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Status and Prospects for Research on the Attitude of Polish pro-Government Groupings Towards the Policy of the Civil and Military Authorities of the Republic of Poland in Connection with the Direct Genesis and Course of the Campaign of 1939, Including Media Coverage

Stan i perspektywy badań nad stosunkiem polskich ugrupowań prorządowych do polityki władz cywilnych i wojskowych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w związku z bezpośrednią genezą i przebiegiem kampanii 1939 r., z uwzględnieniem przekazu medialnego

ABSTRACT

The article is a selective review of the subject literature on activities of the pro-Government organizations during national preparations for defense, starting from eleven months before the outbreak of WWII to the Campaign of 1939. It embraces problems of propaganda and strategic communication. The paper underlines the role of the activities of structures of the Camp of National Unification and media controlled by the state. The paper draws the attention of a reader to lack of a new, more comprehensive, and multidimensional approach to the topic. It also presents the hypothesis on temporary effectiveness, *pro foro interno*, of Polish propaganda. However, due to military defeat, this achievement backfired at the present government. The gap between expectations and tragic reality facilitated the 'anti-Sanacja' opposition the takeover of full power, in the conditions of the emigration.

Key words: 1939, General History, Second Polish Republic, Sławoj Składkowski, Edward Śmigły-Rydz, 'Sanacja', Camp of National Unity, government, civil society, internal policy, strategic communication, propaganda, media, press, radio newsreels, World War II, Polish Campaign

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STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł daje selektywny przegląd piśmiennictwa dotyczącego aktywności organizacji prorządowych w procesie przygotowań społecznych do obrony na jedenaście miesięcy przed wybuchem II wojny światowej i podczas samej kampanii 1939 r. Poruszając zagadnienia propagandy i komunikacji strategicznej podkreśla rolę działań struktur Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego i mediów kontrolowanych przez państwo. Opracowanie zwraca uwagę na brak nowszego, kompetentnego i wieloaspektowego ujęcia tej problematyki, wysuwając hipotezę o czasowej skuteczności *pro foro interno* polskich wysiłków propagandowych. Jednak w związku z niepomysłnym rozwojem wydarzeń na froncie to osiągnięcie miażdżąco obróciło się przeciw ekipie rządzącej. Rozziew między oczekiwaniami społecznymi a tragiczną rzeczywistością ułatwił opozycji antysanacyjnej przejęcie pełni władzy na emigracji.

Słowa kluczowe: 1939, Historia, II Rzeczpospolita, Sławoj Składkowski, Edward Śmigły-Rydz, obóz sanacyjny, Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego, rząd, społeczeństwo, polityka wewnętrzna, komunikacja strategiczna, propaganda, media, prasa, radio, kroniki filmowe, II wojna światowa, kampania polska

This article encompasses issues related to widely known stories and symbols, which are so strongly imprinted into the national consciousness of Poles as an ethnicity. We all remember the statement of the radio speaker Józef Małgorzewski ('A więc wojna! Z dniem dzisiejszym wszystkie sprawy schodzą na plan dalszy...' – 'So, there is war. Today, all other issues got sidelined...'), defence of Westerplatte and announcement of Lt. Col. Roman Umiastowski. The memory of these events a bit overshadows today other important relicts of past one can see on old photographs, like fundraising initiatives for the National Defence Fund (*Fundusz Obrony Narodowej*)¹ and other related ventures. We also tend

¹ See: M. Gieleciński, *Świadczenia społeczeństwa polskiego na obronność przed wybuchem II wojny światowej (1936–1939)*, Poznań 2014, *passim*. The work includes some inaccuracies.

to forget about Polish propaganda plan of the 'human torpedoes'². Sometimes, during subsequent anniversaries of the Campaign of 1939, one can notice mentions about so-called September lies³, recalled with some relish by some publicists who actually or involuntarily – being in line with the dominant trend or taking the easy way – promote a kind of 'pedagogy of shame'. During this century, several books have been published⁴, some of them in the form of a collage, which is a mix of different sources, references, old and modern journalism. They are in fact an effort aimed to prepare new considerations and promote old views, because inherent biases and lack of necessary knowledge and skills did not allow their authors to assess and interpret events in a reasonable manner.

Even today, we still do not have at our disposal a comprehensive and detailed evaluation of one of the most important dimensions of the Polish Campaign, which is not appreciated to a necessary extent by researchers of the military history and history of diplomacy. Such a study should explain psychological phenomena of the time, circumstances, methods, and results of moral and social mobilization efforts to defend the country against the German invasion, and to clarify also events that resulted in loss of power of representatives of the 'Sanacja' regime, who had been blamed sole for blunders and in effect for the so-called September defeat ('klęska wrześniowa'). This could not be done without a bit tautological consideration on details related to the essential element of the ruling establishment, i.e. the second 'anty-party' of 'Sanacja': The Camp of National Unity [literally: Unification] (*Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego*, OZN). We have also to take into account not only its structures, leaders, members, and supporters of badly remembered 'Ozon' ('Ozone'), but also to present the activity of other socio-political groupings as well as NGO's that supported the government of General Sławoj Składkowski M.D.

² See recent work on this extreme of declared sacrificing: E. Szumiec-Zielińska, *Żywe torpedy 1939*, Warszawa 2017, passim.

³ One of the exceptions is an erudite text by Dariusz Baliszewski, published several years ago, which have asked the important questions. It was also included to: *Wojna, tajemnica, miłość*, Warszawa 2016, pp. 155–161.

⁴ See: *Absurdy Polski międzywojennej*, ed. M.S. Fog, Poznań 2008, passim; C. Łazarewicz, E. Winnicka, 1939. *Wojna? Jaka wojna?*, Warszawa 2019, passim. Just to illustrate authors' competencies, one of the quotations should be presented here from the page 10 of his text: 'Gdańsk was the Hitler's main objective and not, as presented to me at school, just a pretext to launch the war'. Another piece to mention – the work of popularisers of the history, S. Koper and T. Pawłowski: *Tajemnice marszałka Śmigłego-Rydza. Bohater, tchórz czy zdrajca?*, Warszawa 2019, pp. 187–207. The authors somewhat ambiguously begin the controversial, but quite factual, story by stating: 'The Marshal of Poland, Edward Śmigły-Rydz is undoubtedly the most hated Polish historical person'. *Ibidem*, p. 5.

The information and propaganda dimensions of the Polish campaign have both domestic and foreign sides. The article focuses on the first area. The remaining sphere will be dealt with by the other Project's team. The starting point for this work was defined on 14 October 1938, the day after the completing of takeover of the Trans-Olza Silesia (*Zaolzie*) by the Polish Army⁵. The closing date is 8 October 1939, after the Polish submarine *ORP Orzeł* crossed the Sund Strait, regular fighting stopped and Maj. Henryk Dobrzański (a.k.a. "Hubal"), by the way a close relative of the hitherto President of the Republic Professor Ignacy Mościcki, who left the post week and half before, started his famous guerilla episode. However, already the initial research shows that this cut-off date should be pushed further to 27 October. It was the day, when the German *Sicherheitspolizei* arrested the President-Commissioner of the City of Warsaw, Stefan Starzyński. He was the Major of the Military Reserve, linked closely with the OZN, and served as the Civilian Commissioner to the improvised Command of the Defence of Warsaw. During the siege of the capital of Poland, he earned the respect of all citizens, won the cross-party support and co-operation, and became the national symbol of courage and tenacity. The previous reluctance towards him, showed by right, centrist, and even sometimes leftist opposition in the city, was pushed into the background⁶. This shows, contrary to popular belief, that in the first month of the German occupation, the period of internal displacement and emigration, not all things in the area under research

⁵ M.P. Deszczyński, *Ostatni egzamin. Wojsko Polskie wobec kryzysu czechosłowackiego 1938–1939*, Warszawa 2003, p. 271.

⁶ See: M.M. Drozdowski, *Stefan Starzyński prezydent Warszawy*, Warszawa 1976, pp. 100–103, 136–321. Also: G. Piątek, *Sanator. Kariera Stefana Starzyńskiego*, Warszawa 2016, *passim*. About dedication of Warsaw residents – M.M. Drozdowski, *Alarm dla Warszawy. Ludność cywilna w obronie stolicy we wrześniu 1939 r.*, 3rd edition, Warszawa 1975, *passim*. The comparable situation could have been noticed, although to the lesser degree, in other parts of the country, in the Upper Silesia, in Gdynia, Lwów, Grodno etc. – see: [R.]L. Moczulski, *Wojna polska 1939*, Warszawa [2017], *passim*; R. Szawłowski („K. Liszewski”), *Wojna polsko-sowiecka 1939 r. Tło polityczne, prawnomiedzynarodowe i psychologiczne. Agresja sowiecka i polska obrona. Sowieckie zbrodnie wojenne i przeciw ludzkości oraz zbrodnie ukraińskie*, vol. 1, *Monografia*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1996, pp. 101–128, 294, 304–311; C. Grzelak, H. Stańczyk, *Kampania polska 1939 roku. Początek II wojny światowej*, Warszawa [2005], *passim*; T. Jurga, 1939. *Obrona Polski i Europy*, Warszawa [2014], *passim*; *Wrzesień 1939 na Górnym Śląsku*, ed. G. Bębniak, Katowice–Kraków 2008 (articles of Ryszard Kaczmarek, Janusz Ryt and Grzegorz Bębniak). It is quite understandable that such facts were difficult to establish concerning smaller towns and villages. As for the attitude of the society to the direct war preparations – A. Rzepniewski, *Wojsko Polskie wobec perspektywy zagrożenia wojennego (13 maja 1935–31 sierpnia 1939 r.)*, parts 1–3, Warszawa 1992, *passim*.

had been already decided⁷ and much depended on the new government, led by General Władysław Sikorski, and its attitude towards the recent, painful and difficult past.

