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Communism and communists towards the intelligentsia in interwar Poland. An outline of the issue *

In 1937, the Catholic Bookshop and Press S.A. of Katowice published a work by Rev. Dr Stefan Wyszyński, entitled *Intelligentsia in the Vanguard of Communism*, in which the author dedicated more than 140 pages to examine the attitudes of the intellectual elites of the state towards the communist idea and the communists themselves, as well as discussed how the communists approached the intelligentsia¹. Such a title almost automatically raises questions about whether Rev. Wyszyński's eponymous thesis reflected the actual state of the intelligentsia of the Second Republic or whether it was a very subjective view of the problem, which overestimated the scale of the phenomenon. What were the ideological and political foundations of the communist influence on the intelligentsia; was it really an ally of the Bolsheviks in Russia and then the communists in interwar Poland? Did they see it as an ally of their revolutionary designs?

Leaving aside Rev. Wyszyński's work, which serves here merely as a point of introduction to the scientific discourse, one should attempt to define the foundations of such interactions and delineate the basics and the complexity of the communists' own policies towards the intelligentsia. Consequently, one may be able to answer whether the intelligentsia was a subject or no more than an object of the communist party's activities. Obviously, in terms of research, it remains somewhat of a challenge to identify and use representative benchmarks which could provide answers to this and other questions, including the general position adopted by the intelligentsia towards the communists. For these reasons, this study cannot give a comprehensive overview of the problem, and, given its complexity and multi-faceted nature, it does not aspire to do so. It only attempts

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¹ See: S. Wyszyński, *Inteligencja w straży przedniej komunizmu*, Katowice 1937, passim.

to draw attention to the attitude of the communists towards the intelligentsia. This article aims to examine the mutual relationship between communists and the intelligentsia while taking into account that the former were an organized group under the supervision of the Comintern, and the latter were a diverse and fragmented community that did not have a unified stance on communism. This analysis is based on careful research and primary sources.

The essential goal of the communists was to reify the communist system, primarily by way of revolution², which guaranteed the consequent dictatorship of the proletariat³. These are indisputable facts and, apparently, widely known in scientific discourse. In reborn Poland, the initiatives thus oriented did not yield the results that the communists had expected. In those circumstances, especially after the defeat of Tukhachevsky's army near Warsaw and then in the battle on the Niemen, the communists were forced to modify their strategy of propagating the communist idea, and thereby Moscow's imperialism. Until then, the social base of the communist party's activity had been largely confined to the working class, partly to the rural population – including smallholders and landless peasants – as well as manor laborer's in particular. Other social and professional groups were relatively poorly represented in the communist party structures. That disparity was also evident in the programmatic thought of the communists, including the so-called "Polish" communist party, although that did not mean that the question of the intelligentsia was completely absent from their ideological and political concepts, quite the contrary. It resonated quite strongly in the writings of Lenin, Trotsky and other leaders

² On the idea of the communist revolution see: S. Grabski, *Rewolucja: studjum społeczno-psychologiczne*, Warszawa 1921; W. Lenin, *Zadania proletariatu w naszej Rewolucji. Projekt Platformy Partii Proletariackiej*, [in:] idem, *Dziela wybrane*, vol. II, Warsaw 1949, pp. 16–45.

³ *Program i statut Międzynarodówki Komunistycznej*, Moscow 1929, p. 43. Although in their internal deliberations on dictatorship the Bolsheviks defined it only as a transitional form of workers' power on the road to making communism real (see: N. Bukharin, Y. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism. A Popular Explanation of the Program of the Communist Party of Russia*, part 1: *Theoretical. Growth and Decay of Capitalism*, transl. by Eden and Cedar Paul, The Communist Party of Great Britain 1922, pp. 39–40; N. Bukharin, Y. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism. A Popular Explanation of the Program of the Communist Party of Russia*, part 2: *Practical. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Upbuilding of Communism*, The Communist Party of Great Britain 1922, p. 11), that expedient did not preclude the essential element of the Bolshevik undertakings, namely terror. Terror, introduced as a mainstay of communist rule, was to accompany not only the outbreak of revolution or civil war, but above all safeguard the new governments against the threat of counter-revolution, potentially staged by the intelligentsia as well; see: *Tezy i rezolucje VI Kongresu Międzynarodówki Komunistycznej*, issue 1; *Manifest Kongresu i tezy o sytuacji międzynarodowej*, Moscow 1929, pp. 37–40; N. Bucharin, *Program Komunistów (bolszewików)*, Moscow 1920, p. 14. On the instruction for the civil war see: H. Glass, *Obrona Polski przed bolszewizmem*, Płock 1928, pp. 28–33 (also "Walka z bolszewizmem" 1928, issue 7, pp. 28–33); S. Jankowski [H. Glass], *Metody ekspansji komunizmu. Dzieje ukształtowania systemu w latach 1919–1939*, London 1982, pp. 199–202; A. Rock [H. Glass], *Mein Kampf Józefa Stalina*, ed. K. Sacewicz, Białystok–Warsaw 2020, pp. 67–98; K. Sacewicz, *Komunizm i antykomunizm w II Rzeczypospolitej: państwo – społeczeństwo – partie*, Olsztyn 2016, pp. 102–103; idem, *Rewolucja komunistyczna i dyktatura proletariatu w świetle publikacji Centralnego Porozumienia Organizacji Współdziałających w Zwalczaniu Komunizmu – zarys problemu*, "Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość" 2017, vol. 2(30), pp. 65–84.

of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Third Communist International and thus influenced the attitudes of vassal sections of the Comintern, such as the CWPP-CPP. Numerous theses defining the intelligentsia were formulated even before the outbreak of the Great War and in the first months after the Bolshevik coup. Consequently, formed in December 1918, the CWPP already had much to draw on in terms of its political course, especially after it had joined the Comintern and become completely, even absolutely subservient to the Moscow headquarters and its decision-makers.

In the official interpretation of their idea and political concept, the Bolsheviks of Russia did not consider the intelligentsia as a partner, which by default made them a hostile force, let alone neutral. Moreover, they asserted “utter alienation of the intelligentsia with respect to the workers’ movement”⁴ which, as Leo Trotsky stressed, was due to the fact that the intelligentsia did “not understand socialism”. Hence, prior to the outbreak of the world war, the leadership of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (Bolsheviks) and the later Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) did not see any chance of winning over the broad masses of the intelligentsia to the idea of social democracy and subsequent Bolshevism. It was even noted that the representatives of the intelligentsia who had joined the movement in its early “childhood” years, would later abandon it⁵. Furthermore, one emphasized a special “spiritual bond” between the intelligentsia and the ruling class, which apparently made potential support for “collectivism” among the intelligentsia negligible⁶. In Trotsky’s opinion, the shape of society’s intellectual elite would have to undergo a radical change for them to be willing to walk side-by-side with the working masses. In this respect, he drew attention, e.g. to the existence of universities, places where new cadres would be forged. At the time, he pronounced them to be “to be the last stage in the state-organized education of the sons of the possessing and ruling classes, just as barracks are the final educational institution for the young generation of workers and peasants”⁷. For that reason, the future founder of the Red Army assumed in 1910 that an ideological offensive at universities would make it possible to educate and produce new elites⁸. It would follow that Trotsky did not reject the intelligentsia but treated it as a social sphere

⁴ L. Trocki, *Inteligencja a socjalizm*, “Świat Współczesny” 1910, <https://www.marxists.org/polski/trocki/1910/intelsoc.htm> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

⁵ “The biggest influx of intellectuals into the socialist movement – and this applies to all countries in Europe – took place in the first period of the party’s existence, when it was still in its childhood. This first wave brought with it the most outstanding theoreticians and politicians of the International. The more European Social Democracy grew, the bigger the mass of workers that was united around it, the weaker (not only relatively but absolutely) has the influx of fresh elements from the intelligentsia become” (ibidem).

