press is important for both the society at large and the intelligentsia, who can find there a public space, free of the influence of authorities. Diaspora organisations play a similar role, which provide the in-country activists with a public voice.
- Broad membership in international organisations and other forms of international recognition by their peers in democratic countries should be granted to endangered opposition activists, independent writers, academics and journalists. This would provide them with a form of protection from repression in the international forum.
- Effective channelling of funds to the democratic opposition and civil society activists cannot be expected to meet the criteria of transparency of

grant-making in established democracies. Donor organisations should take advantage of intermediaries registered in democratic countries, which should take responsibility for the distribution of funds through more or less informal networks of activists in the country under a dictatorship.

- The social exclusion of the victims of repression and their families should be prevented by providing them with alternative sources of income as well as the establishment of "networks of support."
- The assistance funds should be donated not only for such charitable aims, equipment purchase, organisational expenses, but also for research projects and self-study programmes. These activities will facilitate democracy activists in facing the future challenges of systemic transformation.
- The international public opinion quickly becomes "saturated" with information about violations of democratic principles. It is therefore important for democracy activists to make efforts to sustain the attention of international public by presenting their struggle as both universal and exceptional (by "branding" the opposition).

II. Negotiating transition to democracy

- A little democracy can open the way to full democracy. The opposition can seek a compromise with the authorities during negotiations, but in doing so it cannot considerably retreat from democratic principles. The society as well as the international public opinion should be able to see clearly which of the sides is a true guardian of democracy.
- The institution of a mediator respected by both sides is essential during negotiations. Such mediation can be carried out by religious authorities (e.g. the Catholic Church as in Poland), the monarch (as in Spain), or international organisations (as in Ukraine).
- Renouncing universal retribution against the functionaries of the outgoing authoritarian regime by representatives of the democratic opposition is an essential condition for negotiated transition. The complete settling of accounts with the past is not the most important issue when chances for a peaceful handover of power occur. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to provide a security guarantee for the outgoing dictatorship authorities. Both sides should agree that during negotiations and the preparation of resolutions they will try to respect democratic principles to the greatest possible extent.
- The international public opinion should be constantly informed about the developments in the country. Ensuring wide publicity for the negotiations between the democratic opposition and the regime authorities can advance the process of democratisation.

III. Democracy assistance in the post-1989 conditions (democratic consolidation)

- Countries undergoing systemic transformation should not be left on their own. They should be granted membership in the structures of different international organisations as soon as possible. Moreover, the so-called democratic clause – which makes membership in a given organisation subject to respecting democratic principles, human rights, and the rule of law – should be strictly observed and enforced. This constant external monitoring should help to prevent emerging democracies from retreating to authoritarianism.
- Such international organisations as the Council of Europe should play a key role in providing assistance to consolidating democracy, for instance during the drafting of a new democratic constitution (Venice Commission).
- The definition of a strategic goal of the transition, even a far-reaching one (e.g. the EU accession or membership in NATO), is very important for the success of the democratisation of a country, because it helps to keep the political elite within the bounds of democratic practices and procedures.
- In the public perception, the aim of transition is often not the democratisation of a state, but its modernisation and the improvement of living conditions. It is an important task for the political elites to combine these two processes and make it clear that there is no modernisation without democratisation, and no democratisation without modernisation.
- Political parties in established democracies should provide support (mainly through training) to politicians who are not used to functioning in a democratic system, since their hitherto activity was based on the struggle with an anti-democratic regime. Such training should be provided by organisations such as German political foundations (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung or Friedrich Ebert Stiftung), American institutions such as the National Democratic Institute and the National Republican Institute, or the British Westminster Foundation for Democracy.
- Furthermore, one should consider the establishment of EU-funded political foundations affiliated with the political factions in the European Parliament. Such foundations could play a crucial role in "Europeanising" the political scene, in particular in emerging democracies in the EU neighbourhood.
- It is necessary to create a transparent mechanism for organising and controlling the electoral process in order to ensure fair elections. A good solution is the establishment of an autonomous central electoral commission composed of independent judges. The political factor in the electoral process should be limited to local electoral commissions.

- It is important to strengthen the foundations of participatory democracy in a country undergoing systemic transformation, even despite the lack of initiative from the new authorities. For that it is necessary to do the following: create mechanisms of pan-national co-operation between non-governmental organisations, to establish a platform for exchange of experiences, and teach NGOs to effectively monitor government actions. New governments should be encouraged to mobilise their societies and grant them the greatest influence on the process of governing the state (social consultations, public hearings, civic legislative initiatives, etc).
- Fast economic reforms should be coupled with consistent democratisation of public life. One should not focus exclusively on technical and financial assistance aimed at the modernisation of the state; it is important to allocate a substantial part of foreign aid for the support of democratic education, pluralism, tolerance, protection of human rights, self-government, anti-corruption activities, etc.
- Internships in foreign editorial offices and training seminars aimed at teaching journalistic objectivism and professionalism should be organised for independent journalists. In particular, the local media have not been well-prepared for the new reality after the collapse of the regime. Special attention (internships, training courses) should be paid to them in order to help them improve journalistic professionalism.
- In the sphere of free media the new authorities should support grass-root initiatives as well as journalistic self-organisation and self-regulation. Non-governmental watchdog organisations should be established and supported in order to monitor threats to journalists' independence and external pressures on the media.
- It is necessary to provide substantive (training) and institutional support to judges who often have to provide "creative interpretation" of the existing laws during the process of systemic transformation (due to the lack of new legislation).

Useful Terms and Abbreviations

AFL-CIO – American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations
BBWR – (Bezpartyjny Blok Wspierania Reform) Non-partisan Reform Support Block
G-7 – a group of the seven richest countries of the world: the USA, Canada, Japan, Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy
IDEE – Institute of Democracy in Eastern Europe
IMF – International Monetary Fund
CSCE/OSCE – Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe/ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
KC PZPR – (Komitet Centralny Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej) Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party
KOR – (Komitet Obrony Robotników) Workers' Defence Committee
KPZR – (Komunistyczna Partia Związku Radzieckiego) the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
MoND – Ministry of National Defence
MIA – Ministry of Internal Affairs
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NED – National Endowment for Democracy
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations
NSZZ "S" – (Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność") the Solidarity Independent Self-governing Trade Union
ODIHR – Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OKNO – (Oświata, Kultura, Nauka) Education, Culture, Science
OKP – (Obywatelski Klub Parlamentarny) Citizens' Parliamentary Club
UN – the United Nations
OPZZ – (Ogólnopolskie Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych) All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions
PAFF – Polish-American Freedom Foundation
PAUCI – Poland-America-Ukraine Cooperation Initiative
PHARE – Poland-Hungary Assistance to Restructuring of their Economies
PKW – (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza) National Electoral Commission
PRL – (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa) Polish People's Republic

PZPR – (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza) Polish United Workers' Party
SB – (Służba Bezpieczeństwa) Security Service
SD – (Stronnictwo Demokratyczne) Democratic Party
SdRP – (Socjaldemokracja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej) Social Democracy of the Polish Republic
SIDA – Swedish International Development Agency
SLD – (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej) the Democratic Left Alliance
TKK NSZZ "S"– (Tymczasowa Komisja Koordynacyjna NSZZ "Solidarność") Temporary Commission of Coordination NSZZ "Solidarność"
UKIE – (Urząd Komitetu Integracji Europejskiej) Office of the Committee for European Integration
UOP – (Urząd Ochrony Państwa) the Office of State Protection
USAID – United States Agency for International Development
CIS – the Community of Independent States
WSI – (Wojskowe Służby Informacyjne) Military Information Services
ZSL – (Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe) United People's Party
USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

1. Political Pluralism

Political pluralism is fundamental to political systems of democratic states. One of the most popular definitions shows that the essence of this term is free competition of groups in exerting influence upon the decisions taken by the state.[10] Political pluralism is thus a constitutive feature of a democratic regime, and it is manifested in the freedom of association and expression of opinion. In contrast to totalitarian systems, democracy assumes the existence of diverse world outlooks. Despite heated debates and conflicts between the government and the opposition, no one questions the legitimacy of pluralism; in other words, the authorities do not reach out for repressive practices towards people with different opinions. Thus, it is one the basic factors differentiating between a totalitarian state and a democracy.

In post-war Poland, in contrast to other states under the influence of the Soviet Union and the communist ideology, pluralism survived albeit in a limited form throughout the whole period of the PRL's existence. One of the reasons for this was the huge popularity and relatively large autonomy of the Catholic Church, around which different intellectual circles – not always close to the Catholic social thought – could unite.[11] The Church's position became even more stronger after the Krakow metropolitan bishop, Karol Wojtyła, was chosen to become the Pope in 1978. Around this period, basic political currents started to form within the democratic opposition. The first one was the circle of intellectuals centred around the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR), founded after workers' protests in 1976. The full extent of differences in world outlooks could be seen during the "explosion" of the Solidarity social movement, which was also initiated after workers' strikes in 1980.

Solidarity – the United Self-governing Trade Union registered in November 1980 – was joined by many oppositionists from the KOR, the Movement of Young Poland and Znak (the Sign). Thus, this was not a sensu stricto trade union uniting only workers. Very soon, Solidarity had 10 million members.

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[10] For different definitions of democracy see S. M. Lipset (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Democracy*, Washington 1995.

[11] For political disputes as well as co-operation between the Church and political movements during the communist times see the influential book by Adam Michnik *Kościół, Lewica, Dialog [The Church and the Left]*, Chicago University Press, 1993.

Table 1. The Approximate Number of the PZPR (Communist Party) and Solidarity Members in 1980[12]

PZPR	NSZZ Solidarity
3 million	10 million

Source: Based on information from the PWN Encyclopaedia.

The Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), the party of the state, was the real centre of power until 1989. It formed the foundation of the socialist society exercising full control of the bureaucratised command economy. The party was organised on the basis of centralism. The smallest unit of the PZPR was the Basic Party Organisation (POP), which existed in places of employment, universities, and cultural institutions. The most important role was played by the Central Committee, its Political Bureau and the Secretariat. These institutions decided about filling the key posts not only inside the party, but also in all state structures, from central offices to small state and co-operative enterprises. The so-called "party activists" (*aktyw partyjny*) – people professionally involved in politics and who were recommended for managing the main state institutions, social organisations, and trade unions – played the leading role in the PZPR. The different visions of socialism, as well as varied individual interests of these people, led to growing differences inside the party. As early as in the 1980s one could speak of the existence of the "party concrete" (i.e. hardliners-conservatives) and "liberals" who were open towards economic co-operation with the West and wanted to benefit from it.

Poland was also different from other socialist states due to the relatively strong position of its private sector. Despite its attempts at collectivisation, in most areas of Poland it was possible to maintain private ownership of farms. As a result, in agriculture and small enterprises the nomenclature system was controlled by the allies of the PZPR: the United People's Party (ZSL) and the Democratic Party (SD). However, to a limited extent, this fact also contributed to the existence of political pluralism.

Another element that had an impact on maintaining pluralism in Poland was the agreement for the existence of the Sejm, the chamber of the Parliament whose name referred to the tradition of Polish constitutionalism. It has to be added that despite the fact that the Sejm was the highest organ in the state power system, in practice it was submitted to the principle of the

[12] After the establishment of the NSZZ Solidarity in 1980 and the introduction of martial law on the 13th of December 1981 about 850,000 people left the PZPR.

steering role of the party and deprived of any political representativeness. Constitutional rules postulated the concentration of all main power functions in the Sejm (legislature, appointment, dismissal and control of other state organs), and defined the Sejm as the highest organ of state power. In reality the centre of political power was situated outside the Sejm, and its role was limited. In 1952-55 the Sejm was replaced by the Council of State almost entirely, as far as its powers were concerned. In the 1970s and 1980s its character was rather symbolic. The Sejm was more independent in the periods 1957-61 and 1980-85, although it always remained within the limits of the political steering of the PZPR.