The initial study presented here, refers also to a number of hypotheses that appeared in course of research conducted by the author. It has started in the mid-1990s and intensified especially since 2009 – during his work in the Institute of History at the University of Warsaw and within the framework of co-operated projects launched by the Polish History Museum⁸.

State of the subject literature is rather modest. It could be said that propaganda actions were examined better and in a more detailed way, much more than those on OZN and other organizations actions. Some areas of media campaigns of the time (radio, press, film, photography,

⁷ In the new political situation and in the conditions of conspiracy supporters of the former political groupings of Piłsudskites, headed by Gen. Michał Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz, retained certain influence in the first central underground resistance organisation, especially in its military segment – *Służba Zwycięstwu Polski*, SZP (Service for Poland's Victory). However, this fact was noticed only by a limited number of people due to the organization secrecy – see: S. Korboński, *Polskie państwo podziemne. Przewodnik po Podziemiu z lat 1939–1945*, [no place and date of publication], pp. 21–31; M. Ney-Krwawicz, *Komenda Główna Armii Krajowej 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1990, pp. 19–35; D. Bargiełowski, *Po trzykroć pierwszy. Michał Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz, generał broni, teozof, wolnomularz, kapłan Kościoła liberalno-katolickiego*, vol. 2, Warszawa [2001], passim. See also biographies in: A.K. Kunert, *Słownik biograficzny konspiracji warszawskiej 1939–1944*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1987; idem, *Słownik biograficzny konspiracji warszawskiej 1939–1944*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1987; idem, *Słownik biograficzny konspiracji warszawskiej 1939–1944*, vol. 3, Warszawa 1991. In the social-political segment of the SZP the position of Piłsudskites groupings was significantly smaller. There had been efforts to include reserve officers and former officials as Kazimierz Stamirowski and Zygmunt Hempel to the Main Political Council of the SZP – W. Grabowski, *Delegatura Rządu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na Kraj 1940–1945*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 16–17; M. Gałęzowski, *Wierni Polsce. Ludzie konspiracji piłsudczykowskiej 1939–1947*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 52. It should also be mentioned that there had been cases of participation of some people close to the Piłsudski camp in the Sikorski government, i.e. Adam Koc (former Colonel of the Polish Army, a friend and associate of the Marshal E. Śmigły-Rydz) and August Zaleski, who after the political turn-around in Polish policy which took place in Romania and France – was assigned again, after seven years, to the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. See: E. Duraczyński, *Rząd polski na uchodźstwie 1939–1945. Organizacja, personalia, polityka*, Warszawa 1993, pp. 41–42.

⁸ This concerns the coordination of the international scientific conference *The Polish Campaign of 1939. Politics – Society – Culture*, organized by the Polish History Museum and the Historical Institute of the University of Warsaw on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the German and Soviet aggression against Poland, as well as preliminary studies on segments of the PHM permanent exhibition devoted to the Second Polish Republic and Poland during World War II.

postage stamps, the defense of Westerplatte) have sometimes wide and useful historical mentions or even outlines⁹, whilst others still lay fallow. There is no study based on the comprehensive study of pro-government newspapers and journals, no complete analysis of leaflets and occasional prints. Also, no broad research on the visual media was conducted¹⁰.

To make necessary selections of the most important elements, it is necessary to point out at some important synthetic works and handbooks¹¹,

⁹ See: L. Dobroszycki, *Prasa polska w okresie kampanii wrześniowej (1–28 września 1939 r.)*, "Rocznik Historii Czasopiśmiennictwa Polskiego" 1966, 5, 1, pp. 151–166; A. Paczkowski, *Prasa polska w latach 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1980, pp. 144–177; J. Jarowiecki, J. Myśliński, A. Notkowski, *Prasa polska w latach 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1980, passim (chapters by Jerzy Jarowiecki and Jerzy Myśliński); J. Łojek, J. Myśliński, W. Władyka, *Dzieje prasy polskiej*, Warszawa 1988, pp. 107–113, 136 (chapters by Wiesław Władyka); M.J. Kwiatkowski, *Wrzesień 1939 w warszawskiej rozgłośni Polskiego Radia*, Warszawa 1984, passim; S. Ozimek, *Film polski w wojennej potrzebie*, Warszawa 1974, pp. 34–70, 289–293; B. Armatys, L. Armatys, W. Stradomski, 1930–1939, in: *Historia filmu polskiego*, vol. 2, ed. J. Toeplitz, Warszawa 1988, passim; *Katalog specjalizowany znaków pocztowych ziem polskich 1981*, vol. 1, eds. W. Kawecka, A. Myśliński, Warszawa 1981, passim; K. Zajączkowski, *Westerplatte jako miejsce pamięci 1945–1989*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 33–53, 69–71 and articles of Jerzy Piwowarski and M.P. Deszczyński in: *Kampania polska 1939 r. Polityka – społeczeństwo – kultura*, vol. 2, *Polityka i społeczeństwo. Imponderabilia – pamięć – kultura*, eds. M.P. Deszczyński, T. Pawłowski, Warszawa 2014, passim. As for performing arts – S. Marczak-Oborski, *Teatr w Polsce 1918–1939. Wielkie ośrodki*, Warszawa 1984, passim.

¹⁰ The work of Marcin Krzanicki (*Fotografia i propaganda. Polski fotoreportaż prasowy w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym*, Kraków [2013], pp. 217–271) started to pave the way for others in this specific area. It is based on a comprehensive study of sources, has useful iconographic annexes and brings some methodological proposals. Comments of the author are sometimes a bit casual.

¹¹ On the moral attitude of the Polish society and its evolution during the campaign of 1939 – see: *Polskie Siły Zbrojne w Drugiej Wojnie Światowej*, vol. 1, *Kampania wrześniowa 1939*, part 1, *Polityczne i wojskowe położenie Polski przed wojną*, Londyn 1951; part 2, *Przebieg działań od 1 do 8 września*, 2nd edition Londyn 1986; part 3, *Przebieg działań od 9 do 14 września*, Londyn 1959; part 4, *Przebieg działań od 15 do 18 września*, Londyn 1986; part 5, *Marynarka Wojenna i obrona polskiego Wybrzeża*, Londyn 1962; vol. 2, *Kampanie na obczyźnie*, part 1, *Wrzesień 1939–czerwiec 1941*, Londyn 1959; vol. 3, *Armia Krajowa*, Londyn 1950 and: W. Pobóg-Malinowski, *Najnowsza historia polityczna Polski*, vol. 2, 1914–1939; vol. 3, 1939–1945, Opole 1990, passim; *Historia Polski*, ed. C. Madajczyk, vol. 4, 1918–1939, ed. T. Jędruszczyk, part 4, *Rozdz. XXXVIII–LVI (1935–1939)*, Warszawa 1978, pp. 237–248, 311–333 (chapters by T. Jędruszczyk); A. Ajnenkiel, *Polska po przewrocie majowym. Zarys dziejów politycznych Polski 1926–1939*, Warszawa 1980, pp. 657–681; J. Garliński, *Polska w Drugiej Wojnie Światowej*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1988, pp. 23–24, 28, 46–47, 51, 55, 73–78, 103–106; M. Eckert, *Historia Polski 1914–1939*, Warszawa 1990, pp. 303–305, 313–319, 341–342; E. Duraczyński, *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 35–51; C. Łuczak, *Polska i Polacy w drugiej wojnie światowej*, Poznań 1993, pp. 25–26, 39–45, 371–372; P.[P.] Wiczorkiewicz, *Ostatnie lata Polski niepodległej*, Warszawa 1991, pp. 60–64;

encyclopedic headwords in still useful *Encyklopedia Historii Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej* and some para-encyclopedic works on that time in the Polish history¹². As for monographs on OZN and related issues, it is necessary to refer firstly to work that are today strongly devalued, i.e. books of Tadeusz Jędruszcak and Maria Turlejska¹³. They were published in 1960s and are a good example of the scale and scope of historical misrepresentations at that time. On the other side, we have the credible and valuable study of Piotr Stawecki¹⁴. In 1974, in the USA the classic book of Edward D. Wynot was printed¹⁵. Factual and interesting is the work of Jacek M. Majchrowski¹⁶, prepared in Poland, in the beginning of the 1980s,