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ “If collectivism is at all capable of mastering his [student’s, young intellectual’s] mind, now is the moment, and it will indeed do it through the nobly scientific character of its basis and the comprehensive cultural content of its aims, not as a poisaic ‘knife and fork’ question” (ibidem).

which was highly uncertain ideologically, even enigmatic⁹, and therefore dangerous to the Bolshevik cause. He found it required a radical renewal, even a bloody reconstruction of the mindset, ideology, and teaching faculty.

Nevertheless, it was not Trotsky's position but Lenin's interpretation which determined the communists' course towards the intelligentsia. Lenin explicitly argued that there existed a certain type of intelligentsia which constituted a hostile element and, therefore, must be liquidated, whereby he referred to the "bourgeois intelligentsia". This rather broad concept allowed the Bolsheviks to qualify any member of the intelligentsia as such whenever they wanted or required and then subject them to planned elimination. For Lenin, those were saboteurs¹⁰, allies of the exploiters¹¹, sources of counter-revolution¹² and brakes or compromisers¹³, who made up the system of the bourgeois intelligentsia, and yet the revolution that the Bolsheviks were striving for did not admit compromises¹⁴. Thus, striking at the intelligentsia, as thus perceived, was a matter of course for Lenin and his followers. Moreover, in March 1918, he observed that one of the achievements of the first period of internal war in Russia was suppressing passive resistance, i.e. "the

⁹ L. Trotsky, *O inteligencji*, "Kijewska myśl", 4 III 1912, no. 64; 12 III 1912, no. 72, <https://www.marxists.org/polski/trocki/1912/03/o inteligencji.htm> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

¹⁰ W. Lenin, *Przemówienie na Pierwszym Wschechrosyjskim Kongresie Marynarki Wojennej 22 XI 1917*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-inteligencyu-lenin-ob-inteligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

¹¹ "The intelligentsia are using their experience and knowledge – the highest human achievement – in the service of the exploiters, and are doing all they can to prevent our gaining victory over the exploiters; their efforts will cause the death of hundreds of thousands from starvation, but that will not break the resistance of the toilers" – W. Lenin, *IV konferencja związków zawodowych i komitetów fabrycznych Moskwy. 27 VI 1918*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-inteligencyu-lenin-ob-inteligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

¹² "What is the 'nutritive medium' which engenders counter-revolutionary activities, outbreaks, conspiracies and so forth we know full well. The medium is the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois intelligentsia, the kulaks in the countryside, and, everywhere, the 'non-party' public, as well as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. We must redouble, we must increase tenfold our watch over this medium" – W. Lenin, *Wszyscy do walki z Denikinem! 9 VII 1919*, [in:] <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-inteligencyu-lenin-ob-inteligencii-ty/> [last access: 11.07.2022].

¹³ W. Lenin, *O inteligencji. Wybór*, Warsaw 1984, pp. 145–148; idem, *Przemówienie o nacjonalizacji banków na posiedzeniu Wschechrosyjskiego Centralnego Komitetu Wykonawczego, 16 XII 1917*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-inteligencyu-lenin-ob-inteligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

¹⁴ "These intellectualist howls about the suppression of capitalist resistance are actually nothing but an echo of the old 'conciliation', to put it in a 'genteel' manner. Putting it with proletarian bluntness, this means: continued kowtowing to the money-bags is what lies behind the howls against the present working-class coercion now being applied (unfortunately, with insufficient pressure or vigour) against the bourgeoisie, the saboteurs and counter-revolutionaries [...] These spineless hangers-on of the bourgeoisie with intellectualist pretensions are quite 'prepared' to wade into the water provided they do not get their feet wet. [...] The drooping intellectuals are terrified when the bourgeoisie and the civil servants, employees, doctors, engineers, etc., who have grown accustomed to serving the bourgeoisie, go to extremes in their resistance. They tremble and utter even shriller cries about the need for a return to "conciliation". Like all true friends of the oppressed class, we can only derive satisfaction from the exploiters' extreme measures of resistance, because we do not expect the proletariat to mature for power in an atmosphere of cajoling and persuasion, in a school of mealy sermons or didactic declamations, but in the school of life and struggle" – W. Lenin, *Przestraszony upadkiem starego i walką o nowe, 24–27 XII 1917*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-inteligencyu-lenin-ob-inteligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

sabotage of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia”¹⁵. However, Lenin himself by no means underestimated the role of the intelligentsia and, simultaneously, the fact that it was not represented within the party. The Bolshevik achievements during the civil war and wartime communism showed that – as Stalin would say many years later – the “cadres decide everything”. Such cadres were not yet there, which brought about the economic and civilizational disaster of Bolshevik Russia. This is why in the so-called transitional period, Lenin underscored the need to rely on specialists – the intelligentsia – noting that “we have bourgeois experts and nothing else. We have no other bricks with which to build. Socialism must triumph, and we socialists and Communists must prove by deeds that we are capable of building socialism with these bricks, with this material”¹⁶. He even questioned the value of some of the revolutionary base by calling them “thieves” and added, “that a revolution cannot be made with the help of thieves, cannot be made without the intelligentsia. This is a completely sick psychology, acutely aggravated in the environment of embittered bourgeois intellectuals. Everything is being done to draw the intelligentsia (the non-white guard intelligentsia) into the struggle against the thieves. And month-by-month, the Soviet Republic acquires a growing percentage of bourgeois intellectuals who are sincerely helping the workers and peasants, not merely grumbling and spitting fury”¹⁷.

This was, however, a tactical measure informed by an appraisal of the current situation, and in no way did it change Lenin’s attitude toward the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia. As he observed in a letter of September 1919 to M. Gorky, that intelligentsia put themselves higher on a pedestal than the intellectual forces of the workers and peasants, considering themselves “the brains of the nation”, while actually being “not the brains, but shit”¹⁸.