Despite a rather specific situation in Poland, the communist totalitarian state employed traditional methods of repression. Martial law in 1981 dealt a powerful blow to the democratic opposition, one of the main principles of which was non-violence. The use of force by the state was not limited to the introduction of martial law, the delegalisation of Solidarity and the arrest of opposition leaders. Political murders were also committed (e.g. of Grzegorz Przemyk, Piotr Bartoszcze and priest Jerzy Popiełuszko).

During the long years of the existence of the PRL, the government as well as the opposition did not manifest much internal diversification of worldviews. However, the second part of the 1980s witnessed the onset of the process of the "softening" of communist power. This evolution of the PZPR's attitudes was grounded in a deep economic crisis in Poland, as well as the change of the geopolitical situation. After Mikhail Gorbachev became the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the communist authorities had more freedom of undertaking political initiatives inside the country. This is why the televised political debate between Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa and the leader of the pro-regime All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (OPZZ), Alfred Miodowicz, could take place in 1988. This was the first moment when the public in Poland could see the legendary leader after a long period of his absence. From the mid-1980s there was a growing conviction inside the communist party that the "problems in Poland should be dealt with in a political way [negotiations with the opposition] and not in an administrative way [the use of force]."[13]

External help in the establishment and proper functioning of political pluralism in Poland was effective on a number of different levels. It meant the support for the democratic opposition in its disputes with the communist dictatorship. This assistance was carried out in different ways. First of all, Western states were an important point of reference for the formation of the democratic opposition. Secondly, numerous contacts of the opposition

[13] Interview with Mieczysław Rakowski.

strengthened the position of Solidarity in respect to the authorities. It is worth mentioning here the visits of the Polish opposition leaders by Western leaders, e.g. Margaret Thatcher. Thirdly, there was a recognition of the "Polish cause" by the Western media and Western societies. In this sense, the Nobel Peace Prize award for Lech Wałęsa was of great importance: it promoted the Polish endeavours to gain freedom, as well as strengthened Wałęsa's position in respect to the communist authorities and Solidarity. Fourthly, an important instance of support was the flow of unbiased information. Finally, Solidarity received financial support from Western trade unions and other sources.

Among the concrete activities undertaken abroad that supported the democratic opposition and helped break the ideological monopoly of the communist authorities in Poland there were:

- John Paul II's visit to Poland in June 1983 and March 1987;
- Lech Wałęsa's Nobel Peace Prize in 1983;
- The start of the investigation of the PRL authorities by the International Labour Organisation in 1984;
- The establishment of the Solidarity Foundation in the US in 1985. It comprised such people as Edward Kennedy, Jeanne Kirkpatrick and Jerzy Giedroyć;
- The admission of the NSZZ Solidarity to the World Confederation of Labour and International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in 1986;
- The meeting of Solidarity leaders with then senator Edward Kennedy and the US Vice President George Bush in Poland in 1987;
- The appointment of Lech Wałęsa as an honorary member of the American Constitution's 200th anniversary celebration committee in 1987;
- The granting of financial aid of 1 million dollars to Solidarity by the US Congress in 1987;
- The visit of the Solidarity delegation in Paris in December 1988 for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Polish political pluralism proved to be successful at the crucial moment when the negotiations between the outgoing authorities and the democratic opposition started. Both forces decided to carry out the negotiations in a peaceful way. There was a need for a mediator that would be relatively respected and trusted by both sides. In the case of Spain, after the death of general Franco, King Juan Carlos[14] played such a role. In Poland such a role was played by the representatives of the Catholic Church. In Ukraine, during

[14] Interview with Bronisław Geremek.

the Orange Revolution – foreign political leaders (Aleksander Kwaśniewski of Poland and Valdas Adamkus of Lithuania) as well as the European Union took such a position.

The second important factor at the crucial moment of transition was the lack of external or internal destabilising forces. Even if it appears that the situation in Poland would have allowed for a peaceful transformation already in 1981, there were reasons to believe that at that time such forces existed either in the form of the USSR (according to Wojciech Jaruzelski) or the PZPR (if information about the Soviet army's readiness to enter Poland in 1981 served only as a pretext for introducing martial law), or the Polish Army (if martial law could be seen as a military coup). A threat to the peaceful transformation in Poland also existed in 1989, yet it was much less considerable. Nicolae Ceausescu, the Romanian dictator, called for a military intervention of the Warsaw Pact states in Poland. Yet, his motion did not find support from the rest of the leaders of the Eastern bloc, including the leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev.

After 1989 the Polish political scene has been characterised by party particularisation and instability. Many parties do not last one Parliamentary term of office and – as a result of considerable loss of support – they dissolve, split, unite with other parties, or undertake other activities to survive on the political scene.

One could say that for a long time Polish political pluralism was of a "methodological" and not of an "ideological" character.[15] The main focus of the political dispute both at the moment of reforms as well as throughout the period after 1989 was the method of introducing economic reforms. The origin of the parties – post-Solidarity or post-Communist – also evoked strong emotions. Throughout the 1990s, Polish political parties did not follow the classical division into liberals, conservatives, and social-democrats. For example, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) was exceptionally liberal and pro-market.

The example of the SLD, a post-communist party, is very interesting. From the point of view of efficient systemic transformation in the area of political pluralism, it is worth drawing attention to the capability of this party to adapt to the new political reality, to accept democratic principles, and to share the understanding of the state interests with the former opposition. In Poland the post-communist left had to "undergo transformation before the transformation started," and thus it had started democratisation already before 1989.[16] In this way, the Polish left underwent the long process of

[15] Interview with Lena Kolarska-Bobińska.
[16] Interview with Mirosława Grabowska.

modernisation within a very short period of time. The fact of a certain "self-purification" was also important here. In 1990[17] nobody could believe that already three years later this party would come back to power. Conformists left the Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland since that was not the power camp anymore. In this way, the Polish left dismissed the communist ideology and remained pragmatic and non-ideological.

To conclude, it is necessary to say that the existence of political pluralism in Poland after 1989 has never been actually threatened. It is true that the Polish political scene was very unstable for a long time, and the existence of many parties was a condition of one-time electoral successes. Yet, stabilisation can be observed too. What is more, Polish political parties – mainly thanks to the presence of their representatives in the European Parliament – co-operate with their foreign partners and discover a community of convictions with them. As a result, political pluralism existing in Poland is not any different from that in Germany or France.

[17] The point of dissolution of the PZPR and the establishment of the first post-communist formation, the SdRP.

2. Free Elections

Free and honest elections are a fundamental condition for a properly functioning democratic system. In Poland, for almost fifty years of the socialist system consolidation, the institution of elections assumed a distorted, caricatured form. As a result of every election the communists gained enough votes to rule autonomously. In order to ensure such considerable support, apart from mass rigging, the communists applied different mechanisms, one of them being "voting without crossing" – placing as many candidates on the ballot as there were seats in the Parliament (in the 1952 elections).[18] Other parties present on the political scene were entirely subordinated to the PZPR.

The dialogue between the communist authorities and the democratic opposition in spring 1989 started from the issue of free and honest elections. The regime authorities, which were used to the monopoly on political power for fifty years, had to acknowledge the existence of another independent political force and to compete with it. For the first time, this confrontation was supposed to be conducted according to clearly set and honest rules, without rigging.

The way the talks between the authorities and the opposition were conducted in spring 1989 to some extent was determined by the following: the support from the West for the democratic forces, the fact that the world public opinion was watching the situation in Poland very carefully and the generally favourable international climate. The opposition could count on the support from the Western press at crucial moments, for example, during the round table negotiation concerning the Senate election principles.

When Aleksander Kwaśniewski – without prior consultation – suggested that the elections to the Senate would be fully free, the government representatives decided to return to that issue the next day. Yet the foreign media that immediately published that information presented it as a fait accompli. As a result, the government negotiators did not try to retreat from this proposal. They accepted that the elections to the Senate would be without a guaranteed parity. They consoled themselves with the thoughts that the powers of the second chamber were exceptionally limited in comparison to the first chamber, as well as that the electoral law was preferential for candidates from regions, where communists thought they were stronger.[19]

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[18] Putting a ballot into a ballot box without crossing off any names meant voting for the persons at the top of the list, occupied by the communist party activists.

[19] Interview with Janusz Reykowski.

The Round Table – negotiations between the representatives of the communist regime and the opposition held in Poland between the 6th of February and the 5th of April 1989, as a result of which the systemic transformation in the country started. In total 452 people took part in these talks. The name comes from the round shape of the table that was especially made for this meeting and meant the equal status of all the participants. There was also a reference to the legend of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The negotiations were conducted in three groups: the group for economy and social policy (chaired by Władysław Baka from the PZPR and Witold Trzeciakowski from the NSZZ Solidarity), the group for political reforms (chaired by Janusz Reykowski from the PZPR and Bronisław Geremek from the NSZZ Solidarity) and the group for trade unions' pluralism (chaired by Aleksander Kwaśniewski from the PZPR, Tadeusz Mazowiecki from the NSZZ Solidarity and Romuald Sosnowski from the OPZZ). The main resolutions of the round table talks included: the establishment of the second chamber of Parliament, the Senate; parity elections to the Sejm (65% of seats were guaranteed for the ruling PZPR and its satellite parties, and the independent non-party candidates were supposed to compete for the remaining 35% of the seats); the establishment of the office of the President of the Republic of Poland chosen by both chambers of Parliament for six years; the amendment of the Law on association, which made the registration of Solidarity possible; and access to the media for the opposition (e.g. a 30-minute programme on television and the reactivation of the *Tygodnik Solidarność* weekly).

The round table made the beginning of the peaceful and evolutionary democratisation process possible, which avoided the bloodshed of the revolution in Romania and the fate of Nicolae Ceausescu. This form of resignation of the regime authorities from the monopoly on power made way for a systemic transformation with the lowest possible social costs. The authorities agreed to negotiate with Solidarity after a long period of hesitation. A range of external factors, especially the situation in the USSR, influenced this decision. Some internal factors, however, were also important.

First of all, there was a conviction that the opposition did not want retaliation, and thus giving away or sharing power with it would not involve personal repercussion for the members of the regime. The lack of radicalism of most members of the anti-regime opposition was connected with the wish to be recognised by the West as a credible and moderate political partner. The effort of the opposition leaders to convince the West of its stable and moderate political orientation should be emphasised. Thanks to the visits of for example Lech Wałęsa and Bronisław Geremek in Paris in winter 1988,

the Western leaders could see that Solidarity was a serious political force able to exercise power, and not a radical group that would lead to destabilisation in their country and the whole region. The foreign recognition of Solidarity also contributed to its popularity in Poland. During the elections Poles were not hesitant to trust the new political option and believed that it would be able to rule the country despite a lack of practical experience.

The resignation from retribution and violence was also connected with the broad appeal of the teachings of Pope John Paul II. Numerous crimes of the system functionaries never led to the desire for mass scale retribution on the regime representatives. One of the important examples is the reaction to the murder of Father Popiełuszko, the Solidarity chaplain, by a Security Service official in 1984. Church services commemorating this event never developed into demonstrations demanding revenge and retaliation on the perpetrators and on the whole system.[20]

The fact that the regime authorities made the decision to talk with the opposition was also connected with a very strong position of the then leaders of the PZPR, whose attitude could not have been met with any serious internal opposition.[21] This is also true for Solidarity leaders who did everything to prevent divisions inside the movement. Moreover, foreign embassies also played a role by supporting only democratic and moderate representatives of the anti-regime coalition.

