
New Perspectives

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Revolt in the Framework of Memory. "Solidarity," Revolution, Rebellion

TEKSTY DRUGIE 2023, NR 1, S. 80–102

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"So it's not short memory that's at stake here, but another opportunity?"¹

Krzysztof Siwczyk

We give our attention to memory because we assume – not without good reason – that it acts as the scaffolding for both individual and collective identity. Memory does not merely concern the past, but it intertwines with present experiences, imposing patterns that are sourced from the past upon the world as it is seen and experienced. It interferes with the way we perceive the world, influencing our participation in life and the planned future. To investigate memory is to reach deep into the matrices of meaning, which codetermine the range of questions that can be directed at the actual world, it is to search for those images and narratives that still exert influence. Memory is therefore not so much a depository of history, but more of a co-creator of each and every present.

1 Krzysztof Siwczyk, "Zdania z treścią" [Sentences with content] [2003], in *List otwarty 1995–2005* (Wrocław: Biuro Literackie, 2005), 202.

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Contrary to how it may seem, memory is not an easy object to study. On the face of it, access to its archives is sparsely defended, as it permeates almost every aspect of everyday experience – testimonies and letters, works of art and daily routines, monuments and street names, collective acts of foundation and destruction. But even though one cannot utter anything that would not be in some way indebted to memory and cannot perform any act that would not be bound to it, there is an endless capacity to occlude or distort each and every memory. The memory recounted through the verbal testimony of the witness – with which this paper is concerned – does not add up to any neat whole, it is composed rather from matters that are important than from ones that are true, it is nothing like a static archive but is in constant flux, it is a form of action, of incessant renegotiation of meaning conducted by the subject with the self and with the community of which it is a part. Memory is therefore not a storage of some comprehensive version of the past, it is not objective and it is not settled. These three defining traits present with striking force at pivotal moments of public life. At such times society clashes over memory not in order to establish how things really were, but to strengthen partisan positions in the struggle to define the present. The disagreements about the past are not about objective truth but about myth – about the story which will lend sense and structure to the present moment.

The fight over memory, even if it extends to the farthest reaches of the past, is always about arranging the present. The one who determines memory – that is, the direction which memory has set for the present – is the one defining the current situation.

The Point of Contention

The paper “Im się zdaje, że zapomnimy. O nie! Rodowody rewolucji” [“They think we’ll forget. No way!” Origins of the revolution] by Marcin Zaremba deserves praise for its unhurried archaeological work as well as – or, maybe, especially – for the vastness of presented sources. In it, the author introduced letters censored or confiscated by state functionaries, which were probably never analyzed before. On this basis, further strengthened by an interesting reappraisal of the mass culture of that era, the author posits that the year 1980 accumulated within itself the memory of all previous rebellions against Communism and that, in addition to this, it activated the blueprint for insurrections known from previous epochs.

The assertion that the memory of insurrections shined through the actions of the “Solidarity” years is indisputably truthful. Together with this truth we also need to acknowledge the veracity of the belief that the memory of insurrections could become intertwined with the “Solidarity” movement only

through subsequent juxtapositions and reductions. The differences between the November, January, or Warsaw Insurrections and the “Solidarity” movement needed to disappear in a chain of substitutions, if the events of the years 1980–1981 were to become another link in the tradition of the struggle for independence. Stacking up members of a workers union against insurgents could only be done at the cost of simplifications and radical omissions. The axis of similitude has in this case taken over the axis of equivalence.

Taking all this into account, the assertion that the memory of insurrections appeared at the time of “Solidarity” is at the same time self-evident and inadequate. It is self-evident, if we only recall the sheer number of references to the insurrectionist traditions made at the time. It will prove inadequate, if we claim the insurrectionist memory to be the social, political, and historical dominant of the “Solidarity” era. I am ready to go as far as to claim that if the memory of insurrections was to be the principal factor in the origin of “Solidarity,” then the independent trade union would never have been created.

The Heroic Dominant

When we research the memory of the participants of the “Solidarity” movement from the early 1980s, we attempt to learn what people remembered because we assume that it had some bearing on individual and collective action. Analyzing documents in search of metaphors, associations, analogies, and comparisons should aid in the reconstruction of a modelling framework – that is, a quasi-system responsible for structuring reality on both the individual and collective plane, and therefore shaping the actions and the perception of reality at the time.

From among the numerous methods of analyzing memory Marcin Zarembo had chosen the one that – paraphrasing Maurice Halbwachs – relies on reconstructing the insurrectionist frames of memory. For the French author of the study *The Social Frameworks of Memory*,² individual memory is never truly individual. Remembering is, in his opinion, a deeply societal action that is embedded within frames of memory; that is, in “the instruments used by collective memory to reconstruct an image of the past which is in accord, in each epoch, with the predominant thoughts of the society.”³ Therefore, individuals remember that which is important for communication within the bounds of the small-scale society to which they belong – the family, social

2 See Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago–London: Chicago University Press, 1992).

3 Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 40.

class, or religious community. Hence, individual memory not only retains the particular information required for interpersonal communication but it is also shaped by that very act of communication. As members of a family, class, or religious community we build concrete memories that allow us to become embedded in a given group and, in the process, we also become sensitized to certain issues and desensitized to other ones. Halbwachs assumes that “the individual remembers by placing himself in the perspective of the group.”⁴ Memory and the individual’s co-existence within a community influence and support one another: individual memory is a carrier of collective identity, while collective identity is a cache of behaviors and definitions that ground an individual. An individual human being remembers not that which happened, but that which strengthens group cohesion. A change in identification – with class, family, or religion – is accompanied by the adoption of a new sensibility in the sphere of memory. Memories from the previous stage are not lost in the process, of course, but the conviction about their importance for the current social position is.