The intelligentsia was something Lenin needed; their competencies compelled a certain cohabitation of which he was aware. Even with the Bolshevik policy of terror he himself headed, Lenin denounced the unsophisticated course of action towards the intelligentsia, which distinguished him from the later actions of Stalin, for whom the fight against the intelligentsia – of the old variety – was something of a personal feud. Although their tactics differed, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin coincided in their views on the strategic approach to the intelligentsia. The goal was revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat,

¹⁵ Idem, *Natychniastowe zadania władzy sowieckiej, 23–28 III 1918*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-intelligenciyu-lenin-ob-intelligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

¹⁶ Idem, *Sukcesy i trudności władzy radzieckiej, 17 IV 1919*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-intelligenciyu-lenin-ob-intelligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

¹⁷ Idem, *Dziela*, vol. 35: *luty 1912 – grudzień 1922*, Warsaw 1957, p. 394; idem, *List do A.M. Gorkiego, 31 VII 1919*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-intelligenciyu-lenin-ob-intelligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

¹⁸ Idem, *List do A.M. Gorkiego, 15 IX 1919*, <https://dwax.ru/pl/kak-lenin-nazval-intelligenciyu-lenin-ob-intelligencii-ty/> (accessed: 11 VII 2022).

and they needed the intelligentsia insofar as it could ensure that the revolution was carried out, the new order created and sustained through the formation of a new human, the *homo sovieticus*. Everything was geared towards that one end.

The revolutionary steamroller was to be bloody and brutal as it obliterated the old order, including the intelligentsia. Such a narrative was evident in the communist rhetoric not only before the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia or during the years of internal war but also afterwards¹⁹.

The approach of the leaders of the Bolshevik party, and subsequently Soviet Russia, was broadcast to the party rank and file in the country and, through the Comintern, to its other sections. The postulations originating in Kremlin were not confined to the Soviet territory since, through the efforts of communist parties such as the CWPP-CPP, they sought to influence socio-political events in other countries, preparing them for the revolutionary situation.

A cursory review of communist writings reveals that the working classes constituted the main nucleus (center) around which the entire concept of the so-called social liberation was constructed; they were the sole force which would enable the revolutionary uprising and its further formation towards communism. In those political and tactical frameworks, the place of the intelligentsia was very limited, if not marginal. Discussing the social forces of the revolution in their *ABC of Communism*, Nikolai Bukharin and Yevgeni Preobrazhensky stated that, in fact, the working class was exclusively capable of social revolt because “it has nothing to lose but their chains”²⁰. In the opinion of the Bolshevik doctrinaires – who paradoxically often happened to originate from the intellectual class – other social and professional groups, including the intelligentsia, were too uncertain and noncommittal an element, given the prospect of bloody class struggle, and therefore possessed minor revolutionary potential²¹. Admittedly, one recognized the

¹⁹ According to the Comintern programme, the revolution pursued by the dictatorship of the proletariat must invariably be a struggle, a “stubborn fight – bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, pedagogical and administrative – against the forces and traditions of the old society, against external capitalist enemies, against the remnants of the exploiting classes within the country, against the upshoots of the new bourgeoisie that spring up on the basis of still prevailing commodity production” – *Program i statut...*, p. 74 (see also: *Stenograficzeskij otziet VI Kongressa Kominternu*, [in:] 6: *Tiezisy, riezolucyi, postanowlenija, wozzwanija*, Moscow–Leningrad 1929, p. 32; *Programma i ustaw Komunistycznego Internacyonalu*, Moscow 1937, p. 39; *The programme of the Communist International. Together with the statutes of the Communist International*, London 1932, p. 52; *The communist conspiracy. Strategy and tactics of world communism*, part 1: *Communism outside the United States, section C: The world congresses of the communist international*, Washington 1956, pp. 204–205. The programme of the RCP(B) asserted that communists are “advocates of revolutionary violence” as they pursue the idea of socialist revolution, while any revolution means “overpowering the masters” – N. Bucharin, op. cit., p. 12.

²⁰ N. Bukharin, Y. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC...*, part 1, p. 89.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 90, states e.g. that “the aim of this party should be to bring about the communist revolution. To this end, the proletarian party must be absolutely uncompromising. Its function is not to chaffer with the bourgeoisie, but to hurl the bourgeoisie from power and to crush the resistance of the capitalists”.

possibility of having the so-called lower intelligentsia²² as well as the “urban petty bourgeoisie” involved, but it was emphasized that such groups were highly atomized and diverse. Moreover, in spite of being considerably exploited by capitalists, they appeared to be little aware of the fact, confining their social aspirations to achieving professional and social advancement while increasing their own financial standing and did not concern themselves with the radical revolutionary reconstruction so desired by the Bolsheviks²³. Thus, according to the authors of *The ABC of Communism*, they have more in common with their exploiters rather than the interests and goals of the working class²⁴.

Thus, the programmatically and propagandistically proletarian nature of the communist movement diminished the role and significance that the intelligentsia might have played as its part. At most, the intelligentsia were to be re-socialized in the spirit of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Such solutions had been hinted at earlier by Lenin and Trotsky. Still, the primary task that the communists set out to accomplish was to create or design and produce their own intelligentsia in line with the guidelines of the Bolshevik program. *The ABC of Communism* spoke of the school as a “tool of communist education” which should be utilized in propaganda and indoctrination campaigns²⁵. The Bolsheviks took the same position with regard to higher education and the academic staff, who were described as a “relic”. It was stressed that the universities educated young people who had already been formed by the “bourgeois schools”, and should therefore be staffed with new, “original” faculty who – as Bukharin and Preobrazhensky asserted – “may not perhaps attain the standard of the ‘learned specialists of bourgeois society’, but who will be fully competent to effect the necessary revolution in the teaching of the social sciences, and will be able to expel bourgeois culture from its last refuge”²⁶. In doing so, they planned to modify not only the composition of university departments but above all the student body, in which the “working class” would ultimately predominate²⁷.

At the same time, the communists made a distinction between the academic intelligentsia, which could be used to establish a communist state, and those who were not so much superfluous as harmful to such an aspiration. The first group comprised the

²² That peculiar term denoted e.g. lower-ranking state officials or graduates of secondary school.

²³ In this regard, Bukharin finds that they dream of becoming “gentlemen” themselves, just as the former capitalists – N. Bukharin, Y. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC...*, part 1, p. 87.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ “It is natural, therefore, that the urban proletariat, having seized power, should use it primarily to this end, that it may raise all the backward strata of the working population to the requisite level of communist consciousness. [...] The task of the new communist schools is to impose upon bourgeois and petty-bourgeois children a proletarian mentality. [...] The communist school must effect the same revolutionary overthrow of bourgeois society, must effect the same expropriation, that the Soviet Power has effected in the economic sphere by the nationalization of the means of production” – N. Bukharin, Y. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC...*, part 2, pp. 232–233.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 239.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 239; A.R.K. Keller, *Komunizm*, Warsaw 1926, p. 136.

technical intelligentsia: the specialized engineering cadres²⁸, while the second included representatives of the humanities and social sciences²⁹.

The communists' approach to the intelligentsia was unequivocally evinced in the 1920 program of the RCP(B) and its prominent principle of "bread only for the working people"³⁰, by means of which its authors intended to deal a blow to saboteurs and destroyers, i.e. "the Russian intelligentsia"³¹. This was one of the elements of the communist struggle for people's minds in order to shape its new intellectual elites and thus effectively carry out and consolidate the "achievements" of political indoctrination.