Another important factor that helped the negotiations between the regime and the opposition was the mediatory activity of the Catholic Church hierarchs in Poland. The Church had the trust of both sides and did not commit itself to one side of the negotiations. It was also generously supported, both financially and morally, by Western countries, different non-governmental organisations, private persons and state institutions.

One of the most recognisable instances of Western influence upon the round table talks was the fact that the members of the communist apparatus could see the positive effects of the future systemic transformation in Poland. Fulbright scholarships for young activists strongly contributed to this situation. In the 1980s, Fulbright scholarships were granted not only to academics but also to young party activists, and to a lesser extent, to people connected with Solidarity. Thanks to that experience, during the negotiations both sides, the government and the opposition, had a similar view on social and economic

[20] Interview with Halina Bortnowska.

[21] In the Central Committee of the PZPR there was no real opposition able to take over power in the party and in the state. The evidence of this fact is the "blackmail" of the resignation of General Jaruzelski, General Kiszczak, Mieczysław Rakowski and General Siwicki during the 10th Plenary Meeting of the KC PZPR (20-21 December 1988, and 16-17 January 1989) and a symptomatic reaction of the rest of the Central Committee that gave them a vote of confidence. See A. Dudek, *Pierwsze lata III Rzeczpospolitej*, *1989-2001*, Kraków 2002, p. 30.

issues. They were convinced that the socialist system did not have any *raison d'etre* and Poland needed a deep systemic transformation. The differences between the two sides concerned the period of time the changes would take.

The impact of the Fulbright scholarships proved to be even more significant after 1989. In the 1990s, former Fulbright scholars already occupied important positions in the world of business and politics. Their pro-market economy and pro-democratic attitudes, strengthened during several stays abroad, proved to be very important in the process of democracy consolidation in Poland. Former Fulbright scholars were often responsible for the shape of Polish foreign policy, the economy, the EU accession negotiations, or the establishment of the Warsaw stock exchange. Two of them served as prime ministers (Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Marek Belka).

Table 2. Selected Fulbright Scholars and Their Career Paths after 1989

No.	Name (year of birth)	Fulbright	After 1989
1.	Henryka Bochniarz (1947)	1985–1987	Minister of Industry and Trade (1991), President of the Polish Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan, Chair of the Polish Business Council, Presidential candidate in 2005 elections.
2.	Ryszard Bender (1932)	1987–1988	Senator (1989–1990), Chair of the National Radio and Television Council (1993–1994).
3.	Marek Belka (1952)	1978–1979	Minister of Finance (1997 and 2001), Prime Minister (2005), Secretary General of the UN Commission for Europe, President of the Coalition Council for International Co-ordination in Iraq (2003).
4.	Danuta Huebner (1948)	1988–1990	Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Industry and Trade (1994–1996), Polish negotiator at the OECD, Head of the Chancellery of the President (1997–1998), Head of the Office of the Committee for European Integration, Representative of Poland at the European Convention, EU Commissioner for regional policy (from 2004).
5.	Tadeusz Iwiński (1944)	1977–1978	Deputy chair of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.
6.	Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (1950)	1980–1981	Speaker of the Sejm, Minister of Justice (1993–1995), Prime Minister (1996–1997), Minister of Freign Affairs (2001–2005).

7.	Tadeusz Sławek (1946)	1979–1980	Chancellor of the Silesian University (1996–1999).
8.	Juliusz Machulski (1955)	1984–1985	Film director and script writer.
9.	Andrzej Krajewski (1949)	1986–1987	Director of the Press Freedom Monitoring Centre (2003–2005), Deputy editor in chief of the Polish edition of Forum (2001–2003), Editor in chief of the Polish edition of Readers Digest (1994–2001).
10.	Andrzej Ceynowa (1951)	1981–1982 1989–1991	Chancellor of Gdańsk University (2005), Vice President of the Commission for European Education of the Ministry of National Education (2001–2002).
11.	Bohdan Wyżynkiewicz	1975–1976 1991–1992	President of the Central Statistical Office, Stock Exchange Expert.
12.	Adam Budnikowski (1948)	1985–1986	Chancellor of the Warsaw School of Economics (from 2005).
13.	Bogusław Liberadzki (1948)		Minister of Transport and Sea Economy (1993–1997) Member of the European Parliament (from 2004).
14.	Grzegorz Kołodko (1949)	1985–1986	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Consultant to the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, the UN and OECD.
15.	Lesław Paga (1954)	1987–1988	Co-creator of the Warsaw Stock-Exchange, Chair of the Bonds Commission.
16.	Jarosław Pietras (1955)	1989–1990	Secretary of State at the Ministry of Finance (2006), Undersecretary of State at the Office of the Committee for European Integration, Negotiator of the European Agreement (1991).
17.	Dariusz Rosati (1946)	1986–1987	Minister of or Foreign Affairs (1995–1997), Worked at the UN (1991–1995), Member of the European Parliament (from 2004).
18.	Cezary Stypułkowski	1988–1989	President of the PZU (2003–2006), President of Bank Handlowy (1991–2003).
19.	Marcin Święcicki (1947)		Minister of Foreign Economic Co-operation (1989–1991), Warsaw city mayor (1994–1999).
20.	Zofia Ratajczak		Vice President of the University Acreditation Commission (1999–2002), Vice Chancellor for Education, Silesian University (1996–2002).

Source: IPA research

At the crucial moment of the round table talks, the opposition agreed to compromising solutions (e.g. not fully free, but contractual elections), but did not depart much from democratic principles. Solidarity did not want to just accept the 35% of seats in Parliament offered by the communists. It preferred to have free elections for these seats. This was an important step showing the world and the public opinion in Poland which of the two parties was actually democratic. The Solidarity camp did not expect full success in winning all the 35% of seats in the Sejm and 100% in the Senate. It was important, however, to implement democratic principles where possible – in accordance with Bronisław Geremek's words that a "little democracy opens way for full democracy."[22]

The later electoral success of Solidarity – winning almost all seats in the Senate and 35% of seats in the Sejm – provided the opposition with more legitimacy. Its value came to light when the first non-communist government was appointed. Despite a formal majority in the Sejm – the chamber that decided upon the composition of the government – the electoral success of Solidarity led to further steps towards the transition of power into the hands of democratic political forces. The communists agreed to establish the first non-communist government within in the communist bloc, which was headed by Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, keeping the office of the president for themselves. The position of the president was incomparably weaker, mainly due to weak social legitimation. General Wojciech Jaruzelski, chosen by the National Assembly (the Sejm and the Senate combined), was not elected directly by the society.

The new government soon decided to take further steps in order to ensure the fairness of the next elections (local government, 1990) and eliminate rigging. It was decided that independent judges would work in the highest electoral organs. The National Electoral Commission was established. The new body was composed of the highest ranking judges and not political activists. Moreover, judges were to also sit at regional electoral commissions, and regular citizens could only sit at the lowest level, i.e. in district commissions.

An important move was the new legislation regulating the Sejm and Senate elections. The law clearly defined which competences in an electoral process were granted to the court and which ones were given to the electoral organ of a lower level. The events in Ukraine in 2004 showed that in some countries (mainly of the CIS) there is no clear division of competences between the electoral organ and the court.

[22] Interview with Bronisław Geremek.

Another fact that deserves attention is that the society trusted the results of all following elections. Despite many instances of very close outcomes (as in the 1995 second round of presidential elections between Lech Wałęsa and Aleksander Kwaśniewski), the fairness of the elections was never questioned. In this respect, much credit should be given to the institutional solutions that emphasised the independence and non-partisanship of the body responsible for the electoral process.

The resolution of the round table talks to have contractual elections in June 1989 was an unusual success for the democratic opposition. After the fall of the Berlin wall, Tadeusz Mazowiecki's government could shape its own policy also counting on the support of the PZPR MPs. This comfortable situation decreased the demand for new free elections. Yet, Poland's contention for membership in the Council of Europe was also associated with satisfying the free elections principle. Fully free elections were held in September 1991. Just after that Poland became a member of the Council of Europe.

This example shows that even the most devoted democrats may lose their sensitivity to the need to satisfy democratic principles. The case of Poland in the 1980s shows that what was most important for them was the success of the transformation achieved with the lowest possible social costs. There were fears that abrupt implementation of the free market rules (the so-called "shock therapy") would be faced with much social dissatisfaction, connected with the rapid worsening of living conditions. However, the pressure from the Council of Europe and its decision to make fully free elections a condition for membership was an important motivation for the government in the democratisation of the state.

The conditions for membership in different organisations have been combined with the so-called "democratisation clause" many times. For countries contending for EU membership such criteria were prepared at the Copenhagen summit in 1993. This solution has proven to be very successful for Poland and for many other countries.

3. Economic Reforms

Economic reforms are not directly connected with the process of democratisation of a state, yet they often indirectly influence or simply accompany this process. Democracy theorists have been arguing for some time whether systemic transformation and economic reforms should be conducted simultaneously or not. As far as the former option is concerned, there exist many instances of the collapse of the transformation process at the initial stage due to the social dissatisfaction caused by the burden of economic reforms. Such a situation took place in many states of Latin America in the 20th century, when simultaneous economic and political reforms often led to anti-democratic coups.

The latter option is best illustrated by the example of Russia in 1991. Many American advisors were convinced that a free market on its own would trigger democratic transformation. Economic reforms were given priority, and the democratisation of public life was left for later. As a result, despite being granted the status of a market economy, Russia has reached the Western model of democracy, but on the contrary, it has retreated from it. The fact that the democratisation processes were not bound to economic changes has led to a peculiar form of authoritarian government – "the steered democracy" or "the sovereign democracy" – as the phenomenon is described by Russian political scientists.

The success of "shock therapy" in Poland was based not only on swift economic reforms, but also on the consistent democratisation of the state. From the perspective of many years later it is clear how important it was to have an economic correlation with the West through a system of loans and – as a consequence – unpaid debts during Edward Gierek's government. Paradoxically enough, the loans did not have a political goal of "fighting communism," but were invested into the economy. Yet, they led to the weakening of the economy of the PRL and its authorities. In this way, granting these loans made the PZPR start talks with the democratic opposition.[23]

One might assume that, at least at the initial stage of transformation, Poland was under the "guardianship" of the Western states. Instances of the UN supervision of the democratisation processes in Cambodia or East Timor

[23] Interview with Krzysztof Bobiński.

may come to mind. This is also partially true for Poland, since this guardianship existed as far as economic reforms were concerned. External experts, both representatives of Western governments and international institutions, had a strong influence on the shape that the economic reforms assumed. They took part in the creation of some legal norms as well as financial institutions from scratch. Such people as Jeffrey Sachs helped in carrying out "shock therapy." The economic credibility of Poland was correlated to a considerable number of external experts shaping the economic reforms. The economic credibility determined the success of the Polish economy, whereas the success of the Polish economy determined the success of the Polish systemic transformation.

It is worth paying attention to the uneven quality of the services provided by Western advisors. Some experts, popularly known as the "Marriott brigade,"[24] were often unprepared, arrogant, and ignorant of the local conditions. Their attitude was as if they were saying that "today we are in Poland, tomorrow – in Georgia or Bolivia."[25] Yet most of the experts, grouped around serious institutions, presented the required level and specialist knowledge about Poland. German political foundations can serve a good example here.[26] They came to Poland already in 1989, and thanks to their continuous and uninterrupted assistance these foundations have developed a modus operandi that ensures the active and effective presence of external experts, Western political, social and economic thought, and institutional solutions in such areas as civil society, the social market economy, or local government reform.

[24] Interview with Krzysztof Bobiński.
[25] Interview with Ryszard Bugaj.
[26] The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (CDU), the Heinrich Seidl Foundation (CSU), the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (SPD), the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FDP), the Heinrich Boell Foundation (The Green Party), and Rosa Luxembourg (PDS).