Zaremba also mentions other scholars, who introduced such terms as “cultural frameworks” (Jack Goldstone), “tradition” (Jerzy Szacki), “collective memory of the past” (Barbara Szacka), or “historical culture.” What all these notions have in common – Zaremba writes – “is that they speak of the same thing: of a system of values, meanings, symbols, convictions that was inherited from the past and which dominates and shapes the social, economic, religious, and political mores and strategies of action.”⁵ This leads to the conclusion that tradition – in the same sense in which Halbwachs spoke of the “community” – is the framework of individual and collective memory: we learn to remember not by the virtue of direct participation, but in the course of incessant repetition performed by the community to which we belong; we articulate not memory in its completeness, but those fragments of the past which help us identify our place in a given group and a course of action that is adequate to it.

The methodological construct defined in such a way is highly inspiring and, at the same time, very treacherous. The author analyzed the collective memory of the participants of the “Solidarity” movement, extracting from it the memories of national insurrections, with the visible prominence of the Warsaw Insurrection. This was accompanied by an assertion that collective memory is – exactly as Halbwachs claimed – selective and one-sidedly

4 Ibid.

5 Marcin Zaremba, “Im się zdaje, że zapomnimy. O nie! Rodowody rewolucji” [“They think we’ll forget. No way!”: Origins of the revolution], *Teksty Drugie* 6 (2016): 153–203.

accumulative: such memory radically and unceremoniously edits out anything that is not deemed essential, retaining only that which will help nurture collective identity. This assertion helps the scholar corroborate another presupposition, which claims that societies differ in their collective behavior: Polish society is rebellious, while other communities are rather prone to negotiation or obedience. According to Marcin Zaremba, the source of behaviors that dominate Polish culture is the insurrectionist framework, which through the elimination of a more nuanced view of the past shapes the message about the collective heroic position. This gives rise to a distinct feedback loop: the insurrectionist message upheld by the community forms individual memory, which sources and retains from the entirety of experience those fragments which fit with the heroic whole. That is how Zaremba explains the conditions that made “Solidarity” possible – the memory of past insurrections recalled by the society of the 1970s provided the kindling for igniting another one in the year 1980. Meanwhile, the history of the 1980s – that culminated in the Polish Round Table Talks – seems to prove that not every act of resistance turns into an insurrection, and that not every insurrection liberates all of its participants and, furthermore, that there is no such tradition which could not be constructed anew by a given society.

Revolt Against Insurrection

At the beginning there was a strike. It broke out in Świdnik on July 8, 1980, and afterwards it spread to the whole land of Lublin; it lasted until July 25. It was sparked by the announcement on July 1 of an expected rise in food prices. The workers at the aviation works in Świdnik, Polmozbyt in Lublin, the agricultural machinery works, truck assembly plant, nitrate production facility in Puławy, and the rolling bearings manufacturer in Krasnik,⁶ as well as in many other enterprises, demanded improvement of working conditions and the termination of numerous privileges (such as the shops operating beyond the state-regulated market, or conducting domestic commerce in foreign currency) for state apparatchiks and the well-off.

Without this wave of protest there would be no “Solidarity,” though the hasty signing of agreements with the crews did not bode well for its continuation. The worker’s demands were twofold – economic and political – and, therefore, this would indicate that the strikes did not originate in the

6 Świdnickie Zakłady Lotnicze, Polmozbyt – Polish motor vehicle retailer, Fabryka Maszyn Rolniczych [Agricultural machine factory], Fabryka Samochodów Ciężarowych [Truck factory], Zakłady Azotowe w Puławach [Nitrogen factory in Puławy], Fabryka Łożysk Toczących w Kraśniku [Rolling bearings factory in Kraśnik].

insurrectionist memory but rather were rooted in working class consciousness. In response to the experience of poverty, hopelessness, and disorder, this consciousness gave rise to a desperate need for change:

During a later conversation a friend recalled that she also spoke with other colleagues, and we will not work, to put things simply, there can no longer be such disorganization as there is now.⁷

We've had enough.⁸

In the early phase it [...] was a purely emotional approach, that something has to change, that someone finally started to do something about it, and maybe it will be better. Though, nobody yet knew why it would be better, or who would be the one to do it. All in all, it was a feeling of the kind that something should finally change in the country.⁹

The revolutionary “Things cannot go on like this anymore” leads at first to a strike. Throughout the entire postwar period the Communist governments did not allow the word “strike” to enter the official language, substituting it with such euphemisms as “holdups” or “standstills” at work.¹⁰ Permission to use the word “strike” would be tantamount to acknowledging that the relationship between the employers and workers in a socialist country are still capitalist in their nature and that they are based on capturing and withholding added value. Admitting that the strikes broke out in defense of dignity would mean something even worse – this would be synonymous with a declaration that a socialist country humiliates the social class for which it was constructed, and in whose name it exercises power. Meanwhile, at the very core of the strikes lay an intuitive understanding that in a socialist state economic exploitation is fused with the dispossession of dignity. Józef Tischner was

7 Ireneusz Krzemiński, *Solidarność. Projekt polskiej demokracji* [Solidarity. The project of Polish democracy] (Warszawa: Oficyna Naukowa, 1996), 52–53.

8 *Ibid.*, 53.