The conceptual approach concerning the role and significance of the intelligentsia and its purpose in revolutionary action, including its subordination – or, in fact, developing a communist model of that stratum – was articulated in the platform of the Comintern, adopted at the Fifth Congress of the International in 1928. Among other things, the document characterized the transition period from capitalism to socialism, including the dictatorship of the proletariat, and described broadly understood "expropriation of the expropriators". There, one of the pertinent subsections, namely "means of ideological influence" states, e.g. the necessity for "the utilization of the nationalized means of 'intellectual production' for the most extensive political and general education of the toilers and for the building up of a new socialist culture on a proletarian class basis"³². This meant not only total control of the publishing market and its distribution but also thorough supervision of cinematography, theatres, and all forms of artistic and cultural activity in general³³. Such measures would ensure not so much an increased influence as an utter hegemony of the political and social communication from the communists and the new "intellectual elites" they produced, which in practice translated into the "means of ideological influence"³⁴.

The program of the Comintern reveals that the leadership of the communist movement was aware that the intelligentsia were under-represented in the communist party, in the Soviet Union and elsewhere³⁵. Made over a decade later, that conclusion corroborated

²⁸ *Program i statut...*, p. 75. Lenin himself spoke of the need to take advantage of the technical intelligentsia and expert engineering cadre.

²⁹ Even so, particular caution was advised when seeking to win the "technical intelligentsia" over for the communist cause; also, propaganda and indoctrination activities were recommended in view of the fact that the intelligentsia in question was brought up in "bourgeois traditions" – *ibidem*, pp. 75–76.

³⁰ N. Bucharin, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–33.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 32.

³² *Program i statut...*, p. 67.

³³ *Ibidem*, pp. 67–68. Also, the Programme states as follows: "The role of organiser of the new human society presupposes that the proletariat itself will become culturally mature, that it will transform its own nature, that it will continually promote from its ranks increasing numbers of men and women capable of mastering science, technique and administration in order to build up socialism and a new socialist culture" – *ibidem*, pp. 81–82.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 67–68.

³⁵ The research conducted by Marek Przeniosła showed that people with secondary and higher education accounted for 4–5% of members of the CWPP – M. Przeniosła, *Skład społeczny, zawodowy i narodowościowy*

the notion expressed by Trotsky in 1912. Hence, one pursued the programmatic injunctions to make use of the qualified technical intelligentsia – “contaminated by bourgeois tradition” though they were – and elevate “[...] the general cultural level of the proletarian masses, of improving their political education, of raising their general standard of knowledge and technical skill, of training them in the methods of public work and administration, and of combatting the survivals of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois prejudices”³⁶. All that was part of a “process of revolutionary-cultural transformation” of that society³⁷. Seizing control of the intelligentsia and then forming its own model became one of the prerequisites of successful revolution and subsequent consolidation of its “achievements”.

Next to the provisions of the program, an important contribution to the communist undertaking should be attributed to the tangible efforts, e.g. by various associations and organizations – whether scientific, cultural or educational – which were either openly or unofficially established or supported by the communists, the Comintern in particular. The list of such bodies is exceptionally long and illustrates the scale and extent to which the communist idea or thought, as well as the Soviet secret services, penetrated into the intelligentsia circles, especially academic and literary milieus. It was thanks to that sphere of activity of the communist movement that the ideas and attitudes it promoted gained, also in interwar Poland, many adherents among the contemporary political, cultural and academic circles. Although the proportion of the *poputchiki* (fellow travelers) is difficult to verify scientifically, it may be illustrated to some degree by an analysis of the united-front and popular-front writings and literature.

In interwar Poland, the state³⁸ and social agencies³⁹ which monitored and analyzed the activities of the communist elements listed nearly twenty communist or crypto-communist organizations, including united-front and popular-front groups which engaged – with varying degrees and scope – in overt and covert propaganda and agitation among the intelligentsia. The objective was to win the latter over, penetrate it (e.g. by installing communist cells in its ranks), or cause fragmentation of its structures and undermine socio-political attitudes, thus facilitating possible later exploitation for the purposes of revolutionary action. The key communist organizations included the Young Communist International (YCI), the Communist Women’s International, the Red International of Labor Unions (Profintern), the Co-operative International, the International

Komunistycznej Partii Robotniczej Polski (1918–1925), Komuniści w II Rzeczypospolitej. Ludzie – struktury – działalność, eds. M. Bukała, M. Krzysztofiński, Rzeszów 2015, pp. 21–22.

³⁶ *Program i statut...*, p. 83.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ K. Sacewicz, *Komunizm i antykomunizm...*, pp. 289–308; R. Litwiński, *Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych II Rzeczypospolitej wobec komunizmu i komunistów*, [in:] *Antykomunizm Polaków w XX wieku*, eds. P. Kardela, K. Sacewicz, Białystok–Olsztyn–Warsaw 2019, pp. 89–114.

³⁹ See: K. Sacewicz, *Zorganizowane antykomunistyczne inicjatywy społeczne w II Rzeczypospolitej*, [in:] *Antykomunizm Polaków...*, pp. 115–138; idem, *Komunizm i antykomunizm...*, pp. 17–157.

Red Aid (MOPR), the Red Sport International, the Societies for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS), the International Association of Friends of the Soviet Union, Educational Workers' International, and the Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Colonial League⁴⁰.

Undoubtedly, the entire propaganda and agitation targeting the intelligentsia originated in the first place with the Comintern and its various sectoral agencies. The role of the Communist International in the efforts to gain influence among the scientific, literary and artistic circles outside the USSR is particularly evident when one considers the examples of the VOKS and the MOPR, which operated in Poland as *Czerwona Pomoc* (lit. Red Aid)⁴¹. As a result of their organizational and propaganda undertakings, new communists and crypto-communists enlisted for the cause; most importantly, however, considerable numbers of the so-called *poputchiki* were won over.

For any researcher, an accurate determination of the influence of a given idea or clandestine work within even a single social or professional group is difficult, often impossible. Nonetheless, the reports and accounts of the Ministry of the Interior of the Second Republic of Poland attempted to delineate the scale of this phenomenon.

The material in question shows the outcomes of the operations undertaken by the relevant agencies, which sought to investigate communist groups. In 1930, the appendix to the "instruction to the authorities of the general administration on the neutralization of persons and associations (or unions) suspected in case of protective measure or mobilization"⁴² listed "associations (or unions) which display evidence of communist action"⁴³. They were divided into cultural and educational associations, humanitarian associations and sports associations. The former included: the "Książka" Society, the Association of Evening Courses, the Association of Jewish Schools, the Cultural League, the Jewish Youth Cultural Association, the Jewish Art Scene Association, the Jewish Social Reading Room and the "Oświata" Association. Humanitarian associations identified as communist or pro-communist comprised: the "Ort" Association, Jewish Child Welfare Association and the "Gemiles Khesed" Association. Finally, the third group of communist-penetrated sports associations included, e.g. the Jewish Workers' Sports Club, Sports Association "Błyskawica", Sports Clubs "Płomień" and "Jutrznia"⁴⁴. The materials of the Polish security apparatus not only named the entities which had been identified as com-

⁴⁰ S. Wyszynski, op. cit., p. 73.

⁴¹ Concerning the inquiry into the structures of the International Red Aid by the Criminal Investigations Office of the capital city of Warsaw see: K. Sacewicz, *Komunizm i antykomunizm...*, pp. 289–308, 333–349; M. Krzysztofiński, *Czerwona Pomoc w Polsce jako „organ walki z białym terrorem”*, [in:] *Komuniści w II Rzeczypospolitej...*, p. 309.