4. The Rule of Law

The rule of law is one of the basic principles of any democratic system. One of the main differences between totalitarian systems and free states is the lack of respect of the rule of law by the former. The constitutions of communist countries were full of pompous slogans, yet the everyday reality was completely different from the ideals to be found in the basic laws of those totalitarian states.

In the late 1980s the PRL authorities started to copy some institutional solutions from democratic states. That move was aimed at gaining credibility in the eyes of external partners. Thus the Constitutional Tribunal was established in 1986 and the Office of the Ombudsman was founded in 1988. These institutions were modelled after similar institutions in Italy, Germany and Sweden.

When the communist dictatorship was establishing these institutions, it was not planning real power sharing with independent bodies and was filling the posts according to a political key. The Constitutional Tribunal was thus comprised of "nomenclature judges," in other words, those who politically identified themselves with the communist authorities. Yet, the very fact that these institutions existed already in 1989 made the transformation and building of the state ruled by law on the territory of the former PRL much smoother.

One of the fundamental elements of a rule of law system is an independent judicial power. In a totalitarian state the judiciary is not an independent branch of public power, but it is subordinated to the executive power. Poland was not an exception here, and judges in the PRL were often subservient to the dictatorship. Yet, Polish lawyers, including judges, were not always supporters of the regime. The newly established Constitutional Tribunal, which was comprised of nomenclature judges, quickly made itself unpopular with the authorities, passing a decision that was not palatable to the regime already in spring 1986. It turned out that the institution that was expected to be a fig leaf could lay claims to much more power.

The difficulties connected with dividing judicial power from the rest of the powers can be illustrated by the very late recognition of the finality of decisions of the Constitutional Tribunal. The temptation to hand steer the judiciary is not alien even for democratic politicians, especially during the period of transformation. The Constitution of 1997, which came into force in

1999, introduced the finality of the Constitutional Tribunal decisions. Before that, the Sejm had had the right to overrule the Tribunal's decisions by two thirds of voices.

There is a fundamental dilemma whether and in what way the shape of internal processes of establishing the rule of law in a totalitarian state can be influenced externally. The question is whether constitutional courts of other countries should be in contact with their counterparts in totalitarian states, or whether these court should rather be isolated. In the Polish case, in the 1980s the Constitutional Tribunal was isolated from the environment of the European constitutional courts. Only the 1989-1990 changes allowed the Constitutional Tribunal to join the Confederation of European Constitutional Courts in 1990.

Either side of this dilemma involves some risk. Contact with the regime-appointed judges could bring legitimacy to totalitarian authorities; in other words, the regime would achieve exactly what the PRL authorities desired to achieve when they established the Constitutional Tribunal and the Supreme Administrative Court. On the other hand, such contacts could become a source of inspiration and support for the judges in totalitarian states. The solution to this dilemma may be a "conditional approach": if a puppet court issues at least one independent decision, at that time the corresponding external institutions should provide it with support and encouragement.[27]

The suspiciousness of Western states regarding the issue whether Poland was a state ruled by law continued for quite a long time. Paradoxically enough, this was a very positive experience, since the formation of independent judiciary institutions is a long-term process. The constant monitoring of the situation in a given country is a beneficial phenomenon, since all deviations can be corrected immediately. This "watchful eye" was even more important in Poland, since the old Constitution did not guarantee the right to trial, the right to the protection of private life, proportionality principles, accrued rights protection, etc. In fact, there was no catalogue of fundamental rights as they are understood in the European Convention.[28]

The first phase of a standard systemic transformation is the passing of a new democratic Constitution. Yet, in Poland this important element was divided into phases. Before the Constitution was passed, courts had to start applying and respecting rules that de iure did not have a constitutional character. In the context of a very long process of passing the new Constitution, the Constitutional Tribunal exercised a kind of creative interpretation of general rules, e.g. derived from the principles of the rule of

[27] Interview with Marek Safjan.
[28] Ibid.

law "lex retro non agit" formula or the principle of the protection of accrued rights. These rulings de facto created the Constitution step by step.

The development of the Constitution in Poland took eight long years. The Constitution was passed in 1997. It was not possible to pass the basic law earlier due to political instability and the lack of a political consensus. Two transition methods were applied to deal with this situation. First of all, in December 1989, the definition of the state as "socialist" in the PRL Constitution of 1952 was replaced by "democratic." The name of the country was also changed from the PRL to the Republic of Poland.

As the next step, in 1992 the law on mutual relations between the legislative power and the executive power of the Republic of Poland as well as the law on local governments were passed (this was known as the "small Constitution"). The small Constitution put the basic systemic principles of the state in order. Yet, the passing of the "small" instead of the "big" Constitution led to a situation where during the period 1992-1997 constitutional principles were comprised of three different documents: the PRL Constitution of 1952; the 1992 law on the development and passing of the Constitution; and the "small" Constitution of October 1992. The new "big" Constitution was passed in 1997, eight years after the transition. It was not until the enforcement of the new Constitution that the Sejm lost its right to veto the Constitutional Tribunal decisions.

It is vital for the societies and elites of states under transformation to recognise that it is not enough to have the rule of law inscribed in legal acts, but it should become an essential element of the political culture. Thus, it is not sufficient to declare the independence of judges. It takes a long time to educate the society and elites. In this sense, one can agree with those who believe that the end of transformation is possible only with a generational change.

The new qualitative change also consisted of the recognition by the society and political elites that the Constitution can be applied directly and in a given context. This was a huge difference from the situation in totalitarian states, where constitutions are just wishful thinking.

The next problem was the issue of the verification of judges who passed judgements during the PRL and participated in the repression apparatus. With the benefit of hindsight one might claim that the lack of the vetting of judges after 1989 was a mistake.[29] Yet, such verification was possible only in 1990, during the "window of opportunity," the time when many other reforms – economic, local government, and administrative – were conducted. However, at that time there had been no positive experience in this area, whereas such

[29] See the interview with Wiktor Osiatyński, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no 34 (2772), 25 August 2002.

later verification was not possible. An interesting solution was found in Germany, where the former DDR judges were replaced by judges from Western Germany. Such a solution, however, was not possible in Poland.

Communities of lawyers from other European states, mainly from Germany and France, offered valuable help in regard to the establishment of a state ruled by law in Poland. Yet, the most considerable assistance came from the so-called Venice Commission, established in 1990. In the beginning of 1990s, the Council of Europe experts conducted a detailed review of all areas of the Polish legislation from the perspective of their conformity with the European Convention of Human Rights. This was done in such a way that at the moment of Poland's accession to the Convention there would not be any violations of it.

The European Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission) is an advisory body of the Council of Europe. It is comprised of the most important experts in the area of constitutional law. It was established in May 1990 after the collapse of communism in the Central and Eastern European states, at the moment when these states needed assistance in the area of constitutional law. The popular name of the Commission derives from the place of its members' quarterly meetings.

In the beginning, the Venice Commission was comprised of 18 members. Today all members of the Council of Europe are members of the Commission, and from 2002 non-European states can also become full members. In 2006 the Commission was comprised of 50 members, 46 of which were members of the Council of Europe, plus Montenegro, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Korea and Chile. Belarus has the status of an associated member. There are also nine observer states: Argentina, Canada, Holy See, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, the USA and Uruguay.

The Venice Commission concentrates its work on examining the projects of constitutions and constitutional amendments. The Commission also deals with semi-constitutional areas, such as the legislation concerning minority rights or electoral rights. Opinions produced by the Commission are not binding, but are highly respected and often implemented.

The Council of Europe finished the review of the Polish legislation several years before the EU. Poland's membership in the EU has been also fundamental for the consolidation of the principles of a democratic state ruled by law. As a result of its accession to the EU, the European Tribunal of Justice has become another organ guaranteeing the adherence to the

principles of the rule of law. The deep "rooting" of Poland in pan-European structures (the Council of Europe and its European Tribunal of Human Rights; the EU and the European Tribunal of Justice; the OSCE) makes the retreat to a totalitarian regime practically impossible.

Successful transformation and the formation of an independent judiciary system in Poland is an example for other countries retreating from communism. Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and Armenians have been learning from the Polish experience.[30]

[30] Interview with Marek Safjan.

5. Human Rights

The "Cold War" was an ideological confrontation between two blocs of states. For a long time, the communist group prevailed in this conflict. It was only in the mid-1970s that the situation changed, and the West started a campaign to promote and protect human rights, also in communist states. This was one of the most important ways of bringing democracy back to Central and Eastern Europe.

The Helsinki Conference Final Act (1975) was a turning point in the history of the Cold War. For the democratic opposition this was a new impulse for their activity. For the first time, the communist authorities had to admit that they had to respect the human rights of their citizens, including ethnic minorities. The opposition in these countries received a sign that Western states were not indifferent towards the improvement of human rights protection in these countries.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Final Act (1975) lists the areas of interest of the Conference grouped in "baskets":

The First Basket: The issues of security in Europe. In the first part it covers a catalogue of ten principles of equal importance that rule the mutual relations between the participants of the Conference. The second part is a document defining funds for the building of trust and selected elements of security and disarmament.

The Second Basket: Co-operation in the economy, science, technical development, and environmental protection. It comprises recommendations in these areas.

The Third Basket: Co-operation in humanitarian and related areas. It covers four basis issues: interpersonal contacts, information, co-operation and exchange in the areas of culture and education.

The Helsinki conference also started a cycle of Conferences on the Security and Cooperation in Europe. The events in Poland (i.e. the introduction of martial law) considerably influenced the decision made during the second overview CSCE in Madrid (1980–1983). A group of Polish experts not connected with the communist authorities established the Helsinki Committee in 1982, whose aim was to monitor the observance of human rights in Poland. The report prepared by the Committee for the Conference in Madrid, compared the rules of martial law with international

standards and legal systems of countries with long democratic traditions, as well as discussed the ways how laws were exercised by the Polish authorities.[31] This report was smuggled to the West and presented to the Conference participants. In this way the communist regime lost its monopoly on information regarding what was occurring in Poland.

The Helsinki Committee worked continuously throughout the 1980s. Its reports gained considerable recognition at forums of different international organisations (e.g. the International Labour Organisation, the UN).

Another very important factor influencing the level of human rights protection was the establishment of the institution of ombudsman. Just as in the cases of the Constitutional Tribunal and the Supreme Administrative Court, the establishment of the institution of ombudsman was an attempt at legitimating the dictatorship.

The institution of ombudsman was broadly modelled after the Swedish example. Yet, in communist Poland the ombudsman had very different tasks from its Western counterpart. The Supreme Administrative Court and the Constitutional Tribunal were typical institutions of the judiciary branch of power, and so the scope of the competences was easy to predict for the communist authorities. However, the Ombudsman's Office was "an institution of an extraordinary power of authority,"[32] and thus the tasks in front if it were complicated and difficult to predict.

Professor Ewa Łętowska became the first ombudsman. It was not possible to copy Western solutions regarding the organisation of the Office. The new institution with an imprecise status and competences aroused fears among both communists and oppositionists. The problem of the selection of staff was solved by employing retired judges and scholars, the two groups least likely to be corrupted by the authorities.[33]

The fundamental principles of the initial activity of the Office of Ombudsman were: (1) avoiding politics; (2) legitimation through transparency; (3) concern about the media; and (4) grassroot work. Becoming too political might have threatened the respect bestowed on the ombudsman and her office. The transparency of activities had to be total, in order to gain people's trust as well as a favourable attitude of both the authorities and the opposition. The newly established media after 1989 started to become very important sources of information, and good contacts with them were extremely important. Yet, the most important activity of the ombudsman in respect to the media was educating the journalists about human rights and

[31] The Report is comprised of 1000 pages. See the materials of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights available at <http://www.hfhrpol.waw.pl/index.html> (as of 31/07/2006).
[32] Interview with Ewa Łętowska.
[33] "People were afraid to co-operate fearing for their careers." Interview with Ewa Łętowska.

principles of the rule of law. Well prepared journalists were often becoming human rights advocates, sometimes unintentionally. Finally, a new standard of work was established. It was important that the Office replied to all people who addressed their problems to it, even if nothing could be done about the problem. In this way ombudsman Łętowska was gaining her authority at the time of skirmishes on the Polish political scene in the period 1987-1992.