idem, *Historia polityczna Polski 1935–1945*, Warszawa 2005, pp. 28–32, 65–128. It is quite useful to refer also to radio monologues of Paweł Zaremba, that were used to prepare a handbook – idem, *Historia Dwudziestolecia 1918–1939*, ed. M. Łatyński, Wrocław 1991, pp. 387–396 as well as to essay of Andrzej Chojnowski (*Rządy pomajowe*, in: *Polski wiek XX*, vol. 1, *Dwudziestolecie*, eds. K. Persak, P. Machciewicz, Warszawa [2009], pp. 189–193). One work can be considered as a *pendent* and the first synthesis of the Polish history by S. (Cat) Mackiewicz, *Historja Polski od 11 listopada 1918 r. do 17 września 1939 r.*, 8th edition, Warszawa 1989, pp. 288–318; idem, *Lata nadziei. 17 września 1939 r.–5 lipca 1945 r.*, Warszawa 1990, pp. 26–59. Other authors and editors did not conduct source research on the period in question, or left works that were not very credible and too marked by the times in which they were written. See, for instance, the reasonings of Eugeniusz Kozłowski in: *Polski czyn zbrojny w II wojnie światowej*, part 1, *Wojna obronna Polski 1939*, ed. E. Kozłowski, Warszawa 1979, pp. 74–81.

¹² *Encyklopedia Historii Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1999; *Kto był kim w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, eds. J.M. Majchrowski, G. Mazur, K. Stepan, Warszawa 1994; M. Jabłonowski, J. Jarski, *Kalendarium II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1990; A.K. Kunert, *Rzeczpospolita Walcząca. Wrzesień–grudzień 1939. Kalendarium*, Warszawa 1993; C. Łuczak, *Dzieje Polski 1939–1945. Kalendarium wydarzeń*, ed. L. Wrońska-Idziak, 2nd edition, Poznań 2007; A. Sowa, *Kronika 1939 roku*, Warszawa 2000; J. Osica et al., 1939. *Ostatni rok pokoju, pierwszy rok wojny*, Poznań [2009].

¹³ T. Jędruszcak, *Piłsudzcy bez Piłsudskiego. Powstanie Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego w 1937 roku*, Warszawa 1963, *passim*; H. and T. Jędruszcak, *Ostatnie lata Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej (1935–1939)*, Warszawa 1970, pp. 307–322, 340–350; M. Turlejska, *Rok przed klęską. 1 września 1938–1 września 1939*, 3rd edition, Warszawa 1965, *passim*; eadem, *Prawdy i fikcje. Wrzesień 1939–grudzień 1941*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1968, *passim*.

¹⁴ P. Stawecki, *Następcy Komendanta. Wojsko a polityka wewnętrzna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1935–1939*, Warszawa 1969, *passim*. This publication allowed to open new directions of research even in the two last decades. See: J. Kęsik, *Z działalności Komitetów Koordynacyjnych w latach 1936–1939*, "Res Historica" 2013, 35, pp. 107–128.

¹⁵ E.D. Wynot, *Polish politics in transition; the Camp of National Unity and the struggle for power, 1935–1939*, Athens 1974, *passim*.

¹⁶ J.[M.] Majchrowski, *Silni, zvarci, gotowi. Myśl polityczna Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego*, Warszawa 1985, *passim*.

in more relaxed ideologic atmosphere. Details on local conditions on Upper Silesia could also be found in the publication of Edward Długajczyk¹⁷.

Few years after the turn of 1989, an important book by Marek Jabłonowski was released. It was very insightful, based on wide source base and dedicated to veteran associations¹⁸. It includes some information on 'consolidation' processes within this social group. This century saw new useful papers on the topic, including results of biographical research, of Zbigniew K. Zaporowski, Krzysztof Andrzej Boreczek, Arkadiusz Adamczyk, Dorota Malczewska-Pawelec, Marek W. Sioma, Janusz Mierzwa and Przemysław Olstowski¹⁹. A separate mention should also be included here on the outstanding book of the late Waldemar Paruch²⁰. The topics related to OZN had been also analyzed in biographical works on Marshal of Poland, Edward Śmigły-Rydz – by Ryszard Mirowicz, Wiesław J. Wysocki, M. Jabłonowski, P. Stawecki, and Lech Wyszczelski²¹.

¹⁷ E. Długajczyk, *Sanacja śląska 1926–1939. Zarys dziejów politycznych*, Katowice [1983], pp. 316–357.

¹⁸ M. Jabłonowski, *Sen o potęgę Polski. Z dziejów ruchu byłych wojskowych w II Rzeczypospolitej 1918–1939*, Olsztyn 1998, pp. 183–188, 219–225. The development of this research direction – E. Kossewska, *Związek Legionistów Polskich 1922–1939*, Warszawa 2003, passim; A. Niewęgłowska, *Federacja Polskich Związków Obrońców Ojczyzny (1928–1939)*, Warszawa 2011, passim.

¹⁹ Z.K. Zaporowski, *Koło Parlamentarne Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego w Sejmie V kadencji (1938–1939)*, "Res Historica" 1998, 4; idem, *Powstanie i pierwszy okres działalności Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego w województwie łwowskim (lutym–grudzień 1937)*, "Res Historica" 1999, 8, pp. 107–120; K.A. Boreczek, *Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego w województwie lubelskim*, "Res Historica" 1999, 8, pp. 86–106; A. Adamczyk, *Bogusław Miedziński (1891–1972). Biografia polityczna*, Toruń [2000], pp. 227–291; D. Malczewska-Pawelec, *Bogusław Miedziński (1891–1972). Polityk i publicysta*, Łódź 2002, pp. 175–201; M. Sioma, *Spór o konsolidację narodową w okresie zagrożenia wojennego (1938–1939)*, "Res Historica" 2011, 31, pp. 177–195; idem, *Polityka Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego wobec wsi i chłopów w latach 1937–1939*, "Res Historica" 2013, 35, pp. 129–148; idem, *Edward Śmigły-Rydz wobec Obozu Zjednoczenia Narodowego: współdziałanie czy „kohabitacja”, „Niepodległość”* 2012, 61, pp. 185–204; idem, *Dispute on „Polish totalitarianism” of the authorities in the years 1937–1939*, "Studia Humanistyczno-Społeczne" 2018, 20, pp. 15–39; J. Mierzwa, *Pułkownik Adam Koc. Biografia polityczna*, Kraków 2006, pp. 166–221; P. Olstowski, *Obóz pomajowy w województwie pomorskim w latach 1926–1939*, Warszawa 2008, pp. 272–330. Some more on specific issues – W. Kozyra, *Urząd Wojewódzki w Lublinie w latach 1919–1939*, Lublin 1999, pp. 194–196; K. Dziuda, *Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego w Łodzi*, "Muzealny Rocznik Historyczny" 2013, 2, pp. 135–163. The newest, but not fully successful analysis – G. Kała, *Sen o potęgę. Plany i działalność polityczna Edwarda Śmigłego-Rydza w latach 1935–1939*, Olsztyn 2021, passim.

²⁰ W. Paruch, *Mysł polityczna obozu piłsudczykowskiego 1926–1939*, Lublin 2005, passim.

²¹ R. Mirowicz, *Edward Rydz-Śmigły*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1991, pp. 161–171, 210–211, 241, 252–261; W.J. Wysocki, *Cień Zawiszy. Ostatnie lata Marszałka Edwarda Śmigłego-Rydza*,

This was also the case for biographies of other Polish officials, including works on voivodes Michał Grażyński and Wacław Kostek-Biernacki²² as well as for the monographs dedicated to Walery Sławek, who had been gradually marginalized by winning stream of his own political grouping till his tragic end²³. There are also works on the government led by General Składkowski²⁴ and on patriotic and military education²⁵. Some more books could also be very helpful to make necessary analyses and assessments on groups linked earlier to the Józef Piłsudski and his associates and their activities during WWII, i.e. publications of Jacek Piotrowski, and Marek Gałęzowski; the latter one prepared an interesting biography of one of the significant personalities of the described drama, i.e. Lt. Col. Wacław Lipiński²⁶.

2nd edition, [Komorów] 1991, pp. 12–53; M. Jabłonowski, P. Stawecki, *Następca Komendanta. Edward Śmigły-Rydz. Materiały do biografii*, Pułtusk 1998, pp. 150–184; L. Wyszczelski, *Marszałek Polski Edward Śmigły-Rydz (1886–1941)*, Toruń 2013, pp. 274–435.

²² See: W. Musialik, *Michał Tadeusz Grażyński. (1890–1965). Biografia polityczna*, Opole 1989, pp. 143–157; J. Łączewski, *Michał Grażyński (1890–1965). Sylwetka polityka*, Częstochowa 2000, pp. 135, 191–197; P. Cichoracki, *Droga ku anatemie. Wacław Kostek-Biernacki (1884–1957)*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 179–392.