⁴² AAN, MSW, 9/988 accession, Instrukcja dla władz administracji ogólnej o unieruchomieniu osób i stowarzyszeń /związków/ podejrzanych na wypadek osłony lub mobilizacji, Warsaw 1930, items 81–93.

⁴³ AAN, MSW, 9/988 accession, Attachment no. 4 [1930], item 99.

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

minist or communist-leaning but also attested to the breadth, intensity and multi-faceted nature of the communist offensive against the intelligentsia.

An element which complemented the picture of the diverse communist undertakings to infiltrate the intelligentsia circles, remodel them and – in line with the communist rationale – realign their professional and social activities included a list of the legal communist-leaning and united-front periodicals compiled by the Ministry of the Interior⁴⁵. That detailed inventory, providing the title, circulation, period and place of publication, named the following: “Dziennik Popularny” (Warsaw, daily, 6,900 copies, since 15 October 1936), “Krakowski Dziennik Popularny” (Kraków, daily, 2,000 copies, since 15 January 1936), “Sygnały” (Lwów, monthly, 4,500 copies, since 1935), “Trybuna Robotnicza” (Lvov, weekly, 4,000 copies, from 1934), “Trybuna Młodych” (Lvov, biweekly, 3,000 copies, since October 1936), “Człowiek Wolny – Zew Sumienia” (Łódź, weekly, 6,000 copies, since July 1936), “Epoka” (Warsaw, biweekly, 1,500 copies, since 1934), “Front Młodych” (Warsaw, biweekly, 1,000 copies, since 1935), “Sumienie Społeczne” (Warsaw, monthly, 2,000 copies, since March 1936), “Nowy Ustrój” (Kraków, weekly, 1,600 copies, since 1934), “Wiadomości Literackie” (Warsaw, weekly, 11,500 copies, since January 1924), “Nowa Kwadryga” (Warsaw, monthly, 1,300 copies, since February 1937), “Epoka” (Warsaw, biweekly, 2,000 copies, since 1934), “Sygnały” (Lvov, monthly, 4,500 copies, since 1935)⁴⁶. Other documents of the Ministry of the Interior mentioned “Sygnały”, “Nowy Ustrój”, and “Chłopskie Życie Gospodarcze” as legitimate though communist-leaning, united-front or suspiciously oriented periodicals⁴⁷. Also, according to the reports of the Ministry, “Lewy Tor”, “Po prostu”, “Lewar”, “Ugory”, and “Oblicze Dnia” were determined to display a communist penchant (both in terms of content and composition of the editorial team)⁴⁸. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the Ministry found “Wiadomości Literackie”, “Epoka”, and “Sumienie Społeczeństwa” to be “legal periodicals, the content of which reveals tendencies whose character is more or less akin to communism or corresponding to the united-front slogans of the communist party [...]”⁴⁹. The above titles were addressed to the intelligentsia circles and enjoyed certain popularity there. They did not crudely flaunt their communist sympathies or ideological and organizational affiliations.

⁴⁵ AAN, MSW, 9/914, Wykaz legalnych czasopism komunizujących, jednolitifrontowych i o podejrzanych tendencjach [1937], items 4–6.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, items 4–6. The very same titles were mentioned as communist-leaning and united-front periodicals in an addendum to the document of the Ministry of the Interior dated 12 IV 1937; see: AAN, MSW, 9/1063 accession, Lewica literacka w Polsce – akcja wydawnicza. Załącznik, 12 IV 1937, item 20.

⁴⁷ AAN, MSW, 9/991 accession, Legalne czasopisma komunizujące, jednolitifrontowe i o podejrzanych tendencjach, item 26.

⁴⁸ AAN, MSW, 9/990 accession, Pismo Naczelnika Waclawa Żyborskiego do urzędów wojewódzkich: sprzedaż komunizujących czasopism zamiera, Warsaw 14 X 1936, item 67.

⁴⁹ AAN, MSW, 9/914, Wykaz legalnych czasopism komunizujących, jednolitifrontowych i o podejrzanych tendencjach [1937], items 4–6.

On the contrary, the narratives featured there were, in most cases, united-front, subdued, almost subliminal, geared towards a “long march”, culminating in changes in the ethical and moral model of the Polish intelligentsia.

The actions thus aimed relied not only on the recommendations of the Bolshevik leaders, contained in their pre- and post-revolution writings, but also on the superior instructions and guidelines formulated by the Comintern. In interwar Poland, the approach of the communists towards the intelligentsia was also governed by party resolutions, resolutions and circulars. Naturally, they were a vehicle conveying orders from Moscow, but they were the means to reach the rank and file of the CWPP-CPP, setting specific tasks and informing the party’s policy in the field. For instance, the injunctions of the 1920 RCP(B) program to intensify educational and cultural work in order to take control of the intelligentsia were reflected in the April 1922 resolution of the Third Conference of the CWPP “on educational and cultural work”⁵⁰.

The depreciation of the intelligentsia in the communist visions of the future society was evinced in the texts published in communist newspapers, the proclamations and the resolutions issued by the Central Committee and the cells in the field, as well as by the Workers’ and Soldiers’ Councils⁵¹. It was not the worker-intellectual but the worker-peasant alliance which, from the Second Congress of the CWPP onwards, became one of the essential tactical objectives in order to prompt the revolutionary ferment and subsequently to carry out the revolutionary uprising. The intellectual still remained inferior to the proletarian and may have even denoted a saboteur and wrecker. The category of an “intellectual”, i.e. allegations of intelligentsia pedigree or mentality, was often used to attack opponents during factional struggles within the party. For instance, in a text published in June 1924 in “Głos Komunistyczny” – the press organ of the Central Committee of the CWPP – the party leadership centered around the “3W” Group censured the so-called Berlin Four, asserting that “the theses of the ‘four’ are an assault on the resolutions of the Second Congress, that is, on the ideological underpinning of the CWPP; they are a reflection of the anti-Bolshevik strivings on the part of a group established outside the country, essentially intellectual, detached from the movement and active party work [...]”⁵². However, it would be inherently erroneous to qualify the “Berlin Four” as intelligentsia and their adversaries as non-intelligentsia, i.e. workers, since both factions had people with higher education among their leaders. The designation “intellectual” was thus a “cudgel” which, depending on the time and political needs, was brought to bear against the opponents in the 1920s.

It may be noted that once it had been established in Poland, the content and the appeals of the proclamations, resolutions and circulars promulgated by the leadership of

⁵⁰ *KPP. Uchwały i rezolucje*, vol. 1: *I–II Zjazd (1918–1923)*, eds. F. Kalicka et al., Warsaw 1954, pp. 175.

⁵¹ No intelligentsia councils ever existed!

⁵² *Tezy „czterech”*, “Głos Komunistyczny”, 30 VI 1924, no. 26.

the CWPP-CPP referred to or were addressed to “all working people”. That euphemism meant the workers, and later also the inhabitants of the countryside: smallholders, landless peasants and farm workers in the main. Just as in the propaganda of the Bolshevik party in Russia and in the rhetoric of the Communist International, the intelligentsia was utterly marginalized by the CWPP and the CPP⁵³.