After 1989 the most important goal for the Office (apart from monitoring the authorities' activity) was citizen education. The new phenomenon of integration into Western European structures guaranteed high standards of human rights protection.

Hungary was the first country of the communist bloc to join the Council of Europe in November 1990. This organisation started an assistance programme for all states undergoing systemic transformation, which covered such areas as local democracy, constitutional principles, the freedom of the media, and finally human rights. Poland became a full member of the Council of Europe on the 26th of October 1991, after the first free parliamentary elections.

The European Convention on Human Rights was in effect in Poland from 1993. The enforcement of the Convention meant a fundamental rebuilding of the system of human rights protection in Poland. "Appealing to Strasbourg" became an essential element of the Polish judiciary, and European standards of human rights protection started to be respected by almost all social and political groups. The only exception is the issue of the death penalty – abolished in 1997 – which has considerable support of the society[34] and from time to time is raised by some political parties.

Moreover, EU membership had a fundamental influence on human rights protection in Poland. It was stated in the 1993 Copenhagen criteria that every state wishing to become an EU member should protect human rights. Thus, all attempts of Poland to become a member would have been insufficient if it did not respect the norms of human rights protection.

Finally the OSCE established the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw in 1992. This was a kind of reward for Poland as the first country in the region to change the communist regime for a democratic system. The ODIHR, just like some Polish NGOs, has devoted much attention to human rights education on the territory of the former USSR. They share their experience with local organisations there often in co-operation with other Western organisations.

Poland's anchoring in the Western system of human rights protection is of great importance for improving these standards in a real and not only formal

[34] The share of people supporting the death penalty in Poland is about 75%. See the CBOS communication, no 53, March 2004.

way in respect to Polish citizens. A lot of potential problems were resolved in Poland after the transition, e.g. ethnic minorities issues. The change of the system has also brought about a change in the quality of the public debate, where the language of human rights has been accepted for good. What is interesting is that the greatest problems concerning human rights dealt with by non-governmental organisations and successive ombudsmen in the 1990s did not concern political rights. Most of the cases were about the protection of privacy and property rights.

During the process of writing the new democratic Polish Constitution, human rights played a fundamental role. A group of outstanding lawyers within the Helsinki Foundation developed a document on individual rights. To a large extent, it was based on the European Convention of Human Rights. Thanks to the favourable attitude of the Chancellery of the President Lech Wałęsa the principles comprised in this document were included into the so-called presidential version of the Constitution. In the works of the Constitutional Committee almost an entire document on individual rights was included in the new Polish Constitution of 1997 in the form of Chapter II "Freedom, Rights and Duties of Persons and Citizens."

The ideology of human rights has brought democracy to Central and Eastern Europe by the way of reforms, democratically and without bloodshed. On the other hand, what Poland and other countries in the region have accomplished deserves to be called a "revolution." The combination of these two phenomena, reform and revolution, is sometimes called "refolution."[35] This combination can be the only efficient way of transition from a totalitarian state to a liberal democracy.

[35] T. Garton Ash, *We the People: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague*, Penguin: Cambridge 1990.

6. Reform of the Police and Army

During systemic transformation, as well as in the further process of the new system consolidation, much attention is usually paid to the uniformed services (mainly the police and the military). There exists a threat that the military can lead an anti-democratic coup. The Polish case of the end of 1980 could confirm such a fear. From the moment when martial law was introduced in 1981 Poland was governed by the Military Council of National Salvation, mainly composed of army officers. The position of General Wojciech Jaruzelski and General Czesław Kiszczak was exceptionally strong throughout the 1980s.[36] However, it was not the military, but the communist party that exercised real power in Poland. The round table negotiations showed that in fact the position of the military was very weak.[37] General Wojciech Jaruzelski was informed about new decisions every day, but he did not take part in the negotiations himself. After the lost elections of the 4th of June 1989 the military could not become more involved in the political situation and remained neutral.

The changes of 1989 did not mean immediate changes in the force structures. The Soviet Union formally existed until the end of 1991, as well as the Warsaw Pact. Soviet Army forces had their bases in Poland until 1993. There was a serious fear that any radical movement could have unexpected consequences. The most important task was to eliminate the military dependency on Moscow. This was conducted through the introduction of civil control on the army, which was a clear principle of the democratic rule of law. A public declaration about Poland's alliance with Western countries was not possible at that moment.

The new government was very careful about the possibility of Poland's accession to NATO. It was not until the visit of Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka in Brussels in 1992 that journalists could hear a clear declaration that Poland wanted to become a NATO member in the future.[38] This postulate did not change after post-communists won parliamentary elections in 1993 and presidential elections in 1995.

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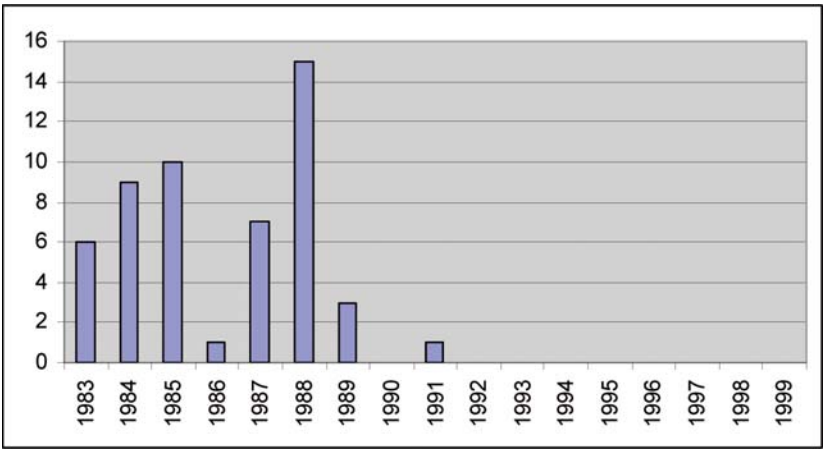
[36] See A. Dudek, *Pierwsze lata III Rzeczpospolitej 1989–2001 [The First Years of the Third Republic of Poland 1989–2001]*, Kraków 2002, p. 30.
[37] Interview with Janusz Reykowski.
[38] Interview with Janusz Onyszkiewicz.

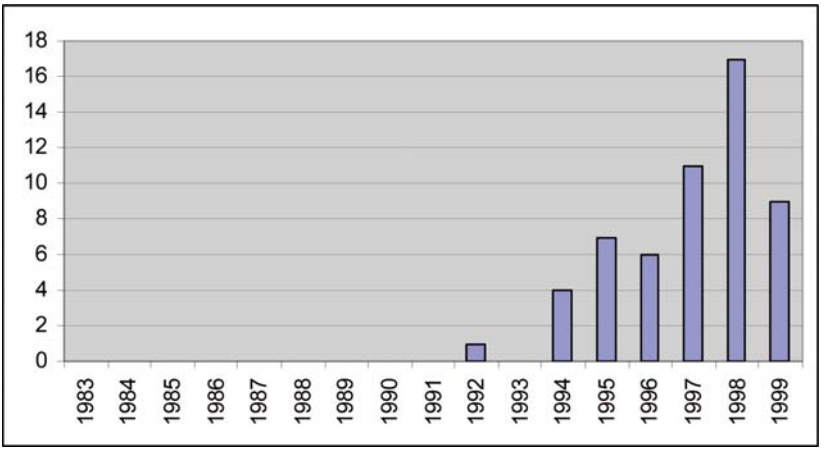
The Polish Army – thanks to the openness and assistance of the West – started a swift but gradual integration with Euroatlantic structures. Polish generals, who were mainly accustomed to training courses and study visits in Moscow, started going to training sessions in the United States and Western European states (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1. The Number of Polish Generals That Underwent Specialist Training Courses in the Warsaw Pact States in the Period 1983-1999



Source: Press Office of MoND.

Figure 2. The Number of Polish Generals that Underwent Specialist Training Courses in the NATO States in the Period 1983-1999



Source: Press Office of MoND.

The Polish intelligence started co-operating with their American and Western European counterparts. The first opportunity to co-operate was the 1991 Iraq War. Thanks to the Polish networks of contacts it was possible to successfully conduct the evacuation of American Embassy employees in Baghdad. In return, the US cancelled part of Poland's debt as well as accelerated the process for Poland's accession to NATO.

The change of allies was not a problem for Poland's highest ranking army officials. What might have been a problem was reviving nationalistic and authoritarian tendencies in the military as well as the politisation of the army.[39]

Some senior army officers had difficulties with accepting the idea of civilian control of the military and wanted to considerably strengthen the position of the Chief of Staff, taking the example from the solutions of the Second Polish Republic (1918-1939), where the Chief of Staff was *de facto* the second person in the state. Thanks to the watchfulness of the parliamentary opposition, and the adequate influence of the Western allies, this idea was never realised and could not threaten the neutral position of the army.[40]

The second problem was the lack of the verification in the military intelligence staff. The Military Information Services – established after 1989 – was comprised mainly of former employees of the PRL military intelligence. The dissolution of this institution and the establishment of new special services remains a problematic and politicised issue even today.

The case of civil intelligence was solved in a different way. The PRL political police was replaced by the Office of State Protection (UOP). The especially established Verification Commission let part of the employees keep their posts (mainly technical workers) as well as recruit many new young people. This was a different solution from that in the Czech Republic, where both intelligence and counterintelligence were completely dissolved.

The steps aimed at reforming the *milicja* (the former name of the police used in the PRL) were directed towards its depolitisation. The 1990 law prevented active members of the police force in political parties. Despite appearing to go against their citizen rights – given the social context of that period – this solution was adequate.

All ministers responsible for military and internal affairs were too concentrated on the special services, and thus they neglected other structures. They had a lot of confidence in all the information and analyses coming from the intelligence services. They were trying to control their activity to the

[39] Interview with Janusz Onyszkiewicz.
[40] "I was afraid of the Latin American style degeneration of the Polish democracy." Interview with Bronisław Geremek.

largest possible extent.[41] It appears that the exaggerated attention paid to special services on the part of the new elites was an effect of liberation from the police state (the PRL). As a result of the end of the Cold War, globalisation processes, informatisation, the role of the intelligence in democratic societies have undergone significant evolution to adjust to new challenges. In this field, Poland of the 1990s has few positive lessons to pass on to other countries.

[41] Interview with Jerzy Zimowski.

7. Free Press

Independent and well functioning media are fundamental to any democratic state. They monitor the government's activities, possible abuses of their power and violations of democratic principles. The Polish example shows that the world of media can also effectively influence politics in a direct way. Among the opposition activists engaged in the Solidarity movement there were many representatives of the literary-journalistic circles. Later some of them became directly engaged in politics.[42]

Throughout almost the whole period of communism in Poland there existed the so-called "second circulation." This meant different publications on different areas of interest – history, philosophy, literature, economy or ecology, which were illegally printed in Poland or smuggled from the West. On one hand, it was important to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the uncensored information and thus the education of Polish citizens, which weakened the influence of communist propaganda. On the other, the "second circulation" was important for the intellectuals themselves. It provided them with an alternative: to be independent of the only correct ideology and publish the results of their work. In this way those with intellectual ambitions were not condemned to co-operation with the regime.