9 *Ibid.*

10 See Michał Głowiński, “Nowomowa tuż po Sierpniu” [Newspeak just after August], in *Nowomowa po polsku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PEN, 1990), 96. “It would not be an overstatement to say that the record of the usage of the word ‘strike’ reflects the history of newspeak – its use in the description of internal events, which broke one of those linguistic taboos that were safeguarded with utmost consequence, marked its collapse. It was not yet used in *Sztandar Ludu* that was published in Lublin on July 19, 1980 [...]. It was used only once in Edward Gierek’s address delivered on August 18, though still rather shyly, with palpable unease, after a whole series of ‘holdups’ and ‘standstills.’ It entered common parlance only at the very end of August.”

right when, voicing the spirit of the times, he characterized the “Solidarity” movement – through a metaphor combining both these spheres – as “rebellion against moral exploitation.”¹¹

This expression aptly describes the sudden advancement in self-comprehension. Furthermore, it also reveals its processual nature: the more efficient the organizational processes became, the greater was the growth in self-understanding, the deeper the understanding of accompanying conditions, the more efficient the results of undertaken actions. And in the course of actions, and through them, it was gradually revealed that nothing is given as a complete whole – starting with language and ending with ever shifting goals. Therefore, the self-knowledge of the rebellion’s participants was only minimally indebted to memory because there was nothing in memory that resembled a “solidary strike” or an “independent labor union.” The key difference between the events of the year 1970 and those of 1980 was therefore not derived from memory, but it appeared somewhat in opposition to it – as a result of comprehending the insufficiency of preceding experiences. It was no accidental choice of words on the part of Dariusz Kobzdej – a physician and activist of the *Młoda Polska* [Young Poland] movement – when in 1979 he called out to others to join the activities commemorating the events of December 1970:

Remember that the lack of self-organization of society against the government diminishes the efficacy of our demands, diminishes the possibility of realizing our individual rights as well as the rights of the nation, that it entails sacrifices that could be avoided even if we did not demand them here, underneath the shipyard gates, but in burning committees.¹²

“Self-organization,” “efficacy,” “realization of rights,” “sacrifices that could be avoided” – this is not the vocabulary of an uprising but an ethical plea to engage in pragmatic action. From this vantage point, September 1980 – even if it was a successor of December 1970 – was more of a grand experiment, which progressed by going beyond the frames of memory.

Memory appeared very sparsely – whether in implied or thematized form – in the interviews conducted in January 1981 by Ireneusz Krzemiński with the founders of independent labor movements. Insufficient knowledge, imagination, improvisation, haste – these were the key factors in establishing the unions:

11 Józef Tischner, *Etyka solidarności oraz Homo sovieticus* [Ethics of solidarity and Homo sovieticus] (Kraków: Znak, 1992), 34.

12 Zaremba, “Rodowody rewolucji.”

On September 1 we went to the director and told him that we are establishing independent labor unions. On September 5, we showed him the statute of "Mazowsze."¹³

What it essentially came down to was that from the very start it wasn't clear whether the agreements signed in Gdańsk were limited only to Gdańsk itself, to the whole coastal region, or were they valid in the whole country. [...] everything [i.e. the creation of an independent labor union at the Polish Academy of Science – P. C.] developed at breakneck speed, because on the 1 [September – P. C.] the agreement was signed and already on the 4 [...] the first meeting took place.¹⁴

Everything sprang to life in a bafflingly spontaneous manner.¹⁵

Dozens more of similar testimonials could be found and quoted, though the historical comparisons or parallels found in memory are here of least importance. That which unfolded at the time drew upon many sources, but channeled all of them into a new current. As a result, "Solidarity" appears as a collective task of inventing and developing historical difference. That difference – that is, a new methodology of collective action – emerged in the course of three phases: the sit-in strike, the work of inter-company committees, and the emergence of country-level structures. The sit-ins reflected the tradition of proletarian struggle against capitalism, inter-company committees drew upon the legacy of communist proletariat, and the country-wide structure – resembling the workers' councils of 1956 Hungary – created an antimodel of the state.¹⁶ This structure was a system of relations between all members and committees, and at the same time it was a democratic mechanism for selecting delegates authorized to conduct negotiations with the government side and to make crucial decisions. The enlargement of "Solidarity" was conducted in such a manner so as to reconcile the fundamentals of direct democracy with the republican representative order.

Participants in the movement were therefore well-aware of the significant difference between these two types of democracy: they had independently developed a practice that minimized the alienating effects of delegating power to others and that obliged delegates to consult both the councils and the

¹³ Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 47.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁶ For a reading of "Solidarity" as an "antimodel of the state," see Roman Laba, *The Roots of Solidarity. A Political Sociology of Poland's Working-Class Democratization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 113.

collective. Neither the memory of the uprisings nor the imperative of rebellion dictated these solutions. Bronisław Świdorski – the author of one of the most important analyses of “Solidarity” – is correct when he says that:

The way this union was organized and operated was the first non-insurrectionist – that is, non-romantic – effort on the part of Polish society conducted on such a grand scale during the last two hundred years. “Solidarity” was a democratic organization because it managed to simultaneously abide by the current constitution, which guaranteed citizens freedom of “conscience and religion” (article 82), freedom of “speech, print, assembly” (article 83), and the right of association (article 84) and recognized these rights as natural rights, ones that are independent from the interests of the state. “Solidarity” was also a democratic organization because it programmatically did not resort to violence, treating the tradition of the romantic uprising as a political metaphor, not as a strategic instruction.¹⁷

Only in official statements, formulated with the awareness of the difference that had been won and with the uncertainty of the future in mind, did social remembrance turn to earlier rebellions and uprisings:

social and moral protest [of 1980 – P. C.] was not born overnight. It contained the bloody legacy of the workers from Poznań of 1956 and those from the coast of December 1970, of the students’ revolt in 1968, of the June in Radom and Ursus in 1976. It encompasses the heritage of the independent workers’ movements, the actions of intelligentsia and the youth, the efforts of the Catholic Church to preserve values, the legacy of all the struggles for human dignity in our country. Our union grew out of these struggles and it will remain faithful to them.¹⁸

We can see in this document how effortlessly – with reverence for previous rebellions, with the pride associated with following in the footsteps of predecessors – collective memory delimits and reinforces the line of its own tradition. “Protest,” “blood,” “rebellion,” these are words which embed “Solidarity” in the tradition of struggle and preparedness for making sacrifices. At the same time, the notion of “dignity” also appeared in the above quoted

17 Bronisław Świdorski, *Gdańsk i Ateny. O demokracji bezpośredniej w Polsce* [Bronisław Świdorski, Gdańsk and Athens. About direct democracy in Poland] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IFIS PAN, 1996), 78–79.