When attempting a critical analysis and characterization of the attitude adopted by the communists and communism towards the intelligentsia, one must be aware that their approach was not uniform throughout the interwar period. Not unlike many other elements in the CPP’s programmatic and political thought, that aspect was also subject to major re-evaluations. These followed the instructions sent from the Kremlin to particular sections of the Comintern, in line with the tactical goals and tasks formulated by the communists as they strove to provoke or sustain revolutionary uprisings in individual countries. Current needs – as the Kremlin saw them – informed the attitude of the communists towards the intelligentsia. As already noted, that attitude fluctuated; the position adopted during the Bolshevik revolution in Russia differed from the paradigm in the early years of the CWPP/CPP in Poland, which changed yet again as the official propaganda and agitation of the communist party prioritized united-front, popular-front and anti-fascist slogans in the 1930s.

Regardless of the positive or negative content, one can observe continual attempts to influence the intelligentsia, which assumed various forms and targeted a broad audience: the communists, crypto-communists, the *poputchiki*, and the so-called useful idiots, of whom there was no shortage of the European circles that considered themselves the cream of the intelligentsia, which, in turn, was positively perceived and anticipated by the Soviet principals.

The ultimate goal was revolution and, ostensibly, the power of the proletariat. In fact, the Kremlin rulers and its subordinate sections of the Comintern were to hold sway over the proletariat of all kinds, and no tool was impracticable in this struggle for ascendancy. Anything was taken advantage of: words, ideas, programmatic and political thought, force, bloody terror, external and civil war, class struggle, pauperization of the unwanted and the forging of the new, including the new human – the Soviet man. As time went by, the intensity of such measures varied, the strategy and, above all, the tactics changed, but the goal was one... Soviet power.

The absence of revolutionary unrest in Poland and other countries of Europe, and the weakness of the working class, compelled the communist organizations – following the

⁵³ As an eloquent example, one could cite a text published in “Nowy Przegląd” of 1928 offers, which commented on the organizational tasks of the CPP arising under the resolutions of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, which enjoined intensified activity among the workers, peasants and soldiers; the intelligentsia were not mentioned at all – “Nowy Przegląd”, XI–XII 1928, no. 25, p. 26. See also: *List otwarty KW MK do wszystkich członków KPP*, “Nowy Przegląd”, XI–XII 1928, no. 25, pp. 6–8.

instructions from the Comintern – to launch an ideological and political battle to win first the peasantry as part of the so-called worker-peasant alliance, and then endeavor to prevail over the so-called intelligentsia. In Rev. Wyszyński's opinion, this was a thoroughly deliberate undertaking which posed a considerable danger to the Polish state and the Christian values of Western Europe. He recognized that to be a long-term effort by Moscow which, among other things, consisted in making people familiar with Bolshevism by introducing them to the culture of Soviet Russia, concerning which he wrote: "The cultural influence exerted on the intelligentsia is perhaps the most dangerous method of conquering the world; by winning over the leading minds of the world, through the persuasion of their literary works, Bolshevism slowly, gradually and imperceptibly molds the minds of the citizens. The state, relieved that the communist adventurism has ceased, may not notice that it governs citizens who already have a collective soul, prepared in secret to embrace the new regime"⁵⁴.

The overt and covert communist propaganda campaign to gain sympathizers and influence the Polish intelligentsia yielded actual success, which, albeit not always massive, was nonetheless palpable. This became apparent at Polish universities, for instance, where increased communist propaganda activity and consequently growing numbers of sympathizers and even communist party activists were a fact. Still, the real extent of the communist and pro-communist sympathies within the walls of Polish universities remains to be determined. In terms of research, the issue is still open and awaits further critical analysis.

Communist influences at the University of Warsaw have been discussed, e.g. by Prof. Andrzej Chojnowski, who underlined that it witnessed a certain degree of political life, which is anything but surprising. Political involvement was evident in both the faculty and the student milieus. However, pro-National Democracy (right-wing) sympathies predominated at first, followed by pro-Sanation sentiments after 1926, whereas supporters of communism at the Warsaw university were relatively few in the 1920s. This should be attributed to the obligatory tuition fees, which effectively restricted access to higher education to the largest communist party base, i.e. the workers⁵⁵. Not only was the communist influence limited, but the left and center-left could not boast a significant permanent position at the university, where the victories of the left-wing representatives in the 1921 and 1922 elections to the Fraternal Assistance Board (Bratniak) were an exception. In the following years, the Bratniak was controlled by national organizations, including the All-Polish Youth. In 1927, the communist candidate Włodzimierz Sokorski received 14 votes in the ballots, while his opponent, supported by the right-wing,

⁵⁴ S. Wyszyński, *Kultura bolszewizmu a inteligencja polska*, Włocławek 1934, p. 3.

⁵⁵ A. Chojnowski, *Wpływy komunistyczne na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim w latach 1918–1939*, [in:] *Komuniści w międzywojennej Warszawie*, ed. E. Kowalczyk, Warsaw 2014, pp. 215–216.

won 428⁵⁶. Any communist attitudes that may have emerged were quickly suppressed by right-wing student organizations, including academic corporations. Nevertheless, some left-wing activity was in evidence, e.g. involving the Independent Union of Socialist Youth. The communist members of the latter sought to dominate or split it, which indeed took place in 1924. As a result, IUSY “*Życie*” was registered, though only in Kraków and Lvov. According to Chojnowski, it operated semi-legally in Warsaw⁵⁷.

In the 1930s, the Warsaw-based “*Życie*” had over 200 members at the University, only 60 of whom were Polish. Its activists included Jan Krasicki, Bolesław Rumiński, Hanka Sawicka-Szapiro, Jan Turlejski, Zdzisław Turlejski and Franciszek Zubrzycki, i.e. figures who would later be involved in the political history of Sovietization in the eastern territories of Poland under USSR occupation, in communist underground groups and the activities of the Soviet agent ring under the banner of the People’s Guard Polish Workers’ Party⁵⁸.

Communists – activists from the Union of Communist Youth in the main – were tasked with carrying out the party’s orders to take control over trade unions and associations by creating red factions or establishing clandestine cells. They did so as part of the Academic Club of Friends of the League of Nations, the Academic Literary and Arts Club, as well as the Association of Free Thinkers and the Club of Polish Studies, among others. The latter was chaired by Stanisław Żółkiewski, later a Polish Workers’ Party Polish United Workers’ Party activist and director of the Institute of Literary Research during the Stalinist era⁵⁹.

The involvement of the communists in the above organizations, especially the activities within the IUSY “*Życie*”, enabled them to establish new contacts and create networks of interpersonal links, which may have at first been somewhat inconsequential, but later often translated into careers in the communist system after 1945.⁶⁰ A number of students of Jewish origin, who preferred not to disclose their communist views at the time, made post-war careers in the communist apparatus of power or terror, including Jakub Berman, Józef Różański and Helena Wolińska⁶¹.