The assistance from the West for underground publishing houses was an important economic, substantial and educational factor. The support for the underground press was often organised by Polish immigrants in the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany and other states. First of all, one should mention the editor of "Kultura," Jerzy Giedroyć, based in Paris, Eugeniusz Smolar in London and Irena Lasota in the United States. Financial help was also provided by the immigrants in London that left Poland after WWII and the Polish Government in Exile.[43]

The most important émigré publishing centre was the Paris-based "Kultura," active from the end of WWII, and based first in Rome and then at Maisons-Laffitte near Paris. Its impact on the cultural, social and political life during communism is difficult to overestimate. The "Kultura" monthly was published in France, smuggled to Poland and reprinted there. The magazine gathered the attention of intellectual elites living outside of Poland, as well as

[42] Interview with Andrzej Zarębski.
[43] See A. Friszke, *Życie polityczne emigracji [The Political Life of Emigration]*, Warsaw 1999, pp. 442-445.

published writers and journalists living in Poland who were under censorship. Jerzy Giedroyć also published "miniatures" – a solution already used by Ukrainian émigrés in Switzerland at the turn of the 19th century. These were little booklets banned in the country that were easy to smuggle to Poland. What is more, there were special points where anyone could get these books for free in order to smuggle them to Poland. Such points existed not only in Paris, but also in New York and Rome.

An important move of the Polish emigrant representatives was to make the "Polish cause" popular not only among people with Polish roots, but also among people who were ready to support the fight for freedom and democracy in Poland for ideological reasons. The international committee called the Appeal for Polish Workers, created in 1976, deserves attention here. Among its ranks there were many outstanding intellectuals – journalists, writers, and artists who were gathering money to help the opposition in Poland. Their activity was co-ordinated by Eugeniusz Smolar and the secretariat in Poland; the scope of the organisation's contacts covered many underground cultural and publishing centres.[44]

One of the most popular forms of support for Polish underground journalists was the provision of printing materials and equipment. Taking into consideration the level of technological development, transport conditions and lack of service opportunities, the opposition leaders decided to use copiers and offset printers. A large amount of smuggling was organised by the Co-ordination Office of the NSZZ Solidarity in Brussels (more in the chapter on "Citizen Participation").[45] In June 1986 the greatest success in smuggling printing materials for Solidarity took place: 11 tons of equipment, including one hundred copiers, large amounts of matrixes, printing inks and books. The future Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki piloted a lorry loaded with the equipment for Solidarity from Sweden. An attempt to repeat this success in November of the same year turned out to be a failure. The Swedish driver was arrested, and the equipment was confiscated.[46]

Internships and study visits for Polish journalists in Western editorial offices – the most effective way of teaching journalistic independence and professionalism – were organised mainly after 1989 (by the Ford Foundation, the NED, etc). But some trainings were also organised earlier, by the Italian Press Union.[47] An important and relatively easy way of gaining and improving professional skills for journalists was reading the foreign press.

[44] Interview with Eugeniusz Smolar.
[45] A. Friszke, *Solidarność podziemna* 1981-1989 *[Underground Solidarity 1981-1989]*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 49 and 118.
[46] More in A. Friszke, *Solidarność podziemna…*, pp. 119-120.
[47] Interview with Jacek Żakowski.

During the communist period, especially during martial law, Western embassies and foreign correspondents provided access to it.[48]

In a totalitarian state journalists are a group that is highly exposed to danger. Kidnapping, mugging, and murders committed by "unknown perpetrators" was a common form of fighting the unflattering voices of criticism by the authorities. Today there are many international specialist organisations defending the freedom of expression in endangered countries. A similar instance of corporate solidarity took place in Poland in the 1980s.

Polish underground journalists did not have any documents to prove their occupation. For that reason they were an easy target for the authorities, which treated them as a threat to public order. A smart move was to grant an opportunity for Polish journalists to seek individual membership in the International Federation of Journalists. Until then the Federation's members were only journalist trade unions and organisations from different countries. The exception made for Polish journalists was dictated by a deep will to protect their rights. Poles were gaining the title to being defended on the international arena. The world federation uniting thousands of people working in the media was defending their rights.

The International Federation of Journalists – the largest journalist organisation in the world. Established for the first time in 1926, it was reactivated in 1946, and then again in 1952 to preserve its form up to date. It is present in 100 states and comprises about 500,000 members. The Federation defends the freedom of expression and justice through its strong, free and independent journalist trade unions. It is a politically neutral organisation. It promotes human rights and principles of democracy and pluralism. It is against discrimination and all methods of using media in order to propagate intolerance and hostility. The Federation supports journalists and their trade unions in their fight for workers' rights. It has also established the International Security Fund in order to provide humanitarian help for journalists in need. Its activity is coordinated by the Secretariat with its headquarters in Brussels under the leadership of the Executive Committee.

After 1989 many underground journalists became actively involved in politics and business. Only some of them remained in the media. The situation was very new for both of these groups – freedom of expression and pluralism looked exceptionally complicated. Local journalists were used to reprinting information from national papers, and were not accustomed to working in the new conditions. There were fears of commercialisation and the inflow of foreign capital in the media. In this situation, the Western assistance involved teaching

[48] Interview with Krzysztof Bobiński.

professional skills and journalistic objectivism. The BBC organised a 6-week study visit to its editorial offices for 36 journalists from Poland. Similar visits were organised by other French and American editorial offices or foundations.

There have been many bad decisions and instances of negligence in the sphere of the free media after 1989. Censorship was abolished relatively late – at the end of Tadeusz Mazowiecki's government. No deep reforms or new institutional solutions independent from the ruling political option were carried out in the public electronic media. The successive government did not support useful grassroot initiatives, e.g. the dialogue of the electronic media services' providers on the establishment of the Advertisement Code or Code of Good Practices. The authorities were not interested in studying the experiences or analyses of other countries regarding the questions of how the electronic media could work on commercial principles without simultaneously resigning from the public mission. Too much attention was paid to external pressure on the media, but not much was done to support journalistic independence in respect to editorial offices.

An example of success in the area of the press was the establishment of two independent opinion-making daily national newspapers: *Rzeczpospolita* and *Gazeta Wyborcza*. The former was established during martial law as a government newspaper, in a way autonomous of the communist party. The first issue of *Rzeczpospolita*, published in 1982, was in any consideration a regime newspaper. Tadeusz Mazowiecki's new government decided to change this situation as early as in 1989 and allowed a foreign majority shareholder to take over. In this way, *Rzeczpospolita* became an independent newspaper, with a moderate and pro-market political line, which was very popular among officials, managers, experts, etc. *Gazeta Wyborcza* was established on the basis of the round table talks resolutions, as a daily representing the Solidarity opposition during the election campaign of 1989. Most of its staff members were previously connected with the underground daily *Tygodnik Mazowsze*. It is one of the most popular newspapers: it has an average circulation of about 450,000 copies and about 5.5 million readers. From the beginning its editor in chief has been Adam Michnik.

The media in Poland are often accused of being partisan and expressing tacit and not so tacit support for particular political options. Yet, it has to be remembered that they have been guarding democracy and alarming the public opinion about its violations and abuses. Journalist investigations aimed at discovering different political pathologies, regardless of the political party involved, have been a very positive phenomenon. The event that consolidated this process beneficial for democracy consolidation was the disclosure of the so-called Rywin affair by *Gazeta Wyborcza* journalists – the scandal that involved many of the then ruling party politicians.

8. Citizen Participation

The success of the Polish transformation was possible mainly thanks to the agreement that the PZPR elite and the Solidarity opposition were able to reach with regard to the principles and fundamental values of the new Poland. The formation of a strong oppositional elite able to make a partner-like compromise with the communist authorities in 1989 was possible thanks to the huge citizen participation of Poles in 1980-1981, which was gradually declining throughout the years of martial law.

For a year and a half, Poles had an opportunity to learn democracy in practice as part of the Solidarity movement. In every large place of employment employees were choosing democratic representative authorities, creating the structures of the NSZZ Solidarity, choosing delegates for regional meetings, and holding internal discussions.[49] Solidarity was learning how to be a non-violent movement. The teachings of the Catholic Church and many non-violent movement leaders, such as Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King, were very helpful examples for Solidarity members.

Martial law introduced on the 13th of December 1981 and the subsequent delegalisation of Solidarity had a negative impact on Polish citizens' awareness. The military took over the power in the country.

The main centre co-ordinating the aid from the West was the Co-ordinating Office of the NSZZ Solidarity, established in July 1982 in Brussels. It soon became accredited by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and by the World Labour Confederation. These organisations also provided organisational and legal help for and funded the activity of the Office, headed by Jerzy Milewski. The Office kept in contact with underground Solidarity structures as well as with many foreign trade union headquarters. The Office's contacts with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Political Refugees, the International Red Cross, Amnesty International, etc. were very important. The Office was a source of information about the situation in Poland, published appeals and statements, organised actions and demonstrations in support of Solidarity, and what is more, transferred financial help to the country (see Table 3). One of its

[49] Interview with Henryk Wujec.

successes was helping to work out a common strategy with regard to the delegalisation of the NSZZ Solidarity among trade unions united in the main international confederations.

Table 3. Financial Aid for Poland Channelled through the Co-ordinating Office of the NSZZ Solidarity in Brussels (in thousands of US dollars)

Years	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Income	109.8	348.7	49.5	554.4	589.7	669.0
Expenses	10.0	61.9	256.7	614.8	571.8	487.3

Source: A. Friszke, Solidarność podziemna..., p. 110. In Hoover Institution. Poland. Dep. III, box 5. the Office Report titled "Financial Aid for the NSZZ Solidarity" from 3 August 1987.

The Office played one more important function. It supervised the activity of the Solidarity committees present in other countries. It tried to ensure that the contacts were limited to trade union activity and Solidarity representatives did not engage in official political activity. In this field only informal activities were allowed. As Bronisław Geremek noted in his letter to Zbigniew Bujak in 1985, the stronger the image of Solidarity as a trade union organisation was, the better its international position was. "When they hear report on martyrology, they are bored, when they hear about imprisonments, they compare it with Turkey, but when they learn that membership fees were collected and financial help was distributed, or that there was a protest against bad working conditions – then the TKK [Provisional Coordination Commission of the NSZZ Solidarity, the representative organ of the underground Solidarity] becomes their partner."[50]

The next issues to which Bronisław Geremek paid attention to was the creation of the sense of difference and even exceptionality of the situation in Poland in comparison to other states of the socialist bloc. "I believe that the strengthening of the Polish particularity, one of the elements of which is Solidarity, is the most fundamental element of any Polish foreign policy.…there is a common view among the international public that what happened on the 13th of December had to happen, and that Poland just came back to the Eastern European standard. And this is the function of my interview: to explain that it all could have been different, that Solidarity still exists, that Solidarity can be a political partner, and that Poland is and will be different from all others."[51]

[50] Archive of W. Kulerski 7/237. Letter from Gustaw [Bronisław Geremek] to Bogdan [Zbigniew Bujak] from 13 June 1985. In A. Friszke, *Solidarność podziemna...*, p. 103.
[51] Ibid.

Thus, it appears that the sources of international success of Solidarity, and later the support of the West for the systemic changes in 1989, were strong connotations with the workers' issues and the particularity of the Polish case against the background of the rest of the socialist bloc. Other opposition movements should act in a similar way – emphasise their particularity, and not just inform the world public opinion of human rights violations and democratic principles abuses. For such information public opinions are simply used. Another useful solution is the international institutionalisation of the opposition, in other words, entering international structures, getting special membership, etc.