18 Introduction to the “Uchwała Programowa delegatów na Krajowy Zjazd Delegatów” [Program Resolution of delegates to the National Congress of Delegates], *AS, Biuletyn Pism Związkowych i Zakładowych* 41 (1981).

statement, pointing in a different direction – towards agreement, respect, compromise, and dialogue.¹⁹ In 1980, these concepts opened a whole new historical lexicon. Instead of the insurgent alternative: “this is the day of triumph or death,” an inclusive approach emerged – one acknowledging “dignity” (of living conditions) as a value of equal importance to freedom, and therefore requiring solutions other than “dying for the homeland.” The pursuit of an agreement implied long-term thinking, whose rationale was based on involving subsequent entities in a cooperative network that would remain open even to party members.

This inclusivity also went on to encompass the socialist order itself. The “Solidarity” movement aimed to collectivize the means of production and to the democratization of decision-making processes. The guiding principle of all undertakings was the notion of the “common good” – in relation to both governance and production. A clear reference to this intention can be found in the words of Lech Wałęsa, who, while commenting the events of 1980–1981, stated that: “During the socialist era most social strata have grown accustomed to its certain achievements, we take as a given things such as social welfare, hospitals, schools. In short, in order for socialism to be acceptable, we have assumed that the best things that economy offers in terms of social services is a socialist achievement, even if it greatly surpassed its previous boundaries.”²⁰

The crucial point for the current argument is exactly this “surpassing of previous boundaries,” that results from the ongoing discovery that neither the uprising nor any other past formula is sufficient for solving present-day contradictions. Collective memory offered skeletal guidelines and at the same time proved inadequate, as the problems at hand “surpassed the boundaries” of the past. Therefore the participants of the social movement tried to act in a manner that would prevent memory from dominating over the present, and the imperative of rebellion would not overpower realism.

It was not about equality of fighting, dying, suffering, or killing, but about equal participation in creating a different living order. It was about regaining the feeling of being at home. Perhaps – and in this respect Marcin Zaremba

19 This is evidenced by, i.a., the letter addressed on August 20, 1980, by the intelligentsia and writers from the Warsaw circle to the workers of the striking Gdynia Shipyard, which called for settlements to be reached “by way of dialogue, [...] way of compromise. [...] Everyone – the ruling and the ruled must be guided by Poland’s best interest. [...] Let us all learn to mutually respect our dignity.” *Zapis rokowań gdańskich. Sierpień 1980* [Record of the Gdańsk negotiations. August 1980], ed. Andrzej Drzycimski and Tadeusz Skutnik (Paris: Editions Spotkania), 213; quoted after: Świdorski, *Gdańskie Ateny*, 134.

20 Lech Wałęsa, *Droga nadziei* [The path of hope] (Kraków: Znak, 1990), 207.

is right – if it were not for the insurrectionist memory, the activists of “Solidarity” would not have struggled for impractical “dignity” and would not have shown such steadfastness. At the same time – and this is where our paths diverge – if the collective memory leading to the birth of the “S” movement had been dominated by insurrectionary clichés, then there would have been no talks in Gdańsk, no dialogue between the protesters and the authorities, no signing of agreements, and, finally, no free trade union. The key concepts of that time – dialogue, consultations, understanding, settlement – emerged from traditions other than the insurrectionist one, or were even hostile towards it. The extraordinary tension that pervaded the entire social life of that period resulted, as one might assume, from the fact that social invention drew various suggestions from memory, limiting their applicability and adequacy. Revolutionary thinking inhibited insurrectionary associations, and thinking in terms of a trade union countered the desire to create a political party. What was at stake at the time was not defeating the enemy, but inventing a new model of collective life.

Insurrection Against Revolt

Within countless analyses, “Solidarity” is variously framed as either a revolution, trade union,²¹ political party, or as an insurrection.²² The more competent the study in question, the more probable is some merger of two or three of the above characteristics.²³

21 “Solidarity,” was “a total social movement,” which fused “union action and struggle for free labor unions with a movement for democracy and national insurrection.” See Alain Touraine, Jan Strzelecki, François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka, *“Solidarność.” Analiza ruchu społecznego 1980–1981* [“Solidarity.” Analysis of the social movement 1980–1981], trans. Andrzej Krasiński (Warszawa: “Europa,” 1989), 9.

22 “[...] Several important elements that clearly refer to the Polish insurrectionary tradition can be found in the events of 1980–1981. First, the “Solidarity” movement had a clearly defined enemy, who fiercely defended the old order. [...] Secondly, like the Kościuszko Uprising or – to a lesser extent – the January Uprising, “S” had a charismatic leader [...]. Thirdly, and finally, the idea of national solidarity was a very important element of the union’s program. See Antoni Dudek, “Rewolucja robotnicza i ruch narodowowyzwoleńczy” [The workers’ revolution and the national liberation movement], in *Lekcja Sierpnia. Dziedzictwo “Solidarności” po dwudziestu latach*, ed. D. Gawin (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IFIS PAN, 2002), 150–151.