²³ J.M. Nowakowski, *Walery Sławek (1879–1939). Zarys biografii politycznej*, Warszawa 1988, pp. 5–6, 159–170 and P. Adamski, *Plk dypl. Walery Sławek: biografia polityczna (1928–1939). Od BBWR do śmierci*, Łódź 2010, pp. 124–164.

²⁴ See i.a.: A. Chojnowski, *Felician Sławoj Składkowski, premier Rzeczypospolitej 15 V 1936–30 IX 1939*, in: *Prezydenci i premierzy Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, eds. A. Chojnowski, P. Wróbel, Wrocław 1992, pp. 368–373; A. Adamczyk, *Generał dywizji Sławoj Felician Składkowski (1885–1962). Zarys biografii politycznej*, Toruń 2001, pp. 232–289; M. Sioma, *Sławoj Felician Składkowski (1885–1962). Żołnierz i polityk*, Lublin 2005, pp. 307–403; J. Faryś, *Gabinet Felicjana Sławoja Składkowskiego 16 maja 1936–30 września 1939*, in: *Od Moraczewskiego do Składkowskiego. Gabinety Polski Odrodzonej 1918–1939*, eds. J. Faryś, A. Wątor, H. Walczak, Szczecin 2011, pp. 379–392.

²⁵ See also: A. Bernaś-Kostynowicz, *Spółeczeństwo polskie w wojnie obronnej 1939. Współdziałanie ludności cywilnej z wojskiem w okresie zagrożenia i działań wojennych*, Warszawa 1988, passim; J. Odziemkowski, *Armia i społeczeństwo II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1996, passim; J. Kęsik, *Naród pod bronią. Społeczeństwo w programie polskiej polityki wojskowej 1918–1939*, Wrocław 1998, pp. 106–131; L. Wyszczelski, *Społeczeństwo a obronność w Polsce (1918–1939)*, Toruń 2007, pp. 281–332; idem, *Ministerstwo Spraw Wojskowych (1918–1939)*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 194–197, 206–208; A. Ignatowicz, *Przygotowanie obronne społeczeństwa w Polsce (1921–1939)*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 199–294, 298–299.

²⁶ J. Piotrowski, *Piłsudczycy bez lidera (po 1 września 1939 roku)*, Toruń 2003, pp. 11–95; M. Gałęzowski, *„Wzór piłsudczyka”. Wacław Lipiński 1896–1949. Żołnierz, historyk, działacz polityczny*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 69–126; idem, *Wierni...*, passim; idem, *Przeciw dwóm zaborcom. Polityczna konspiracja piłsudczykowska w kraju w latach 1939–1947*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 39–63, 74, 89–93.

As for works on the government's and pro-government organizations' propaganda activities *sensu largo*, some fragments of the book of Elżbieta Kaszuba²⁷ should be taken into account as they could contribute to structuring of analyzed problems. Next such pieces are the monograph by Piotr Borowiec on the one of the press corporations²⁸ and summarizing papers prepared by Grzegorz Łukomski and Michał Przybylak²⁹. There had also been an effort to reflect on the psychosocial side of such undertakings – by Jacek Chrobaczyński³⁰. However, the results of that quest, at least in the opinion of the author of this article, are rather still debatable. To study ideological inspirations of political changes before and after the outbreak of war, including reflection on the Polish national character, part of the publication of late Andrzej Wierzbicki could also be exploited for analyses³¹.

As for printed sources, two journals should be brought to the fore – recently published recollection of Lt. Col. R. Umiastowski and notes of his deputy and actual successor, Lt. Col. W. Lipiński³². There are also some

²⁷ E. Kaszuba, *System propagandy państwowej obozu rządzącego w Polsce w latach 1926–1939*, Toruń 2004, *passim*.

²⁸ P. Borowiec, *Jesteśmy głosem milionów. Dzieje krakowskiego wydawnictwa i koncernu prasowego Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny 1910–1939*, Kraków 2005, *passim*.

²⁹ G. Łukomski, *Propaganda polska u progu II wojny światowej*, in: *Kampania*, pp. 171–186; M. Przybylak, *Stan badań nad polską propagandą wojenną w kampanii 1939 roku*, Warszawa 2022, unpublished paper. See also: J. Czechowski, *Informacja i propaganda. Spojrzenie prasy krajowej na społeczno-polityczne wydarzenia w latach 1918–1939*, Warszawa 2021, pp. 57–68, 246–328.

³⁰ J. Chrobaczyński, *Dwie klęski. Wrześniowy syndrom 1939 i klęska Francji 1940 w postawach, zachowaniach i nastrojach społeczeństwa polskiego. Próba retrospekcji i komparatystyki. Kontrowersje i dylematy*, Kraków [2015], *passim*. The advantage of the work, however, is that it examines the effects of September 1939 in an extended context.

³¹ This is about discussions in the 1930s in the circle close to Adam Skwarczyński, elder brother of the second chief of OZN – A. Wierzbicki, *Spory o polską duszę. Z zagadnień charakterologii narodowej w historiografii polskiej XIX i XX wieku*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 254–258. One of analysed problems was the question of leadership. Among of the outcomes of such discussions was the statement: 'Poles are quarrelsome, but if they have a good executive, they play great. To create a good team of Poles, one should have to give them energetic executive [group – M.P.D.]. This conclusion can be applied not only to sports.'

³² See: P.M. Żukowski, *Roman Umiastowski. Szkic biograficzny*, in: R. Umiastowski, *Dziennik wojenny 18 IX 1939–19 IX 1945*, ed. P.M. Żukowski, Warszawa 2009, pp. 24–78; P. Eberhardt, *Roman Umiastowski – zapomniany geograf*, "Acta Universitatis Lodziensis. Folia Geografica Socio-Oeconomica" 2014, 17, pp. 147–160 (the article by an eminent geographer unfortunately rehashes a historically incorrect assessment of the well-known lieutenant colonels' appeal); J.M. Kłoczowski, *Wstęp*, in: W. Lipiński, *Dziennik. Wrześniowa obrona Warszawy 1939 r.*, ed. J.M. Kłoczowski, Warszawa 1989, pp. 5–24. We also have recollections of

useful and historically important memoirs³³ as well as some collected sources on the Polish underground movement and emigration³⁴. As for the history of the Polish Radio, key accounts were published by Rafał Habielski³⁵.

To signal problems that require a new perspective and novel approach during the project, the most important is to collect and supplement the knowledge as well as to verify the interpretation of the process that was named in the subject literature 'the national consolidation'. It was linked to the person of the Marshal E. Śmigły-Rydz and social-political activities of the OZN. The last point is not widely known and correctly evaluated. The available studies sometimes show a kind of inability to conduct complex functional analyses that would be emotionless. It is not easy, because during the Communist regime those problems were long time discredited with use of the ideologically resonant invective such as 'fascification' ('faszyzacja')³⁶. As can be concluded such efforts were taken after 1935 not only in order to overcome the trend of so-called decomposition of 'Sanacja'. This was supposed to be done by building a new organization opened not to only to old Piłsudski supporters but also to people out of the Government circles, especially to representatives of the young

civilians, i.e. diaries of Ludwik Landau (*Kronika lat wojny i okupacji*, vol. 1, Wrzesień 1939–listopad 1940, eds. Z. Landau, J. Tomaszewski, Warszawa [1962]), or mobilised physician, Zygmunt Klukowski M.D. (*Zamojszczyzna*, eds. A. Knyt, B. Odnous, vol. I, 1918–1943, 2nd edition, Warszawa 2008).

³³ See also: T. Katelbach, *Spowiedź pokolenia*, ed. S. Cenckiewicz, 2nd edition, Gdańsk 2001, pp. 211–265; F.S. Składkowski, *Nieostatnie słowo oskarżonego. Wspomnienia i artykuły*, ed. A. Adamczyk, Warszawa 2003, pp. 237–353; S. Korboński, *W imieniu Rzeczypospolitej*, 6th edition, Warszawa 2009, pp. 29–63; *Wojna i konspiracja. Wspomnienia dziennikarzy polskich*, ed. E. Rudziński, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1987, pp. 9–150.

³⁴ I.a.: *Armia Krajowa w dokumentach 1939–1945*, vol. 1, Wrzesień 1939–czerwiec 1941, Szczecin 1989, pp. 1–92; *Protokoły z posiedzeń Rady Ministrów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, vol. 1, Październik 1939–czerwiec 1940, ed. M. Zgórniak, prep. W. Rojek, A. Suchcitz, Kraków 1994, pp. 1–148.