During martial law, Solidarity implemented assistance from the West in an effective way. It was devoted to publishing activity, to supporting oppositionists who were fired because of their activity, and families of the interned activists. Polish historian Andrzej Friszke has noticed that "no widespread and active conspiracy can survive without external support. All great independence actions starting from the 19th century hoped for financial support from foreign friends, and often received it.[52]

Financial support for Solidarity during martial law came mainly from Western trade unions or through their intermediation. Annually it amounted to 450,000 US dollars. The largest share went through the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). According to different calculations, in 1983 and 1984 the AFL-CIO channelled about 200,000 US dollars each year to Solidarity, and 300,000 in 1985 and in 1986.[53]

An important source of assistance from the mid-1980s was the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) established by the US Congress on the initiative of President Ronald Reagan. The aim of the NED was to support democratic movements in the world, but the direct cause for its establishment was the wish to increase the support for Solidarity. It was mainly the money from the NED that the AFL-CIO was channelling to the underground Solidarity movement. According to different calculations the NED allocated about half a million US dollars for Solidarity in 1985-1986 (see Table 4).[54]

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[52] A. Friszke, *Solidarność podziemna...,* p. 109.
[53] Ibid, p. 110. In Hoover Institution. Poland. Dep. III, box 5. The Office Report titled "Financial Aid for the NSZZ Solidarity" from 3 August 1987. IPN 0582/261, t.1. Letter from Jurek [Milewski] to Adam [B. Lis] from 25 May 1984.
[54] Ibid, p. 111. To give an examples, Jerzy Milewski estimated that in total the NED donations to Solidarity channelled via the AFL-CIO amounted to 540,000 dollars.

Table 4. Funds Allocated for Solidarity by the NED, Selected Years (in US dollars)

Year	Amount	Main beneficiaries
1985	800,000	Co-ordination Office in Brussels, (300,000 via the AFL-CIO)
1986	842,000	Co-ordination Office in Brussels, (300,000 via the AFL-CIO) Polish American Congress (205,000) OKNO (100,000) and Helsinki Committee (5,000) Aurora Foundation (92,400) Freedom House (96,400) Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe (123,200) Polish Institute of Arts and Science of America (25,000)

Source: A. Friszke, Solidarność podziemna 1981 – 1989, ISP PAN, Warszawa 2006, p. 111

The assistance coming from Western European trade unions was relatively modest. The French headquarters provided equipment worth from several to several thousand US dollars annually, sent humanitarian escorts, organised assistance for those under repressions, and funded internships for several people from year to year. They signed contracts with many regions of Solidarity.

The Brussels Office was trying to co-ordinate and centralise the assistance granted by the West. It was important to keep Solidarity consolidated. Uncoordinated attempts to seek assistance by individual members of the Solidarity might, in the eyes of the leaders, strengthen tendencies to split. "Treating Solidarity just or predominantly as an idea will weaken the chances for the future for both the trade union and the society" – the Office advisors wrote. In a letter to Lech Wałęsa, Solidarity advisors wrote that

> People grouped in the union have more opportunities to influence the course of events, than when they are scattered.…Other groups, teams and independent centres may benefit from the existence of a union which, as the most important socio-political power, will cover them and pave the way for them.…Activities which seem to be accidental, uncoordinated, unprepared harm the reputation of Solidarity abroad. All actions that show ideological-organisational cohesion, on the other hand, considerably increase the authority of the trade union....If the inflow of equipment and especially financial help is centrally coordinated, it will be an instrument of cementing the loose, out of necessity, organisational forms of the union. If, on the contrary, the present state of affairs is continued, when different persons, centres, and groups gain equipment and money for Solidarity and manage them without consulting the central authorities of Solidarity – there may emerge disintegration tendencies.[55]

[55] Ibid, p. 113. In IPN 0582/264, t. 15, k.100. Letter from B. Cywiński, Z. Najder i K. Pomian to L. Wałęsa and the TKK, January 1986.

The Brussels Office decided that the couriers who transported money had to be foreign and not Polish citizens. One person carried from 5,000 to 10,000 US dollars. It was too dangerous to send a larger amount of money by one person. The system of money transfers was not always very efficient and confirmations from Poland came with delay. The coding of correspondence between the underground and Brussels never succeeded on a larger scale.

The Provisional Co-ordinating Commission tried to send money proportionally to all regions without concentrating too much in the capital. The largest amounts of money were allocated to charitable help and to purchase equipment (see Table 5). It is worth pointing out the fact that the underground Solidarity authorities were trying to undertake long-term activities that would bear fruit in the future. For example, they initiated scientific research on the state of the economy, the level of life, social issues, work security and hygiene, or environmental protection. They also planned to develop the local press and independent publishing houses. Self-education programmes were to be funded by the underground structures and participants themselves.

Table 5. Expenses of the Provisional Co-ordination Commission of the NSZZ Solidarity in 1986 (in US dollars).

No	Aim	Amount
1.	Subsidization of the regions (mainly cities)	90,000
2.	Purchase of equipment	150,000
3.	Funding Lech Wałęsa Office's activity	30,000
4.	Subsidisation of 30 smaller towns	90,000
5.	Assistance to farmers	10,000
6.	Charity (the interned)	100,000
7.	Support for external structures (workers' self-governments, school and student youth organisations)	30,000
8.	Reserve	30,000
	Total	530,000

Source: A. Friszke, Solidarność podziemna 1981-1989, ISP PAN, Warsaw 2006, pp. 115-116.

An important element of the activisation of the Polish society during martial law and counteraction to social apathy was the activity of the Catholic Church. The Church was trying to prevent isolation or exclusion of the interned persons or victims of repressions. It was important to prevent the situation known from the Stalinist era, when people were afraid to contact the regime victims. These people were considered to be "condemned," and any contact with them might have led to becoming

another victim. This fear also strengthened the authorities' conviction that repressions were effective and achieved the intended goal. The Catholic Church, through help for victims and interned persons tried first of all not to allow their exclusion. Political prisoners were not considered by the society as criminals, but as heroes, in a sense. They did not evoke negative feelings. The communist authorities soon noticed that the regime victims were not excluded from the society. There was no point in having more martyrs or in increasing their popularity.[56]

Martial law played a considerable role in weakening citizen participation in Poland. Many people decided to emigrate to the West because they did not see any prospects in their country. It was in the 1980s when there emerged a negative stereotype of Poles, who were contriving and earning their living in not entirely legal ways in the West. The changing political situation in the Soviet Union, as well as the strikes in 1988 did not inspire civic mobilisation of the same intensity as in 1980-1981.

Paradoxically enough, citizen participation, which had enabled the formation of the opposition elite that was strong enough to start a dialogue with the communist regime, was not needed anymore at the time of reforms. Citizens' passivity, in a way, suited the new government. The newly formed political parties were based on ideological differences and did not have the capacity to represent the interests of their electorates. As a result, after 1989 in Poland there was no major anti-modernisation backlash, which the architects of the reforms had anticipated.[57]

The absence of an active civil society obviously had a negative impact on the success of the ongoing processes during the successive phases of democratisation. Such a situation is well described in scientific literature – elites alone, without an active civil society, are not able to consolidate democracy.[58] It is only the civil society that can effectively limit abuses of power, as well as function as an arena for the formation of democratic participation skills and conflict mediations. It can mobilise citizens, aggregate and articulate their interests, provide future political leaders, give legitimacy to the political system, and monitor the truthfulness of the information presented by the media.[59] Poland, as well as other countries of the former socialist bloc, started to be corroded by the problems following from the absence of an active civil society, such as corruption, clientelism and apathy.

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[56] Interview with Halina Bortnowska.
[57] Interview with Professor Aleksander Smolar.
[58] See. L. Diamond, *Developing Democracy. Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1999, p. 218.
[59] Ibid, pp. 239-250.

Throughout the 1990s institutions from the United States, the European Union and its member states played an immense role in improving this situation. Thanks to external support, the emerging civil society in Poland had an opportunity to engage in various state issues and remain financially independent from it. The most important sources of funding were the USAID, George Soros' Foundation and the NED. The PHARE programme – started at the initiative of the G-7 states and co-ordinated by the EC Commission – from the very beginning has had special programmes for non-governmental organisations.[60]

This programme, like many other forms of assistance from the EU member-states, the United States or Canada, started to mobilise the Polish non-governmental sector. When comparing the assistance provided to Poland by the US and the EU, one could argue that the US aid was more focused on promoting democracy, whereas the EU assistance was rather aimed at technical issues and helping Poland meet the membership requirements.[61] Thanks to foreign grants Polish institutions started to carry out projects on citizen awareness, self-government, and a sense of tolerance; in other words, projects that help Poles respect the principles of democracy and the rule of law. Nonetheless, the development of civil society in Poland had been negatively affected by low social capital, which is not only directly correlated with the socio-economic development of the state, but also influences democratic consolidation, as many studies have shown.[62]

As time was passing, American programmes and institutions promoting democracy started to withdraw from Poland due to the satisfactory results of their activity. However, despite the advancement of the integration between Poland and the EU, non-governmental organisations found it difficult to fill the void and keep up their activity. Re-adjustment to the EU support required time and investment in professional staff, which not all NGOs could afford.

Some Polish NGOs re-orientated their activities towards programmes promoting democracy in the post-Soviet zone and/or Balkans, successfully applying skills developed during the early days of democratic consolidation

[60] See Klon/Jawor Association, *Trzeci Sektor w Unii Europejskiej. Przewodnik dla organizacji pozarządowych [*The *Third Sector in the European Union. A Guidebook for NGOs]*, Warsaw 2003, p. 349.

[61] Special attention should be paid to the unrepayable assistance provided to the Polish government by the governments of the EU member states, the US, Canada and other countries as well as international financial institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund). Repayable assistance was granted by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank and the World Bank. Both forms of assistance covered humanitarian aims (until 1993) and EU integration support. More in T. Schimanek, *Wybrane aspekty bezzwrotnej pomocy zagranicznej dla Polski [Selected Aspects of the Foreign Unrepayable Assistance for Poland]* the IPA Report, Warsaw 2003.

[62] P. Norris, *Democratic Phoenix. Reinventing Political Activism*, Cambridge University Press 2002, p. 164.

or even as democratic opposition. Some donors (e.g. PAUCI, the British government) developed grant programmes to support such a reorientation. Another adjustment strategy of Polish NGOs has been the organisation of co-operation networks with international partners with the support of the Council of Europe, the European Union and other international organisations. The creation of strong supra-national advocacy groups supporting the European integration process and the watchdog organisations monitoring the activities of national authorities helps to consolidate democracy in the new member states, including Poland.

Key Conclusions

- The widespread international appeal of the Solidarity movement was related to its combination of the struggle for democracy and human rights with its defence of social justice and workers' rights. This helped Solidarity activists to elicit support from across the entire political spectrum from left to right as well as gain sympathy of intellectuals and artists who are otherwise reluctant to be involved in "politics."
- The economic correlations of the Polish People's Republic with the West economically – through a system of loans – proved to be very important. The unpaid debts led to the weakening of the Polish economy and consequently of the authorities. In this way, paradoxically enough, the granting of loans by Western countries forced the PZPR to open negotiations with the democratic opposition.
- The Catholic Church had a generally positive impact on the attitudes of the Polish society both prior to and during the transition negotiations. It served as a mediator trusted by both sides as well as promoted peaceful and conciliatory attitudes and resisted calls for retribution upon the communist regime representatives.
- Pro-democratic attitudes among the Polish political elites (both post-Solidarity and post-communist) were rooted in their positive attitude towards the Western democratic system and market economy. The Fulbright scholarships granted to young party activists, academics and experts were an important factor in creating this favourable image of the West .
- The meetings of Polish opposition leaders with Western politicians and foreign embassy representatives contributed to the legitimacy of the former on the international political arena. Such attention from the West also increased their visibility both at home and abroad and helped to marginalise radical attitudes.
- The establishment by the communist authorities of 'façade" institutions meant to give legitimacy to the PRL, such as the Constitutional Tribunal and the Office of Ombudsman, had unexpected positive consequences for the development of democracy and rule of law. In 1986, well before the round table agreement, the Constitutional Tribunal issued its first decision that went against the expectations of the communist government.
- Polish underground publishing houses and independent press were not only a source of information for the public at large, but also "a living space" for many intellectuals, who did not have to collaborate with the regime in order to publish their artistic or scientific works.