23 “The Poles in fact produced a quite original mixture of ideas drawn from diverse traditions. In politics, they clove to the central principles of liberal democracy, but they combined this with proposals for a kind of radical devolution, social control and local self-government which did not exist in the West. [...] For culture and education, their ideals

The two extreme categories – revolution and insurrection – are closely related, because the events to which they point are elemental, mass movements, which are very hard to control. The middle categories – trade union and political party – share common traits because they both denote forms of organization (though ones with different goals and methods of action). Nonetheless, they were listed here in this particular order for a reason, as in the course of the “Solidarity” revolution paved the way towards a trade union and insurrection led to the formation of a political party. The strength that comes from such an ordering is that it allows to explain the peculiar trajectory of a movement that needed to develop a unionized organizational structure, and which – after the failure of attempts to change the structure of power – turned into an underground conspiratorial network that reverted to the model of a political party. To state things differently: the first period of “Solidarity,” encompassing the years 1980–1981, was rather revolutionary, and the second, which followed the introduction of martial law in Poland (on December 13, 1981), was rather insurrectionist.

The analyses referring to the revolutionary nature of the first period clearly underscore that this category cannot be applied here in its strictest sense. This is highlighted by the use of oxymoronic expressions, such as, “slouching revolution,” “self-limiting revolution,” “revolution without violence,” or “ceremonial revolution.” From the point of view of Marxist tradition all these characteristics contain an internal contradiction: a revolution cannot limit itself, slouch, or do away with violence. But it is exactly these paradoxes which offer a deeper insight into the first period of “Solidarity,” when the union, party, or insurrectionist goals slowed down the revolution and endowed it with its slouching quality.

For these very reasons, the ownership structure of the means of production did not change, the leadership role of the party was not stricken out from the constitution, and the military and political treaties binding the Polish People’s Republic to the USSR were not terminated. Nonetheless, if there are still many valid arguments that back the thesis about the revolutionary nature of this initial period of the “Solidarity” movement, it is mostly due to the changes in social communication. This sphere experienced what could be described as communicational enfranchisement, which became possible through the creation of circumstances favouring polyphonic communication that was equitable and referential, that became the basis of the revised model of participation

could best be characterized as conservative-restorationist. In economics, they wished to combine the market, self-government and planning.” See Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 352.

in decision-making processes.²⁴ Within the bounds of thus redefined communication, anyone and everyone held the right to be heard and to demand an answer to the question that was posed.

Social communication changed after the introduction of martial law – and this change was so significant that it transformed a revolutionary movement into an insurrectionist one. The above statement seems to make me switch sides and join Marcin Zaremba. Nonetheless, even if I do agree with him, it is only temporarily, as I see the influence of insurrectionist thinking in different spheres than he does, and, moreover, I do not perceive that influence to be positive.

The analysis of public discourse – especially on the day-to-day basis – provides us with ample proof of insurrectionist radicalization of the collective mood. After December 13, 1981, a certain militarization of imagination becomes apparent, which finds its release through themes of insurrection, war, and occupation. The walls of city tenements – I will examine this subject shortly in greater detail – became adorned with the letter “S” inscribed into the anchor symbolizing the wartime Polish Underground State, as well as with the phrases “Pamiętamy” [We remember], or with drawings depicting a turtle, which during the time of Nazi occupation, between 1939 and 1945, was tantamount to the injunction “Pracuj wolniej – pracujesz dla okupanta” [Work slower – you work for the occupant]. During street protests and fights with the security services – which took place on every thirteenth day of the month – the chants “ZOMO²⁵ – Gestapo!” were heard, shortening the temporal distance between the martial law period and the wartime German occupation. At the same time, the underground structures of “Solidarity” were being created – there were clandestine teaching courses and screenings of films, discussions and artistic shows were organized, political parties and associations were formed, and independent publishing was responsible for producing several hundred titles per year. Underground culture reached a level of development comparable to that of the wartime underground cultural activity.

At the same time this insurrectionist militarisation of imagination reshaped the rules of public communication. The revolution outlined in the previous paragraphs rested on the attempt to flood the political sphere with communication that was referential, differentiated, and equal. It remained

24 Bronisław Świdorski writes about this convincingly in his study devoted to the subject of direct democracy; see Świdorski, *Gdańsk i Ateny*, esp. chap. 2, “O porozumiewaniu się Polaków,” 87–139.

25 Zmotoryzowane Odwoły Milicji Obywatelskiej [Motorized Reserves of the Citizens’ Militia] – elite units of state police, notorious for their brutality especially towards anti-government protesters during the communist era in Poland. Disbanded after 1989. – Trans.

functional after December 13, 1981, but only in spasmodic acts – during street clashes. In turn, conspiracy which regained its legitimacy only as preparation for a future uprising, sanctioned one-sided communication, monologic and hierarchical, which denigrated dialog and autonomy. In the mid-1980s, Adam Michnik in his book *Takie czasy* [Such times],²⁶ did not diagnose new social divisions, but he cautioned against the authoritarian ambitions of local “Solidarity” leaders, and he suggested to consider the advisers of “Solidarity” as the sole representatives of the social movement. Therefore, the conspiratorial syndrome paved the way for centrally shaped communication.

Insurrection – seen as Marcin Zaremba would have it, as Polish cultural tradition – appears here not as an “act,” but primarily as an intellectual structure that orders reality. It holds a decisive role in the way that social relations are shaped and perceived. In the 1980s, these relations were shaped in such manner that the social structure began to closely resemble the military structure – with a distant command centre, clandestine flow of orders from the top to the lower ranks, irrelevance of dialog, and the commonness of unexpressed but agreed upon belonging to particular units. Within the framework of this division – into elite decision-making units and the egalitarian activist masses – the “command” issued appeals to the masses for them to turn out in the streets in order to pressure the government, which will in consequence concede and either agree to ease some particular law or, as the ultimate goal, will enter into negotiations with the opposition. This is how the insurrectionist logic of the 1980s paved the way for the Round Table talks and for the representative democracy, that is, that form of governance wherein citizens express themselves in four-year voting cycles, transferring the decision-making to their delegates.