³⁵ *Polskie Radio we wrześniu 1939 r. i w okresie poprzedzającym wybuch wojny, w zeznaniach złożonych przed Wojskowym Trybunałem Orzekającym oraz Komisją Powołaną w Związku z Wynikiem Kampanii Wojennej 1939 r.*, part 1, ed. R. Habielski, "Kwartalnik Historii Prasy Polskiej" 1989, 28, 4, pp. 95–123; *Polskie Radio we wrześniu 1939 r. i w okresie poprzedzającym wybuch wojny, w zeznaniach złożonych przed Wojskowym Trybunałem Orzekającym oraz Komisją Powołaną w Związku z Wynikiem Kampanii Wojennej 1939 r.*, part 2, "Kwartalnik Historii Prasy Polskiej" 1990, 29, 1, pp. 109–130.

³⁶ The actual direction of evolution of political system in Poland in the last years of the interwar period is discussed competently by G. Ławnikowicz (*Miedzy koniecznością państwa a pochwałą autorytaryzmu. Koncepcja państwa społecznego Wacława Makowskiego*, Lublin 2014, passim).

generation. What more important, a kind of gradual militarization of the society developed simultaneously. The key was probably to prepare the nation to defend the country. The striving to mitigate inter-party divisions emerged. The plan was to assemble all groups which had declared their support to defense of the country, around the OZN³⁷. This resulted in a twofold effect – on one side authorities declared to stand together with part of the opposition seen as a constructive, incl. the Polish Socialist Party (*Polska Partia Socjalistyczna*, PPS) and try to conclude a partial truce with other political groupings³⁸. On the other – some divisions within the Piłsudskites popped up. The manifestation of such a situation were accusations made by prominent, older pro-Government activists directed to ‘successors of the Commandant’. They suggested a betrayal of the First Marshal policies, especially with regard to right-wing and center-right parties.

In the opinion of author of this article provided study should find solid evidence to support arguments about the fiasco of the OZN project, especially from the security policy and defence preparations perspectives. The results of Śmigły-Rydz’s ideas should be thoroughly examined. Especially, that the answers would not be always direct and simple. In practical terms, many political parties and groupings have though supported the Government in one way or another in conducting of defense policy. For example, they designated their representatives not only to the committee of Anti-Aircraft Defence Bonds (*Pożyczka Obrony Przeciwlotniczej*, POP), i.e. Tadeusz Bielecki from the National Party (*Stronnictwo Narodowe*, SN), Maciej Rataj from the Peasants’ Party (*Stronnictwo Ludowe*, SL), and Kazimierz Pużak from PPS, but also to a proposed Government of National Unity. Taking these facts into account, it is necessary to re-consider the assessment about the failure of the entire OZN project, initiated three years earlier. This should be linked to evaluation of *Ozon’s* attitude towards ethnic minorities and everyday practice of ruling the country, especially in the last months before the war³⁹.

³⁷ See also: W. Paruch, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

³⁸ Certain hopes of the part of ruling circles were linked with the attitude of M. Niedziałkowski, the editor of daily „Robotnik” (“The Worker”). See: M. Śliwa, *Myśl polityczna Mieczysława Niedziałkowskiego (1893–1940)*, Warszawa 1980, pp. 70–73, 362 and K. Kawalec, *Spadkobiercy niepokornych. Dzieje polskiej myśli politycznej 1918–1939*, Wrocław 2000, pp. 253–260. More on this topic – see article by Dariusz Miszewski in present volume.

³⁹ See: A. Chojnowski, *Koncepcje polityki narodowościowej rządów polskich w latach 1921–1939*, Wrocław 1979, pp. 224–239; J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita wielu narodów*, Warszawa 1985, *passim*; idem, *Zarys dziejów Żydów w Polsce w latach 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1990, *passim*; J.M. Majchrowski, *Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego wobec kwestii żydowskiej*, in: *Polska*

The popular support to policies of the Składkowski's government was also built by engaging many different communities, with OZN apparatus and its affiliated structures – i.e. the Rural Organisation (*Organizacja Wiejska*), Youth Service (*Służba Młodych*), and the Youth Legion (*Legion Młodych*), as well as with many other youth, veteran and handicapped veterans and professional societies and associations, controlled and supported, directly or indirectly by the government. The pro-OZN spirit was also propagated within ranks of the Polish Army. The same approach was assumed probably regarding the other uniformed or paramilitary formations, such as Youth Labour Corps (*Junackie Hufce Pracy*) and fully militarized National Defence units (*Obrona Narodowa*)⁴⁰. There have also been other elements that were used by authorities to support their activities within information and propaganda domains. A number of former militaries was directed to lead and coordinate actions, incl. Adam Koc, Bogusław Miedziński, and Julian Piasecki. For many of them, it was the first official political mission. It is also necessary to draw here the attention of readers to such personalities as the second head of OZN, General Stanisław Skwarczyński, his deputy, Col. Zygmunt Wenda⁴¹, and Maj. Edmund Galina, responsible for the youth section of the organization. There is still a lot to do to acquire necessary knowledge about actions of these and second-line officials before they emigrated from Poland or found themselves under German occupation.

Another crucial element to be studied is the alleged increased activity, at the turn of winter and spring 1939, of opposers of diplomatic and military confrontation with German *Reich*. This could be examined with

– Polacy – mniejszości narodowe, ed. W. Wrzesiński, Wrocław 1992, pp. 139–147; W. Paruch, *op. cit.*, pp. 394–396.

⁴⁰ See: K. Pindel, *Obrona terytorialna w II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 109, 160–227; L. Wyszczelski, *Ministerstwo*, pp. 187–188. During the initial period, it was planned to build the whole initiative with members of the Federation of Polish Associations of Defenders of the Fatherland (*Federacja Polskich Związków Obrony Ojczyzny*), Association of Reservists (*Związek Rezerwistów*), Riflemen's Association (*Związek Strzelecki*), Polish Scouting Association (*Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego*), Association of Young Village (*Związek Młodej Wsi*), Association of People's Youth (*Związek Młodzieży Ludowej*) or the Union of Gymnastics Societies "Falcon" (*Związek Towarzystw Gimnastycznych "Sokół"*). It is quite possible that it would be possible to identify the influence of the Polish Military Intelligence on such undertakings, incl. organization and combat preparation of groups for so-called diversional activities behind the enemy lines ('*dywersja pozafrontowa*') with the participation of Polish citizens and Poles from the Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Lithuania and Free City of Gdańsk – see also: W. Skóra, *Służba konsularna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Organizacja, kadry i działalność*, Toruń 2006, pp. 823–842.

⁴¹ See also: M. Gałęzowski, *Wierni*, pp. 810–813.

taking into account the case of suicide of W. Sławek⁴². The next one is the attitude of Polish freemasons of various obediences. Over ten years earlier there were quite close to the 'Sanacja' establishment, but in autumn 1938 their organizations were forced to disband own structures⁴³.

As for the propaganda activities within the country, the most known case is the action directed at the Polish society, to mobilize the public opinion to defend the country against the foreign aggression. This was supposed to result in building support to Polish Army and the government. The most prominent figure used in all such campaigns was the Marshal Śmigły-Rydz⁴⁴. However, there is still a necessity to review and evaluate, from the current perspective, objectives of the individual campaigns, expectations of chief personalities and results of actions taken both by the establishment and different organizations.

On the working level, all elements could be presented in the following formats: 1) desire to limit any problems with regard to military mobilization and create psychosocial conditions to carry it out in the most effective way; 2) increasing the readiness of the society to follow regulations and orders of state authorities; 3) aiming at minimalization of war losses in the conflict that was perceived as being close to the total war and characterized by the wide use of modern military technology to a degree much bigger than the conflict with Soviets 20 years earlier; 4) limiting the scale of internal migrations of civilians after the breakout of war, up until the night 6/7 September 1939; 5) building up the morale of soldiers and civilians both at the frontline and in the rear area as well as in defensive and fortified positions, during the fast strategic retreat and evacuation; 6) documenting the course of war. It would be interesting to see if there are general resemblances and/or continuation in aspects listed above, with regards to the time of fights for borders of the Second Republic (1919–1921).

It would be also necessary to clearly define main recipients of the action, indicate barriers that prevented effective delivering of messages to particular social groups, and evaluate range of influence and significance of propaganda activities for Polish citizens. Some more elements should be presented and described in a more precise way – as main

⁴² A primary attempt to clarify the issue – J. Rawicz, *Pozostało do wyjaśnienia*, Warszawa 1979, pp. 261–284.

⁴³ See: L. Hass, *Masoneria polska w XX wieku. Losy, loże, ludzie*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1996, pp. 81–89; L. Chajin, *Polskie wolnomularstwo 1920–1938*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1984, passim.

⁴⁴ An example of an introductory study – M.P. Deszczyński, *Ostatni*, pp. 400–406. See also: M. Krzanicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 248–257, 265, 268.

figures and operators of the information warfare concept (incl. Umiastowski, Lipiński, and President Starzyński) and its celebrities (i.e., famous opera-singer Jan Kiepura). Some more assessment should also be done on the executive branch of the government, such as Ministry of Interior, Polish Telegraph Agency (*Polska Agencja Telegraficzna*, PAT), Polish Radio and media/press groups (i.e. *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny*, *Dom Prasy*), printing houses and cinemas. Another issue for a scientific consideration is funding (sources of financing, volume of funds, schedules and structure of expenses). *Pars pro toto*, in case of lack of the governmental files some archival items of the territorial level should also be taken into account.