Among the academic staff, communist views were marginal, but they were in evidence nonetheless. Affiliation with the movement was admitted by Prof. Ludwik Krzywicki, head of the Department of Social Systems, Prof. Stefan Szulc, a statistician and originator of the Statistical Library at the Central Statistical Office (now Statistics Poland), sociologist Prof. Stefan Czarnowski (initially an adherent of the National Demo-

⁵⁶ Ibidem, p. 216.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 217.

⁵⁸ See more broadly in P. Gontarczyk, *Polska Partia Robotnicza. Droga do władzy 1941–1944*, Warsaw 2003, passim.

⁵⁹ A. Chojnowski, op. cit., p. 217.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, p. 219.

⁶¹ *Dzieje Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 1915–1945*, ed. P.W. Majewski, Warsaw 2016, p. 284.

cratic views, later leaning towards socialism, ended up as a communist), mathematician and logician Adolf Lindenbaum (CPP activist), mathematician Aleksandr Rajchman (alias Olek, CPP and MOPR activist), and philosopher Stefan Rudniański (Salomon Rubinroth), a CPP activist and lecturer at the Free Polish University of Warsaw⁶².

Besides the academic and student circles, the legal community was highly active with respect to the communist cause. Among the best-known defenders of the communist activists in Poland were Teodor Duracz and Karol Winawer. In addition, the Red Aid in Poland (a section of the MOPR) collaborated with other legal practitioners, including Włodzimierz Baczyński, Leon Bernson, Waław Barcikowski, Mieczysław Bibrowski, Waław Brokman, Jan Dąbrowski, Michał Wołoszyn, Semen Szewczuk, Lejba Landau, Lew Hankiewicz and others⁶³. The struggle for influence in that professional group between communists, pro-communists and those who held anti-communist views was already taking place at the academic stage, with the University of Warsaw Club of Student Lawyers as a leading example. The confrontation was won by the latter faction⁶⁴. The pro-communist attitudes, such as Duracz's, for instance, provoked vehement opposition in the bar circles, which manifested most explicitly in the resolutions of the Fourth National Congress of Polish Lawyers, held on 26–28 May 1928 in Toruń. It was asserted that any glorification of communism by defence attorneys was inadmissible, and charging any fees was banned if there was even the slightest suspicion that the USSR was providing the source of financing⁶⁵. Even earlier, similar notions were expressed at the convention of Polish lawyers in Poznań in September 1925⁶⁶, by the Lublin Bar Council on 27 March 1925⁶⁷, and in the resolution of the Supreme Bar Council of 12 June that year⁶⁸. This

⁶² A. Chojnowski, op. cit., p. 220.

⁶³ See more broadly in A. Zatorski, *Czerwona Pomoc (MOPR) w Polsce w latach 1924–1928*, Warsaw 1966, pp. 6–7; *Przewodnik po wystawie. Międzynarodowa Organizacja Pomocy Rewolucjonistom MOPR*, ed. H. Wajn, Warsaw 1967, p. 15; *Kto broni w Polsce agentów S.S.S.R.?*, “Walka z bolszewizmem” 1928, issue 17, p. 8; T. Duracz, *Mowy obrończe*, ed. A. Wendel, Warsaw 1958; *Teodor Duracz 1883–1943. W piątą rocznicę śmierci 1943*, Warsaw 1948, pp. 1–76. On Duracz as an agent see: *Adwokat Duracz agentem bolszewickim*, “Walka z bolszewizmem” 1930, issue 29, p. 106; P. Gontarczyk, op. cit., pp. 92–93.

⁶⁴ I. Mrzygłód, *Paragrafy dla narodu. Antysemita radykalizacja Koła Prawników Studentów Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w okresie II Rzeczypospolitej*, [in:] *Polityka. Między współpracą a odrzuceniem – Żydzi i Polacy w XIX i XX wieku*, ed. Z. Trębacz, Warsaw 2021, p. 89.

⁶⁵ *Adwokaci polscy przeciwko komunizmowi*, “Walka z bolszewizmem” 1928, issue 12, p. 16.

⁶⁶ During the convention, conducting appointed defence of communists was addressed in a paper by the Lvov lawyer Włodzimierz Godlewski, who stressed that accepting such appointments was tantamount to violating attorney ethics and constitutional provisions, as well as the attorney's oath of allegiance to the Republic of Poland; *O obronach w sprawach komunistów*, “Gazeta Warszawska Poranna”, 20 VI 1925, no. 167.

⁶⁷ The Bar Council of Lublin unequivocally spoke against accepting appointments from persons charged with communist activity – *ibidem*.

⁶⁸ The resolution reads: “2) clarify that when bringing defence in cases of persons accused of belonging to the communist party, it is inadmissible on the part of the defence counsel to justify, let alone glorify, the principles of communism, and it is also inadmissible for the counsel to charge fees from persons and organizations that are reasonably suspected of being financed by the Third International”. The Supreme Council instructed its field branches to adopt measures to verify whether the resolution is complied with – *ibidem*.

meant that the communists, despite major attempts to influence law students and later lawyers, did not succeed in “taking over” that professional group.

Communist influence was also seen among teachers – as exemplified by the Polish Teachers’ Union affair – as well as among writers and journalists. These particular groups began to gravitate towards communism and the communist party to a greater extent and on a larger scale in the 1930s, with the rise of popular-front and united-front ideas, though the primary incentive was that the communist party and Comintern promoted anti-fascist, democratic slogans and formed various fronts around them. Rev. Wyszyński noted that there was a period of dangerous fashion for communism in the intelligentsia circles, especially among its young representatives.

Can the above professions be considered representative of the entire socio-professional group that constituted the intelligentsia? Naturally, they cannot because they do not account for a proportion that may be called significant and do not demonstrate the entire range of the expressed views. Nevertheless, they were very active and quite prominent in the media but, simultaneously – in a paradoxical antithesis which aptly reflects the complex nature of the phenomenon – often tended to conceal their support for communism in the thicket of various camouflaged united-front initiatives and pro-communist attitudes. By way of counterpoise, the intelligentsia of interwar Poland formulated and endorsed the ideological foundations of anti-communism, with which they affiliated as an entire group to a much greater degree than with communism, despite the Kremlin’s attempts⁶⁹.

Determining the actual influence of communism among the interwar Polish intelligentsia is greatly difficult or impossible, but even when one broadens its scope to include crypto-communist attitudes, the anti-communist stance undoubtedly prevailed given the potential of the pro-independence parties of Poland to influence the public and garner support, also among the intelligentsia. The situation changed due to war and occupation, during which the Polish elites were physically annihilated. In consequence, the rulers of the Kremlin and their “Polish” hirelings confronted much fewer obstacles as the post-war, post-Yalta Poland was being Sovietized. The “long march” upon which the CWPP and later the CPP embarked to take control of the Polish intelligentsia, develop a convenient model of the intellectual, and manage the masses, thereby proved unsuccessful at the time. Admittedly, they managed to establish ideological bridgeheads and develop a cadre,

⁶⁹ On the anti-communist attitudes of the Polish intelligentsia in the Second Republic of Poland see K. Sacewicz, *Komunizm i antykomunizm...*, pp. 17–157; B. Szlachta, *Polaków krytyczne spojrzenie na komunizm*, [in:] *Antykomunizm Polaków...*, pp. 37–63.

which triumphed only in the post-war reality, facing no strong anti-communist resistance from the intellectual elites, as its representatives had either perished or, morally and physically exhausted by the war and the post-war terror, went on the definite defensive, being a minority in relation to the new elites and the new power.