Throughout the entire decade – from the introduction of martial law until the contract election of 1989 – society simulated insurrection, therefore forcing the government to make further concessions. All the while, within the confines of that simulation, the fundamental questions were not asked – such as those related to the ownership of the means of production, participation in the exercise of power and its control. The more successful was the performance of that insurrection, which was never meant to break out, the lesser the chances for joint negotiations of a new social contract became. If there was an insurrection underway in the 1980s, then certainly the masses were not victorious.

The conspiratorial-insurrectionist imagination, which dominated the political culture of the 1980s, also played a role in the upholding of the gender division. This was not a recent phenomenon, as the memorable inscription

26 Adam Michnik, *Takie czasy* [Such times] (Warszawa: NOWa, 1985), esp. pp. 26–31.

– “Women, go home, we are fighting for Poland here” – adorned the wall of the Gdańsk Shipyard already in August 1980.²⁷ The conservative perception of sexual dimorphism with its social consequences was not influenced by the fact that the Gdańsk protest broke out in defence of Anna Walentynowicz, among other reasons, and that all of the collectives on strike had substantial female representations. During the one-and-a-half-year period of freedom, women were still perceived as “guardians of the domestic hearth,” and as persons who by virtue of their endowments should not participate in civic life. Therefore, patriarchal protectionism held strong, and it pushed women out of the “masculine struggle” for power and distinction.

The martial law only strengthened this way of thinking, adding to it a military-insurrectionist rationale. When society demanded freedom for the Poles, the universal expression “Poles” camouflaged the male gender of the collective’s representative. In consequence, a socially important space became embroiled in a state of permanent and ethically dubious schizophrenia: after the introduction of martial law, that is, after the internment of over five thousand men, the underground remained active mostly due to the efforts of women, but the system of conspiratorial-insurrectionist imagination made women invisible.²⁸ And yet without women:

There would be no advisors of TKK, no *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, the region, the Poznan Radio, nor the network of social contacts. There would be no runners, typists, safe houses, there would be no one to run errands for the activists in hiding. Women either continued doing that what they did before, or they initiated completely novel forms of resistance. They organized ephemeral publishing houses and informal groups, they managed them, and worked in them. Until 1988 two women became representatives of their regional commissions – Ewa Kulik and Barbara Labuda. [...] Nonetheless, the value system adopted by the movement did not undergo change and did not correct for the transformation that was already underway. Actions were speedy and the development of theory could not keep up. Therefore, the system of values did not evolve in a way that would recognize the substantial input of women.²⁹

27 See Agnieszka Graff, *Świat bez kobiet. Płeć w polskim życiu publicznym* [A world without women. Gender in Polish public life] (Warszawa: W.A.B., 2001).

28 This theme often surfaces in the testimonies gathered by Ewa Kondratowicz in *Szminka na sztandarze. Kobiety Solidarności 1980–1989. Rozmowy* [Lipstick on a banner. Women of Solidarity 1980–1989. Conversations] (Warszawa: Sic!, 2001).

29 Shana Penn, *Podziemie kobiet*, trans. Hanna Jankowska (Warszawa: Rosner & Wspólnicy, 2003), 160–161. English edition: Shana Penn, *Solidarity’s Secret: The Women Who Defeated Communism in Poland* (An Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

The division into “us and them,” reinforced by the feeling of alienation from the political order and the government, successfully blocked critical thinking and obscured the truth about how much power, symbolic violence, and everyday exploitation is hidden in the interactions of women and men. The “Solidarity” revolution had, or it at least could have, brought meaningful change into that relationship. The martial law preserved the insurrectionist phantasy of the importance of the male role and the necessity of forceful participation in history. This entailed catastrophic results for the democratic order of the Third Polish Republic: among the sixty oppositionist seated at the round table, only one was female, and in 1993 the Women’s Commission [Komisja Kobiet] was disbanded and the abortion law was tightened. The ruling power after 1989 proved to be masculine: it disenfranchised women and it turned the female body into the object of political bargain. If there was an insurrection underway in the 1980s, then certainly women were not victorious.³⁰

The Fifth Element

In early January 1982 the inscription “Zima wasza, wiosna nasza” [Your winter, our spring] appeared on the wall of a Poznan tenement. A simple and ingenious phrase: rhythmical, logical, and suggestive. The prediction of victory was associated here with the seasons, directing the associations of its readers to the cyclicity of nature’s calendar. Insurrection will break out just as blossom in springtime; society will take spring into its possession and will overpower those who have imprisoned Poland in cahoots with winter. Prediction, prophecy, and threat in one, greatly strengthened the clear distinction between “we” and “you.” State power is on the side of winter, of dormancy, downtime; it succeeds not through its own strength but through the alliance with frost, which confines people to their dwellings. “We” is backed by the rationale of life, standing on the side of light, development, and growth; therefore this “we,” temporarily absent from the public sphere, will emerge from homes and will triumph, just as germination and growth triumph over frozen soil.

30 “At the end of the 1980s, I maintained that Solidarity must first win independence and democracy for the entire society, and only then it will be able to calmly deal with the women’s cause and improve their condition. And so it did, with obvious results, by sending women back to their traditional life not as individuals but as ‘family beings’ and by passing repressive decisions on abortion. It took some time before I understood that ‘democracy in Poland is masculine.’” (Maria Janion, “Ifigenia w Polsce” [Iphigenia in Poland], in *Kobiety i duch inności* [Warszawa: Sic!, 1996], 326–327).