- During martial law, underground Solidarity members used foreign financial assistance not only for everyday needs (support for the families of the interned, charitable help), but also for long-term projects, such as research or self-study programmes. This experience turned out to be exceptionally useful at the time of systemic transformation.
- The legality of Polish elections after 1989 has never been questioned. This was possible thanks to institutional solutions – such as the establishment of the National Electoral Commission or the engagement of judges into the electoral process – which guaranteed independence and an apolitical character of the electoral process.
- Thanks to the openness and assistance from the West, the Polish Army started a gradual integration into the Euroatlantic structures. The United States and Europe began to invite Polish generals for study visits. This helped to avoid a possible revival of nationalistic tendencies and politisation of the Army. As a result, the apolitical character of the Army was not threatened thanks to the watchful attitude of the parliamentary opposition and the influence of Western allies.
- The activities aimed at the police reform were focused mainly on its depolitisation. The 1990 law prevented active members of the police force from being members in political parties. Despite apparently going against their citizen rights – given the social context of that period – this solution proved adequate.
- All ministers responsible for the military and internal affairs were excessively focused on gaining full control of the special services, while neglecting reforms of other structures. It appears that this exaggerated attention from the side of the new elites was the effect of the syndrome of liberation from the communist police state.
- The role of the Constitutional Court was very important in the process of the democratisation of the state. Since the process of the development and passing of the new Constitution was very long, in the meantime the Constitutional Tribunal exercised a kind of "creative" interpretation of the existing general rules, adopting them to the new democratic reality.
- The relative weakness of the civil society and low citizen participation after 1989 remain as one of the greatest setbacks of the Polish democratic transformation. Until today the problems of corruption, clientelism, and low electoral turnout corrode the public life in Poland. In this respect, Poland is no different from other Central and Eastern European states. It seems that the decision of major international donors to withdraw from Central Europe prior to EU enlargement had been premature. It will take some time before these countries develop fully mature democratic regimes impervious to populist and authoritarian backlash.

Biographical Notes

Krzysztof Bobiński is an expert at the Polish Institute for International Affairs (PISM). He was the *Financial Times* correspondent during martial law.

Halina Bortnowska is a journalist and human rights activist, connected with many Catholic movements and organisations. She was the secretary of the editorial office of *Znak* monthly in the period 1960-1983, an animator of religious education for adults in Nowa Huta (1970-1983), an advisor to Solidarity (1980-1989), a member of the Citizens Committee with Lech Wałęsa, and co-founder of ROAD (Ruch Obywatelski Akcja Demokratyczna – Democratic Action Civic Movement) and the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights.

Ryszard Bugaj is a founding member and leader of the Union of Labour (initially the Labour Party). He was a Solidarity activist. In 1968 he took part in student protests against the banning of the "Dziady" theatre production. From 1980 he was engaged in Solidarity's activities. After 1989 he was a member of the Sejm for many years.

Jerzy Eisler is a professor of history at the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences, lecturer of the University of Warsaw, and an expert on contemporary French history. He is a researcher at the Institute for National Remembrance and the director of the Warsaw department of the INR.

Bronisław Geremek is a professor of history and member of the EP. He was an opposition activist, advisor to Solidarity, and a participant of the round table negotiations. He became involved in the social protest of Gdańsk workers in August 1980 and was one of the experts of the emerging NSZZ Solidarity. After the introduction of martial law he was interned to be released the same year. He co-operated closely with Lech Wałęsa and was an adviser to the delegalised Solidarity. He was a foreign affairs minister from 1997 to 2000, and a member of the Sejm from 1989. Professor Geremek was a founding member and leader of the Democratic Union (later the Freedom Union) for many years. He has been awarded with the Order of White Eagle.

Mirosława Grabowska is a sociologist and a researcher at the Institute of Sociology of Warsaw University and the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. She is a founding member of the Institute for the Study on the Foundations of Democracy and editor of the underground Political Quarterly *Krytyka* (1982-1989). She is the author of many books and articles.

Lena Kolarska-Bobińska is a professor of sociology and director of the Institute of Public Affairs. From 1970 to 1991 she was a researcher at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and from 1991 to 1997 she was a member of many Polish and international professional organisations and advisory bodies including the Advisory Committee on Social and Human Sciences of the European Commission. From 2001 to 2005 she was a member of the Council for Socio-economic Strategy, Cabinet of Ministers and the Presidential Reflection Group.

Ewa Łętowska is a professor of law and a Constitutional Tribunal judge. She was the first Ombudsman (1987-1992). From 1999 to 2002 she was a Supreme Administrative Court judge; a correspondent member of the Polish Academy of Skills, Académie de Droit Comparé in Paris as well as the International Commission of Jurists (Geneva). Professor Łętowska was awarded with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Restitution of Poland. She is the author of 19 books on civil and constitutional law and more than 300 articles and studies.

Janusz Onyszkiewicz is Deputy President of the European Parliament and also a mountaineer. He was an opposition activist, an active participant of the demonstration in support of the freedom of speech and science, and one of the co-founders of Solidarity in the Mazowsze region. He received his PhD in Mathematics from Warsaw University. In 1981-1989 he was a member of the presidium of the National Committee of the NSZZ Solidarity and the press spokesman for the Solidarity. During martial law he was arrested. He took part in the round table talks. After 1989 he was a member of the Sejm and the Minister for National Defence (1992-1993 and 1997-2000).

Mieczysław Rakowski is a journalist and historian. He was Prime Minister from 1988 to 1989 and the last secretary of the KC PZPR. He was the editor in chief of *Polityka* weekly from 1958 to 1982. He also co-organised the round table negotiations.

Janusz Reykowski is a professor of psychology and the founder of the Institute of the Polish Psychology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He co-

chaired the "political table" during the round table talks from the side of the government. He won (as the second in history European) the *Nevitt Stanford Award for International Society of Political Psychology* (2000). From 2003 he has been the chair of the Programme Council of the Warsaw School of Social Psychology.

Adam Rotfeld is a professor of human sciences, an expert in international relations, and former minister of foreign affairs (2005). He worked at the Polish Institute of International Affairs (1961-1989) and took part in the works of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as a member of the Polish delegation. In 1991 he became the director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). In 2000 he became a member of the National Security Council. He is the author of more than 300 scientific publications.

Ferdynand Rymarz is a lawyer, a retired judge of the Constitutional Tribunal and the chair of the National Electoral Commission. He was a deputy prosecutor general of the Polish Republic from 1992 to 1993. He is the author of many publications on law and history of the region. He was awarded with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Restitution of Poland.

Marek Safjan is a professor of law, judge, the chair of the Constitutional Tribunal, and member of the Helsinki Committee in Poland. He was the director of the Institute of Civil Law of the University of Warsaw (1993-1996). He is the author of about 200 scientific publications on civil law, medical law, European law and constitutional law.

Aleksander Smolar is a political scientist and journalist. In 1971-1989 as a political emigrant he lived in Italy, Great Britain and France. He was co-founder and editor in chief of Aneks, a political quarterly from 1974 to 1990. From 1989 to1990 he was a political advisor to Prime Minister Mazowiecki and a foreign policy advisor to Prime Minister Suchocka from 1992 to 1993. Since 1990 he has been the Chair of the Board of Stefan Batory Foundation (George Soros' network). He is also a senior research fellow of the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS).

Eugeniusz Smolar is a journalist. As an opposition activist, during his emigration years he supported the activity of the KOR, Solidarity, and other circles of the democratic opposition, as well as underground publishing houses. He was a co-founder of Aneks, a political quarterly. For many years he was the director of the Polish section of the BBC radio station in London.

After returning to Poland, he became the Director for Programming of the Polish Radio (2002-2004). Today he is the chair of a Polish think-tank called the Centre for International Relations.

Andrzej Wielowieyski is a former Senator. In the 1980s he was a secretary of the Catholic Intelligentsia Club (KIK) in Warsaw, a participant of the round table negotiations, and adviser to Solidarity. He was a deputy speaker of the Senate from 1989 to 1991 and a Member of the Sejm from 1991 to 2000 (Democratic Union, later the Freedom Union). Today he is a member of the national authorities of the Democratic Party – democraci.pl and the Euro-Atlantic Association.

Henryk Wujec is a member of the national authorities of the Democratic Party – democraci.pl. He was an opposition activist (Catholic Intelligentsia Club – from 1962, the Workers' Defence Committee, and Solidarity). During martial law he was interned and later imprisoned. He was a member and a secretary of the Citizens' Committee with the Chair of the NSZZ Solidarity Lech Wałęsa (1987-1990), and he took part in the round table negotiations in the trade unions' pluralism team. After 1989 he was a member of the Sejm for many years and a member of the political council of the Freedom Union.

Andrzej Zarębski is a journalist and media expert. He was a journalist in Gdańsk and an opposition activist involved in the activity of the Press Information Office of the NSZZ Solidarity. After the end of the round table talks he was a journalist of T*ygodnik Powszechny* in Gdańsk and the head of the political section of *Tygodnik Gdański*. In 1991 he was a press spokesman for Jan Krzysztof Bielecki's government, a member of the Sejm from 1991 to 1993, and a member of the National Radio and Television Broadcasting Council from 1993 to 1999.

Jerzy Zimowski is a lawyer. He was a Solidarity activist. After 1989 he was the secretary of state at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, responsible for the reform of the police. From 1990 to 1996 he was a deputy minister for internal affairs.

Jacek Żakowski is a journalist. During martial law he worked at the Press Information Office of the NSZZ Solidarity, for *Na Przełaj* weekly and *Tygodnik Powszechny*. After 1989 he was a spokesperson for the Citizens' Parliamentary Club (OKP) and the first president of the Polish Information Agency. He was also a co-founder and a journalist of the *Gazeta Wyborcza*. He is the author of television and radio programmes as well as books, and he has won many awards and honours. Today he is a commentator for *Polityka* weekly.

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Jarosław Ćwiek-Karpowicz (1981) – a political scientist and analyst at the Institute of Public Affair. He graduated from the Department of Journalism and Political Science of Warsaw University. He also studied at Lomonosov University in Moscow and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Science-Po) in Strasbourg. He is now a PhD student at the Institute of Political Sciences of Warsaw University. His book "Europejskie oblicze Rosji. Stosunek rosyjskiej elity politycznej do Unii Europejskiej" *[European Faces of Russia. The Attitude of Russian Elites Towards the European Union]* will be published soon.

Piotr Maciej Kaczyński (1978) – political scientist, researcher and analyst at the Institute of Public Affairs. He graduated from the Department of Journalism and Political Science of Warsaw Univerity and the College of Europe. His scientific interests include the foreign and external policy of the EU and the member states, the political integration of the EU, trans-Atlantic co-operation and human rights issues. As a co-editor, he has recently published a book entitled "Bridges across the Atlantic? Attitudes of Poles, Czechs and Slovaks towards the United States". He is also a member of the steering committee of Babel International and a commentator on contemporary political and social issues for the Polish and foreign media.

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