The forms and channels of propaganda activities have been diverse and multidimensional. One can enumerate about twenty of them even now. Therefore, they should be evaluated in a comprehensive but still general way. Such elements include occasional speeches of government officials, meetings, rallies, demonstrations, and marches organized by the administration and pro-government organizations, different types of reunions, state ceremonies, education curricula for the basic⁴⁵ and higher education⁴⁶, as well as for scouting, educational activities within the military and other services, information distributed to state and local officials, to workers of state-owned enterprises, official announcements and statements. Such actions were complemented by press publications (in daily press and periodicals) as well as by other means: posters, leaflets, wall newspapers⁴⁷, post stamps and other philatelic values, banners and installations, radio programs, newsreel issues of "Tygodnik Dźwiękowy PAT", occasional films, fabular movies and documentaries, different gadgets, also imprints on bottles, cigarettes and matchboxes, and military songs, caricatures, cartoons, theatre/cabaret performances⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ See: W. Garbowska, *Szkolnictwo powszechne w Polsce w latach 1932–1939*, Wrocław 1976, pp. 174–176; Z. Konieczny, *Szkolnictwo średnie miasta Przemyśla w latach 1918–1939*, Przemyśl 1985, pp. 146–171.

⁴⁶ See also: M.P. Deszczyński, *Uniwersytet Warszawski i Uniwersytet Józefa Piłsudskiego w Warszawie w systemie polskiego szkolnictwa wyższego 1918–1939*, in: *Dzieje Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 1915–1945*, ed. P.M. Majewski, Warszawa 2016, pp. 369–370, 376–378, 386–392.

⁴⁷ See: A. Zdanowicz, *Propaganda ukrywana – wiejska gazeta ścienna „Nowiny” (1933–1939)*, "Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej" 2016, 47, pp. 91–107.

⁴⁸ It should be noted that apart from the activities mentioned above, there have also been diverse and multi-dimensional propaganda activities carried out by the Naval Defence Fund (*Fundusz Obrony Morskiej* – see: T. Białas, *Liga Morska i Kolonialna 1930–1939*, Gdańsk 1983, pp. 134–145), National Defence Fund (*Fundusz Obrony Narodowej*) or Airborne and Antigas Defence League (*Liga Obrony Powietrznej i Przeciwgazowej*).

Also literary work should be mentioned as it had a huge emotional load, apart from famous poets like Kazimierz Wierzyński and Władysław Broniewski, but also for example, moving report by Józef Kisielewski from Western Pomerania that exposed the sinister specificity of the Nazi regime⁴⁹. Nevertheless, already since the 1920s, some militaristic components have also become visible in visual arts. On the other hand, one can notice pro-consolidation trends in architecture and various urban arrangements designed or only partially built in late years of the next decade, i.e. *Oleandry* in Cracow, Gdynia Maritime Forum and Marshal Józef Piłsudski District in Warsaw. Some similar threads were also present in the sacral architecture⁵⁰.

As for research problems, some more analysis should be done to determine phases of information actions, their evolution and intensity – as it has its apogee most likely in the period since the first days of general mobilization up until the time the government left the capital city, and destruction of the main radio transmission center in Raszyn near Warsaw on 7 September, and after startling, emotional appeal of Lt. Col. Umiastowski, aired on the personal order of the Commander-in-Chief in order to withdraw human reserves in the east direction, far behind the Vistula line, and prepare the defense of capital, which had been endangered by the German *Panzer* advance. During next days, due to very high pace of German military operations, evacuation of the edition staff and paper deficits, influence of press and media has significantly been reduced. Soon, relatively good situation in this area existed only in Gdynia, Poznań, Warsaw, in Białystok, Lublin, Wilno/Vilnius (“Słowo”) and Lwów/Lviv (“Dziennik Polski”), also in some Eastern voivodeships. Such activities were supported by regional radio stations, however having limited power. Warszawa II resumed broadcasting on medium waves after not long break. Lwów, Baranowicze/Baranovichi and Wilno stations worked till they were seized by Soviets. The final beats of the Polish side of the

⁴⁹ See: G. Labuda, *Posłowie*, in: J. Kisielewski, *Ziemia gromadzi prochy*, 2nd edition, Poznań 1939 (reprint: Warszawa 1990), pp. XXVII–XXXIX.

⁵⁰ See: A. Melbechowska-Luty, *Posagi i ludzie. Rzeźba polska dwudziestolecia międzywojennego*, Warszawa 2005, passim; F. Burno, *Świątynie nowego państwa. Kościoły rzymskokatolickie II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa [2012], passim; B. Zbroja, M. Bemberek, *Architektura międzywojennego Krakowa. Budynki. Ludzie. Historie*, Kraków 2013, pp. 180–181; J. Trybuś, *Warszawa niezaistniała. Niezrealizowane projekty urbanistyczne i architektoniczne Warszawy dwudziestolecia międzywojennego*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 260–342. Although conclusions of the author of the last publication mentioned here show deficiencies in historical knowledge (i.e. on pp. 351–352, he claims that ‘almost 20% of Warsaw inhabitants [...] are of the Eastern origin [sic]’), the work also includes interesting interpretations of events unfolding at the intersection of different domains: social, political and art.

information war took place in Warsaw. Just after the ceasefire of 29 September, the third and last edition of the "Gazeta Wspólna" ("The Joined Gazette") was published. The next day, about noon, the radio broadcasting studio at Zielna Street 25 aired on short waves the announcement on German troops taking Warsaw, in three languages and bid farewell to radio listeners. New editions of former pro-government "Dobry Wieczór! Kurier Czerwony" ("Good Evening! The Red Herald") and opposition "Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy" ("Warsaw National Daily") were printed in the first days of October, in practical terms still without the control from aggressor. Since 11 October "Nowy Kurier Warszawski" ("The New Warsaw Herald") was published. It was the slimy, the main title of occupation press fully controlled by German authorities, soon has become the main official source of information for the city, that was degraded to the capital of the *Distrikt Warschau* only. Till the end of the month the 'old', newspapers ceased to circulate⁵¹.

It is quite obvious that it would be necessary to explore the content of such press editions over the time. It is widely known that it was the period of presenting the power of the state and its Armed Forces, positive attributes of the General Inspector of the Armed Forces/Commander-in-Chief, and the direction of the foreign policy conducted by the Minister Józef Beck. This was complemented by calls to stay calm and reasonable, to follow instructions of authorities, to continue to show dedication and generosity, to keep official and military secrets, not to spread rumors and take care about soldiers, reservists, and their families, and to fight off speculation. The separate dimension had been the set of issues related to the activity of the Airborne and Antigas Defence League (*Liga Obrony Powietrznej i Przeciwgazowej*, LOPP). Another essential question covers the content of information directed to ethnic minorities, especially to Ukrainians, Belarussians, Jews, and Germans. This problem has not been properly noticed so far, but we must remember that those minorities constituted 1/3 of the population and rather less (about 1/5?) of potential readers and listeners of broadcasts in the Polish language.

It is rightly to say already now that the media coverage was to reassure Polish citizens through the rationalization of the relativity of the German military superiority over the Polish Republic, exposing lies and countering the offensive Nazi propaganda. Some elements of the situation were rather ignored (i.e. technical and logistic capabilities of the enemy, Molotov-Ribbentrop Agreement), another has been overstated (i.e. long-term

⁵¹ See: M.J. Kwiatkowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 301–302, 336; J. Jarowiecki, J. Myśliński, A. Notkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 16; T. Szarota, *Okupowanej Warszawy dzień powszedni. Studium historyczne*, 3rd edition, Warszawa 1988, pp. 15–23, 555–556.

weaknesses of Germany). There were also issues that in fact were not been presented, like an attitude of the Soviet Union towards Poland (till 16 September 1939), the real eventuality, that parts of the Polish Army and other uniformed services will probably have to leave big areas of the country to the enemy, and – in effect – the possibility of the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of the common civilians. There had been also fake news that were related to alleged large-scale military operations of France and United Kingdom and imagined Polish military victories.

What is also necessary is to present different types of argumentations that were used (i.e. ‘we support the government because we agree with its attitude and decisions’), verify similarities and differences with the WWI Legion-type propaganda that was used 25 years earlier (incl. the specific sense of jaunty humor). It would be also useful to define and describe the scale of distance to propagated content. For instance, as we know from studies on the Polish popular literature, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs tolerated in the springtime of 1939 printing in the “Express Poranny” (“Morning Express”) newspaper stories about Mrs. Hanka, a wife of the young and promising official working in the Brühl Palace. The well-known author of that future novel and critic of the ruling ‘Sanacja’ Tadeusz Dołęga-Mostowicz described him as a person of a rather little perspicacity, as we can assess especially today, reading his remarks on key issues related to international events. But at the same time, the book by aged politician Władysław Studnicki *Wobec nadchodzącej drugiej wojny światowej* (*In View of the Upcoming Second World War*) was confiscated. More serious troubles happened to Stanisław Mackiewicz (aka ‘Cat’, pronounce: ‘Tsat’), top Polish conservative publicist of the time and the former Deputy to the Polish Parliament, who earlier represented the Nonpartisan Bloc for the Cooperation with the Government of Józef Piłsudski (*Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem Józefa Piłsudskiego*, BBWR) but was critical of the contemporary establishment. In March 1939 he was detained for publications on the policy of Składkowski government (charge: ‘weakening the defensive spirit of Poles’) and spent over two weeks in isolation camp in Bereza Kartuska⁵².