The spring of 1982 came but the balance of power remained unchanged. In June someone amended the phrase to read: “Zima wasza, wiosna nasza, lato muminków” (Your winter, our spring, Moomin summer).³¹

Making allowance for the substantial brevity, this addendum can be viewed as the pinnacle of public communication in the 1980s. The solidified dichotomy of “us–them” was suddenly enriched here, as the last part of the inscription came neither from the authorities nor from the “Solidarity” movement. Its sender was someone else – someone who did not fit into the binary logic that dominated thinking and speaking after the introduction of martial law. This third party did not introduce a distinct language and did not speak for a clearly identifiable social group. This was the clearest communicational dissimilarity from the two other entities present in this exchange. The capacious “them” referred to the authorities – the regime, Moscow, Asia, the commies, traitors, Gestapo members, or the Soviets. The even broader “us” meant “almost anyone” – society, Poles, “Solidarity,” the nation. But this Third belonged to no one and came from nowhere. Still, this unexpected appearance in the public sphere signalled something more than a mere tripling: it shattered the belief in the completeness of the “them–us” division, in that it encompasses the whole social map, and that it had exhausted the list of possible identifications.

The playful addition was also a signal that this Third party has no distinctive language. Unlike the ideologically loaded language of power – a narrow idiom of lies and cynicism – and also unlike the rich language of “us” – full of sublime slogans, phrases, moral reasons, wise theories, and rich traditions – the language of the Third existed only in the abstract, as a tradition lacking apparent public respect. “The Moomins,” although widely known, did not belong to the archives of legitimate culture from which one could draw the tools needed for a moral and reasoned fight with the regime. It took some courage to put oneself between the opposing sides alongside the Moomins. The tactics of a wide-eyed simpleton signalled a debunking of the linguistic struggle: martial law was framed by its supporters as the only salvation from civil war, and by its critics as a “war waged upon the nation” – as partition, gulag, or occupation. A “Moomin summer” added to the “spring (of the people)” unmasked both the language of the dispute and the fictitious nature of the entities behind it. A ludic postscript changed the meaning of the whole. The joke was wielded as a shield against despair, but it also dispelled the faith in the magical power of words.

31 The added phrase “lato muminków” (lit. summer of the Moomins) is the Polish title of Tove Jansson’s fifth novel in the Moomin series, which was translated into English as “Moominsummer Madness.” – Trans.

When the summer of 1982 drew to an end, the inscription on the wall was enriched with a fourth phrase. This time it read: “Zima wasza, wiosna nasza, lato muminków, jesień średniowiecza” [Your winter, our spring, Moomin summer, autumn of the Middle Ages]. The game went on – finding its own momentum, disengaged from the rhetorical struggle of state power with the “Solidarity” movement. Subsequent persons and groups positioned themselves ever further from the centre of the dispute.

Did the new participants of public communication enter the stage only after the introduction of martial law? It does not seem likely. The Third party added another voice to the dichotomised debate and, through this single action, opened it up to the possibility of accommodating an uncountable multitude of speakers. A quip drew awareness to the fact that the history of Communism is also the history of humour, which existed in its myriad of forms – street, graphic, print, song, or cabaret – even in the considerably darker times of Hitlerism and Stalinism. And through its sheer existence it subverted any and all notions of unification, irrespective of whom should they concern – society, history, or state power.

Humour acted as a fifth element. It did not belong to any existing order, because even though it borrows something from each of them, it feels indebted to none. It responds to both dread and common officialdom, it takes aim at people and situations, it arises from stilted idioms and rituals. It respects nothing, speaking on behalf of the dispossessed, which happen to be the silent majority. It wants more life, therefore it celebrates casualness; it praises ease, so it sneers at practicality; it favours serendipity, therefore it frowns upon plans and order. It is active, arising from within itself, and reactive – vulgar in response to forced pleasantries, feral in the face of superficial refinement, ribald and lewd in the company of high society. It knows no rules but for the principle of verbal insubordination.

If we examine in isolation the social movement from which “Solidarity” was born, we will notice that humour was present there alongside all the solemn and serious efforts. It functioned as a form of realignment, a tool safeguarding from calcification in moral solemnity, messianic unity, in a missionary pose. Humour unmasked the absurdities of socialism, but it also ridiculed insurrectionist phraseology. Miron Białoszewski³² diligently reminded readers that falling onto one’s knees and bowing the head to the floor exposes the

32 Miron Białoszewski (1922–1983) – Polish poet and writer active from the 1950s to the early 1980s. Author of *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising*, translated from the Polish by Madeline G. Levine (New York: NYRB Classics, 2015), which gives a vivid account of the 1944 insurrection from a civilian’s point of view. – Trans.

prominently bulging “counter-head.”³³ Tadeusz Ross paraphrased the national epic *Pan Tadeusz* in a song with the memorable refrain “they will step in, they won’t step in,” articulating in the guise of a ribald joke, based on a scene from Adam Mickiewicz’s work, the commonly shared fear of Soviet encroachment on Polish soil. Ultimately, the same comical impropriety, which halts the transformation of commonality into pathos, could be found in Lech Wałęsa’s memorable gesture during the historically significant moment of signing the Gdańsk agreements, which he ratified with an enormous pen.

Whatever the “Solidarity” movement ultimately proved to be, the formulaic memory enlivened in its course – suggesting patterns of a collective experience of unity – was continuously countered by a comical imperative derived from cultural tradition. The jest that blossomed during the years of Edward Gierek, has truly exploded after August 1980. It proliferated in papers, bootlegged cassettes, improvisational comedy and cabaret, in drawings, songs, and street humour. Nonetheless, it appeared not only as a weapon in the struggle against the regime, but also as a redemptive mockery of the unwavering sense of self-righteousness. Miron Białoszewski was very deliberate in his stanzas from one of the first episodes of the Kici-Koci cabaret: “I exercise my right / to free speech my dears / Separateness is at an end. / We are slain by the chain reaction of community,”³⁴ where he jokingly cautioned about the unity that can subdue individuality, which was so important to him.