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Communism and communists towards the intelligentsia in interwar Poland. An outline of the issue

Summary: As a section of the Comintern and a de facto Soviet agent, the Communist Workers' Party of Poland (CWPP), and subsequently the Communist Party of Poland (CPP), aimed to effect a revolt of the masses – a revolution – which would culminate in making the dictatorship of the proletariat a reality. Holding hegemonic power, the Communists would thus be able to carry out Moscow's imperial plans in the guise of Communist slogans and ideals. In that struggle, the communist party active on the territory of the Second Republic of Poland, as well as all sections of the Comintern, relied primarily on the working masses, on the proletariat, and with time found support among the landless and rural smallholders: groups which were susceptible to the most extreme revolutionary slogans. Or was there a place for another force, namely the intelligentsia? What positions with regard to the latter were adopted by the Bolsheviks in Russia, the principal ideologists of the Soviet *mir* and, by virtue of the CWPP/CPP's subordination to Moscow, by the communist parties in Poland? This is precisely what this text is concerned with: the varying, fairly flexible policy of the communists towards the intelligentsia, which nonetheless was always calculated to serve the interests and goals of Moscow. One rather important detail should be noted here. The intelligentsia in question was neither a homogeneous group in terms of its social, political or economic views nor was it a national or religious monolith; on the contrary, it was characterized by numerous dividing lines, which is why applying a uniform yardstick to assess its attitudes towards communism and vice versa would be erroneous. Hence, this study only

outlines and critically discusses the chief directions adopted by the communist party in its treatment of the intelligentsia, as well as the selected modalities of the latter's approach to communism: from negation, through conformist subservience, to total subordination. All the same, it is merely a voice in the scholarly debate that should continue.

Keywords: Communism, communists, intelligentsia, Lenin, Trotsky, Stefan Wyszyński, revolution, crypto-communists, united-fronters, *poputchiki*

Der Kommunismus und die Kommunisten gegenüber der Intelligenz im Polen der Zwischenkriegszeit. Umriss des Problems

Zusammenfassung: Die KPRP und später die KPP als Sektion der Komintern und de facto sowjetische Agenten setzten sich zum Ziel, einen Aufstand der Massen – eine Revolution – durchzuführen, die zur Verwirklichung der Diktatur des Proletariats führen sollte. Dies würde den Kommunisten aufgrund ihrer Hegemonialmacht die Möglichkeit geben, Moskaus imperiale Pläne zu verwirklichen, die in kommunistische Parolen und Ideale gehüllt wurden. In diesem Kampf stützten sich die auf dem Gebiet der Zweiten Republik tätige kommunistische Partei, aber auch alle Sektionen der Komintern, vor allem auf die arbeitenden Massen, auf das Proletariat und später auch auf die Landlosen und Kleinbauern auf dem Lande, die für die extremsten revolutionären Parolen empfänglich waren. Gab es in diesem Arrangement Platz für eine weitere Kraft – die Intelligenz? Welche Haltung nahmen die Bolschewiki in Russland, die wichtigsten Ideologen der Sowjetunion, und – aufgrund der Unterordnung der KPRP/KPP unter Moskau – die kommunistischen Parteien in Polen dazu ein? In diesem Beitrag geht es um die heterogene, recht flexible, aber stets auf die Interessen und Ziele Moskaus zugeschnittene Politik der Kommunisten gegenüber der Intelligenz. Dabei ist ein recht wichtiges Detail zu beachten. Die Intelligenz war weder eine homogene Gruppe in Bezug auf ihre sozio-politisch-ökonomischen Ansichten, noch war sie national oder religiös monolithisch; im Gegenteil, sie war durch zahlreiche Trennlinien gekennzeichnet, so dass es nicht gerechtfertigt ist, einen einzigen Maßstab für die Bewertung ihrer Haltung zum Kommunismus und des Kommunismus ihr gegenüber anzuwenden. Daher werden in diesem Text lediglich die Hauptrichtungen der von Komintern gegenüber der Intelligenz ergriffenen Maßnahmen sowie die ausgewählten Formen der Haltung der Intelligenz gegenüber dem Kommunismus dargestellt und kritisch diskutiert: von einer Haltung der Verweigerung über eine konformistische Unterwürfigkeit bis hin zur totalen Unterordnung. Gleichzeitig ist dieser Text nur eine Stimme in einer wissenschaftlichen Diskussion, die fortgesetzt werden sollte.

Schlüsselwörter: Kommunismus, Kommunisten, Intelligenz, Lenin, Trotzki, Stefan Wyszyński, Revolution, Kryptokommunisten, Einheitsfront-Anhänger, Weggenossen

Komunizm i komuniści wobec inteligencji w międzywojennej Polsce. Zarys problemu

Streszczenie: KPRP, a następnie KPP jako sekcja Kominternu, a *de facto* sowiecka agentura, stawiała sobie za cel przeprowadzenie buntu mas (rewolucji), który miał doprowadzić do urealnienia dyktatury proletariatu. Ta z racji hegemonistycznej władzy komunistów dawałaby im szansę na realizację imperialnych planów Moskwy, osnutych w komunistyczne hasła i ideały. W tej walce komunistyczna partia działająca na terytorium II RP, ale i wszystkie sekcje Kominternu bazowały przede wszystkim na masach pracujących, na proletariacie, a z czasem na bezrolnych i małorolnych mieszkańcach wsi, a więc podatnych na najbardziej skrajne hasła rewolucyjne. Czy w tym układzie było miejsce dla innej siły – inteligencji? Jaki był do niej stosunek zarówno bolszewików w Rosji, głównych ideologów sowieckiego miru, a z racji podporządkowania się KPRP/KPP Moskwie i partii komunistycznych w Polsce? O tym jest rzeczony tekst – o niejednorodnej, dość elastycznej, ale zawsze obliczonej na interes i cele Moskwy polityce komunistów wobec inteligencji. Należy mieć przy tym na uwadze jeden dość istotny szczegół. Rzeczona inteligencja nie była ani grupą jednolitą w kwestii poglądów społeczno-polityczno-gospodarczych, ani narodowościowo czy wyznaniowo monolityczną, wręcz przeciwnie – charakteryzowały ją liczne linie podziałów, co sprawia, że przykładanie jednej miary do oceny jej postaw wobec komunizmu i komunizmu wobec niej jest niezasadne. Dlatego też niniejszy tekst jedynie przedstawia i krytycznie omawia główne kierunki działań kompartii wobec inteligencji, jak również prawne wybrane formy postaw tejsze wobec komunizmu: od postaw negacji, przez konformistyczną usłużność, po całkowite podporządkowanie. Tym samym jest to jedynie głos w naukowej dyskusji, która winna trwać.

Słowa kluczowe: Komunizm, komuniści, inteligencja, Lenin, Trocki, Stefan Wyszyński, rewolucja, kryptokomuniści, jednolitifrontowcy, poputczycy