Of course, pro-consolidation effects have to be mentioned in this study, i.a. with figures from parliamentary election to the Fifth Term

⁵² See: P. Śliwinski, *Tadeusz Dołęga-Mostowicz*, Poznań 1994, pp. 143–144; J. Gzella, *Zaborcy i sąsiedzi Polski w myśli społeczno-politycznej Władysława Studnickiego (do 1939 roku)*, Toruń 1998, pp. 265–267; J. Jaruzelski, *Stanisław Cat-Mackiewicz 1896–1966. Wilno – Londyn – Warszawa*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1994, pp. 191–200; M. Wojtacki, „Słowo” Stanisława Cata-Mackiewicza. *Dziennik konserwatystów wileńskich w latach 1922–1939. Monografia pisma*, Toruń 2009, pp. 217–240.

Sejm and local governments⁵³. They show quite high, about 50%, popularity of the 'Sanacja' and the OZN in the group of people who are eligible to vote. The level of support was even higher within the population of the Polish ethnicity, at least since the beginning of spring 1939. The broad acceptance of the Beck's speech in Sejm on 5 May and very good results of POP bonds subscription remained high for subsequent weeks. The return of the leaders of the opposition from over five years exile, Wincenty Witos and Wojciech Korfanty, who were convicted in 'Trial of Brześć', should also not be considered as a failure of the ruling establishment pro-consolidation policies⁵⁴. In addition, in the second half of August 1939, satisfactory results of the process of 'silent' mobilization of reservists and enthusiasm of the population to government defense preparations, such as digging of anti-aircraft ditches, should be noted and appreciated.

Hopes pinned on all this – because it was not just about the simply fulfilment of citizen's duty – have turned against the ruling camp, as a result of and great armed defeat and the crushing of any chances for a quick and victorious end of war. This aspect should absolutely be included into the study. Men of new emigration establishment gathered around General Sikorski deliberately played such a card, and this additionally channeled the national frustration. In practical terms, it had been happening already since October 1939⁵⁵. To make the *ancien regime* account-

⁵³ See i.a.: A. Ajnenkiel, *II Rzeczpospolita*, in: *Historia Sejmu polskiego*, ed. A. Ajnenkiel, vol. 2, part 2, Warszawa 1989., pp. 211–213; H. Izdebski, *Samorząd terytorialny w II Rzeczypospolitej*, in: *Samorząd terytorialny. Zagadnienia prawne i administracyjne*, eds. A. Piekara, Z. Niewiadomski, Warszawa 1998, pp. 84–89; R. Szwed, *Samorządowa Rzeczpospolita 1918–1939. Wybór rozpraw i artykułów*, 2nd edition, Częstochowa 2002, pp. 45–46. As for Warsaw – A. Szczypiorski, *Samorząd Warszawy (1916–1939)*, in: *Warszawa II Rzeczypospolitej*, issue 1, eds. E. Borecka, M. Drozdowski, H. Janowska, Warszawa 1971, pp. 97–98.

⁵⁴ See: A. Zakrzewski, *Wincenty Witos. Chłopski polityk i mąż stanu*, Warszawa 1977, pp. 372–375; *Wincenty Witos*, ed. M.P. Deszczyński, Warszawa 2009, p. [16]; *Wojciech Korfanty*, ed. M. Skrzypek, Warszawa 2009, p. [24]; J.F. Lewandowski, *Wojciech Korfanty*, [2nd edition], Warszawa 2013, pp. 197–224. As for the leader of Christian democrats, the authorities wasted a chance to use this effect as his health deteriorated after the several months detention. He died on 17 August 1939, i.e. over dozen days before the German invasion. This, together with the abandonment of Upper Silesia by the Polish Army and civilian authorities a few days later, dealt an *ex post* serious moral blow to the government of Gen. Sładkowski and the ruling team.

⁵⁵ See: M. Pestkowska, *Uchodźcze pasje. Władysław Sikorski a polska społeczność emigracyjna na Zachodzie 1939–1943*, Paris 1991, pp. 27, 31–37 and M. Kwiecień, *Wśród potępięcych swarów. Prawne aspekty rozliczeń politycznych wśród uchodźstwa polskiego we Francji i Wielkiej Brytanii 1939–1943*, Kraków 2013, *passim*. Such ardentness and lack of a proper knowledge remains an issue also in our century. See an uncritical introduction to the edition of sources – M. Adamczyk, J. Gmitruk, *Wstęp*, in: *Sprawcy klęski wrześniowej przed sądem historii*.

able for the disaster, these groups sometimes repeated even claims made by propaganda of Berlin and Moscow. This deteriorated the psycho-social situation further and threatened the moral demobilization – not only of the army in exile. For over the century, wide and intensive campaign of slandering ‘Sanacja’ overshadowed the picture of the September 1939 and prevented its balanced and fair assessment, and not only within the social dimension. Although the paralyzing effect of the clash of analyzed Polish propaganda with brutal reality was objectively mitigated by the German successes and defeats of allies in whole Europe during 1940–1941, but it did not change the situation significantly. Even now, some splinters of such narratives are still present within the Polish population, and used in political rhetoric or in contemporary media campaigns, also those linked to the current conflict in Ukraine.

After the consideration of all things mentioned above, it is possible to formulate the main hypothesis related to, as we call now, the ‘strategic communication’ problem. It should be related to the social situation and information preparation to war. The ruling establishment had made certain mistakes and committed some omissions, mainly with regard to new media technologies that time. Within the domestic dimension, their impact did not ease the trauma, that was deepening the grief brought by each day. Tens of hours period, starting in the afternoon of 3 September by the breaking news on enter of the Great Britain and France to war, was the peak of positive mood of the population. However, this was probably not case in areas already occupied. Foreign consequences of the outlined crisis were constrained, although with some delay, due to resume of the Warszawa II program of the Polish Radio and the beginning of spontaneous action of the American filmmaker Julien Bryan, which had a really big share in documenting of war in Poland and broadcasting information that could help the fighting country⁵⁶.

Dokumenty komisji badawczych władz polskich na emigracji, eds. M. Adamczyk, J. Gmitruk, Warszawa 2005, pp. 5–24.

⁵⁶ In addition, due to security reasons, so few Polish photographs and shots were taken during the final stages of mobilization and the first days of the war. The activity of amateur photographers and filmmakers was clearly limited at that time. Therefore, one of the tasks for researchers in upcoming years should be juxtaposition other examples of documentation of mobilization and combat made by Polish side, particularly outside Warsaw, and preparing the reliable catalogue. It is possible that during the Communist period, some of the remaining records were lost, because until the second half of the 1950s there was no climate in the country for archiving them, and later it was also variously. As a result, until the development of the phenomenon of historical reenactment, there was practically no other visual message in circulation than that recorded and used by both aggressors, with a small addition of materials of Hungarian, Romanian, or possibly Lithuanian provenance.

It is also possible to identify some other working hypotheses: 1) one of the main tasks of the state was to prepare the nation, with a psychosocial type of operation lasting few months, to face unavoidable consequences of the Polish refusal to German and Soviet demands; 2) Poland wanted, in the information domain, to present a calm, balanced and sensible posture. That was the reason for self-limitation and reactive approach, especially on the foreign policy arena. The main objective was to avoid situation in which Poland would be blamed for an outbreak of conflict. Generally speaking, it worked out, as even nominal German allies, i.e. Japan and Italy, did not believe lies from Berlin, despite efforts of apparatus directed by Dr. Josef Goebbels; 3) a moral mobilization of the society, till the first week of war, partially even longer, was generally a success, although the social mood was undermined by Soviet aggression; 4) we can talk about several assumed positions – on the nation/state being strong ('silni'), tight-knit ('zwarci') and ready ('gotowi') for the defense. This complemented another important narrative on the necessity to build up military potential that emerged already in 1936–1938; 5) in the narratives presented to the recipients the possibility of defeat had been not exposed, writing only sometimes about the option of a lonely struggle with stronger enemy. It is hard to blame anyone for this, i.a. after the making a political decision to fight. Propaganda activities, in some of the cases, were based on the assumption that the knowledge about realities should be disseminated sparingly to avoid any breakdown of the social mood; 6) tight security and protecting information about own weaknesses should be considered as a positive manner of action as it helped to protect direct preparations for defense.

To make an effort to explain long term media and psychosocial results of the political and military defeat of the 'Sanacja' establishment, it is necessary to take into account the assumption that no country, till 1940, had to face such a big collision of its military and political effectiveness narratives with the tragic reality of invasion of the German Nazi/Soviet Russia, totalitarian regime. Poland was the first such a state and has found itself in addition in the trap of acting as a power ('mocarstwowość'). It was quite then logic to convince citizens, in a rational and acceptable way, that under such historical, political and military conditions, few months after great celebrations of the 20th anniversary of restoring Polish independence, the Republic have to reject the toxic compromise and

Already now, pictures/films from reenactors' activities are sometimes virtually aged, and in the public consciousness (which also applies to media editors), the much less numerous authentic photographs/shots are being replaced by the 'artificial' documentation being created at present. This can lead to serious misunderstandings.

to face the threat of real military confrontation. But on the other hand, it was difficult to explain to the population that if we want to save the honor, we probably would lose the initial phase of war, and all at the cost of huge human and material losses. That was the main reason to improvise the information warfare, although it could not have been so effective as assumed, because in September 1939 arose in fact the conditions of a lone fight, not like in the current case of Ukraine, actively and widely supported by the Western world in conflict with Russia. The elements similar to present situation occurred rather during the three-month Soviet-Finnish 'Winter War' on the turn of 1939/40. It seems that the system that emerged in Poland at that time can be described as a hybrid of four models distinguished in public relations literature (the classic categorization of James E. Grunig – Todd [T.] Hunt), containing – in the order of importance at that time – basically elements of propaganda and informing the public opinion, as well as asymmetric, and exceptionally also symmetric two-way communication. This was a phenomenon characteristic of the first period of development of the PR⁵⁷.

Referring to the problem of distorting the message it could be initially assessed that the ruling circles really decided on the concealment of certain reports⁵⁸. Then, especially after the actual loss of control over the system after the leaving of Warsaw by the government and supreme command, there were published/aired by various levels of the decentralized mechanism of information war invented or false news, which today can be easily identified in surviving newspaper issues. The remaining space between outlined extremes was filled in with many of examples of wishful thinking, though based on worsening steadily realities. All of this in the end of September it brought rather tragic dissonances. The main objective of such initiatives was to sustain the spirit of the population and build the attitude of a collective, at least passive heroism and fulfilment of duties. We should remember that it was probably not always along with the will of the majority, which remembered the times of Poland partitions.

The defeat, after just few weeks resulted in a kind of social depression, and even could evoke feelings of being deceived by authorities among a certain part of society. In view of the already outlined attitude of General Sikorski's government and the fact that the previous decision-makers (mostly interned in Romania) were deprived for some

⁵⁷ See for example: B. Rozwadowska, *Public relations. Teoria, praktyka, perspektywy*, [2nd edition], Warszawa [2006], pp. 30–51.

⁵⁸ On the dissemination of news about the secret annex to the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, see: M.P. Deszczyński, *Biały wywiad nie zawiódł*, "Polska Zbrojna. Historia" 2023, 3, pp. 14–19.

time of their voices, the 'Sanacja' lost social confidence, especially in the occupied country. It seems that the highest moral price for the actual course of action on the media front was paid in public perception by the Commander-in-Chief, Marshal Śmigły-Rydz, Minister of Foreign Affairs Beck and Prime Minister General Składkowski. The two remaining members of the state governing body were treated clearly more graciously by the national collective memory⁵⁹.

It is also understandable that it would be necessary to determine whether any weaknesses in analyzed actions were noticed by the ruling and executive circles already before the actual start of mobilization? In order to answer of such a question, the starting point could be the study of content of initial underground publications, particularly prepared by authors close to the Piłsudskites. In addition, it would be necessary to consider if there had been any alternative for propagated contents that would allow to ease possible shock after the defeat and not to lead to deterioration in social mood. We have to determine, which used theses were effective/ineffective and/or counterproductive. The last but not least important question is to settle, whether really one can talk about helplessness of Polish propaganda against Soviet invasion.

To describe presented problems, it would be necessary to place accents in rather symmetric way. Analysis of pro-consolidation platform i.e. attitudes and actions of pro-government structures towards civilian and military authorities' policy, defense preparations and course of military campaign should encompass make over 1/3 of the work. The remaining part (respectively: below and above its half) should be dedicated to propaganda mechanisms and media content. Any research within the second segment will be the most difficult, from the methodological and organizational point of view. The third one could be analyzed in much flexible way, and could be continued even after the termination of the project, with printed sources or e-resources. An introduction, with the presentation of the importance of the topic, as well as conclusions should be covered maximum of 15% of the total volume. Probably, the chronological-problem construct would have to be applied here.

⁵⁹ It can be stated that the person of the non-partisan after all president and distinguished scientist I. Mościcki was exempted from formal charges (but not from even the harshest criticism) by the constitution. On the other hand, in the case of a prominent member of the government, i.e. deputy prime minister and minister of the treasury eng. Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski, even publications about scientific ambitions usually pass over his involvement in the activities of the OZN in silence (exception: M.M. Drozdowski, *Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski*, Wrocław 2001, pp. 116–123).

It is also necessary to make necessary assumptions on methodology and heuristics⁶⁰ including widening the scope of the research beyond only the press, with use of archival recordings and radio documentation, as well as the press information concerning broadcasting (via "Antena" weekly), photographs, movies, and of course PAT's newsreels (incl. so-called offs). Due to tight schedule assigned to the project, it would be necessary to use positively verified monographs, printed sources and selective press research, complemented by archival materials from the Polish Radio Archive (*Archiwum Polskiego Radia*), National Digital Archive (*Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe*), National Film Archive (*Filmoteka Narodowa*, FINA – mainly Film Archive at the Chełmska Street), Polish TV Archive (*Archiwum Telewizji Polskiej*), Institute of National Remembrance Archive (*Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej*), Archives of Modern Records (*Archiwum Akt Nowych*), Military Historical Office – Central Military Archive (*Wojskowe Biuro Historyczne – Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe*), The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (*Instytut Polski and Muzeum im. gen. Władysława Sikorskiego*) in London and Józef Piłsudski Institutes in London and New York. It would be also useful to complement the recordings and documents available on the Polish Radio with recordings and stenographic documents prepared in other countries, i.a. Bucharest and Budapest; there are also suppositions about monitoring of Warszawa II broadcasts in Copenhagen, Stockholm, possibly also by the BBC. A kind of substitute could also be reviews and reportages published in the foreign press of the time.

⁶⁰ See newer works, concerning also some aspects of methodology: M. Getter, A. Tokarz, *Wrzesień 1939 w książce, prasie i filmie. Poradnik bibliograficzny*, [3rd edition], Warszawa 1973; N. Kraśko, *Instytucje wydawnicze w II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 2001; *Media audiowizualne w warsztacie historyka*, ed. D. Skotarczak, Poznań 2008 (i.e. article of Anna Topolska); *Komunikowanie się i komunikacja w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym*, eds. K. Stępnik, M. Rajewski, Lublin 2011; *Komunikowanie się Polaków w okresie II wojny światowej*, eds. K. Stępnik, M. Rajewski, Lublin 2010. Examples of album type publications, with the collage of various sources: "A więc wojna..." . *Ludność cywilna we wrześniu 1939 r. "It's War ...". The Civilian Population in September 1939*, Warszawa–Lublin 2009, passim; 1939. *Polska była pierwsza*, eds. A.K. Kunert, R.E. Stolarski, Z. Walkowski, Warszawa 2009, passim; *Rok 1939. Rozbiór Polski*, ed. M. Markowska, Warszawa 2009, passim; A. Wesołowski, K. Stepan, *To proste – będziemy się bić. Przygotowania obronne (marzec–sierpień 1939)*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 391–406 and M. Krzanicki, *op. cit.*, insert after p. 248.

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NOTA O AUTORZE

Marek P. Deszczyński – dr hab., historyk, profesor uczelni w Instytucie Historii i Polemologii Akademii Sztuki Wojennej. Zajmuje się historią najnowszą, dziejami wojskowymi, gospodarczymi, dyplomatycznymi i kultury. W badaniach koncentruje się na historii Polski i świata I połowy XX stulecia. Opublikował m.in. monografie: *Ostatni egzamin*.

Wojsko Polskie wobec kryzysu czechosłowackiego 1938–1939 (Warszawa 2003); *Na krawędzi ryzyka. Eksport polskiego sprzętu wojskowego w okresie międzywojennym* (Warszawa 2004, współautor); *Kampania polska 1939 r. Polityka – społeczeństwo – kultura. Polish Campaign 1939. Politics – Society – Culture*, t./vols 1–2 (Warszawa/Warsaw 2013–2014, współautor i współredaktor); *Monumenta Universitatis Varsoviensis*, [III], *Dzieje Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 1915–1945*, red. Piotr M. Majewski (Warszawa 2016, współautor).