The poetics of Białoszewski’s cabaret, full of folksy adoration and puerile impropriety, became much more unusual and harder to maintain with each passing month of martial law. Humour thickened after December 1981, turning into sarcasm, lampoon, and bitter irony of the defeated.³⁵ If memory suggested some similarity between the “Solidarity” revolution and national uprisings, then martial law must have brought to mind the post-insurrectionist periods – with the era of Paskiewicz, collaboration, collective tepidness. It was exactly because the circumstances have been radically simplified, that humour was facing the task of splitting discourses, finding multiplicity in dichotomy, disturbing seriousness. For the above reasons, after the introduction of martial law, the publishing underground reinterpreted modernism by

33 Miron Białoszewski, “Wybuch stanu” [Explosion of the state], in *Oho i inne wiersze opublikowane po roku 1980* (Warszawa: PIW, 2000), 213.

34 Miron Białoszewski, “Odczyt Kici-Koci” [Kici-Koci’s reading], in *Oho i inne wiersze*, 210.

35 The poetics of lampoon, an important tradition of underground communication after December 13, 1981, was heralded by one of the most famous texts of this nature that was aimed at collaborationist attitudes; see Piotr Wierzbicki, *Gnidzi parnas* [Nits Parnassus] (Warszawa: NOWa, 1980).

“decidedly appreciating humorous texts,”³⁶ through the publication of works such as Alfred Jarry’s *Ubu Roi*, Witold Gombrowicz’s *Trans-Atlantyk*, or George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*.

This kind of humour, which pricks the balloons of nationalistic pathos, can be traced to the very roots of counterculture. Its traditions were revived by *Puls* – a periodical edited by Jacek Bierezin, Witold Sułkowski, and Tomasz Filipczak, and published from 1977 to 1981 by the NOW publishing house, and from 1982 in London by Jan Chodakowski. If *Zapis*, the most earnest of literary magazines of the first period of independent culture, was an alternative to state-approved cultural production, then *Puls* was an alternative to the alternative, an underground of the underground. It defended against official and unofficial censorship, siding with the right to independent expression.³⁷ Where *Zapis* turned to the traditions of Polish realist and political novel – Bolesław Prus, Stefan Żeromski, and Juliusz Kaden-Bandrowski – there *Puls* chose Witold Gombrowicz and post-modernist literature. *Zapis* valued solemnity, *Puls* – the grotesque. *Zapis* battled propagandist lies, siding with the truth; *Puls* duelled with the socialist mass culture and practiced multiplicity of truths. That is why in the first issue of *Puls* the editorial board published the morally outrageous poems of Antoni Pawlak, the work of counterculture radical Allen Ginsberg, and the antiheroic, foolish, and absurdist novelistic grotesque titled *Dysiek* by Witold Sułkowski.

The Orange Alternative referred to this tactics – different from one-sided satire aimed at the regime or state power³⁸ – in its own actions. The “Orange” drew from the traditions of the Dutch Provos, French situationism and Polish street demonstrations.³⁹ Their originality was determined by the courage to be funny, which was foreign to both the authorities and to Solidarity. It required the use of a different tactic – not insurrectionist, based on a readiness to fight, not conspiratorial, requiring concealment of identity, but campy, the

36 Tomasz Mizerkiewicz, “‘Sytuacja jest groźna, ale nie poważna’ – komizm w literaturze drugiego obiegu,” [“The situation is dangerous, but not serious” – comedy in second-circuit literature], in *Niść śmiesznego. Studia o komizmie w literaturze polskiej XX i XXI wieku* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2007), 268.

37 *Niezależność najwięcej kosztuje. Relacje uczestników opozycji demokratycznej w Łodzi 1976–1980* [Independence costs the most. Accounts of participants of the democratic opposition in Łódź 1976–1980], (Łódź: IPN, 2008). Here, see especially the testimonies of Tomasz Filipczak, Zdzisław Jaskuła, Bartosz Pietrzak, and Ewa Sułkowska-Bierezin.

38 See, e.g., *Szopki satyryczne 1982–1983* [Satirical nativity scenes 1982–1983] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo “Słowo,” 1983).

39 See Łukasz Kamiński, “Krasnoludki i żołnierze. Wrocławska opozycja lat osiemdziesiątych” [Dwarfs and soldiers. Wrocław opposition in the 1980s], *Pamięć i Przyszłość* 2 (2008): 7–19.

starting point of which was a sensitive, wonderfully ambiguous, and from the point of view of the authorities unbelievable, declaration of faith in socialism: "The Orange Alternative was probably the only case when we dared to go back to our own childhood and speak in the language of socialist realist fairy tales and this unique camp, which characterized local imitations of Western films and songs."⁴⁰ The streets of Wrocław, Łódź, and Katowice were filled with crowds of people dressed as gnomes. The participants of these happenings were not hostile, they did not shout angrily or throw stones, but instead they celebrated the most hated holidays – such as, Militiaman's Day or the anniversary of the October Revolution – thus bewildering the security services and confounding state authorities. In the mid-1980s, no one – including the party members – believed in socialism any longer, though the propaganda would never allow such statements. The Orange Alternative, professing love for real socialism – as the source of a strangest reality – lured the authorities into a trap of bad or even worse choices: to arrest people celebrating Militiaman's Day was to admit that it was a bogus holiday, and to let people have their fun in the street was to admit that society itself defines the circumstances independently from state power.⁴¹

The gnomish jest did not disarm the weaponized state apparatus but it did incapacitate its discourse and it neutralized the division into the "brave society" and the "immoral regime." The happenings – during which toilet paper or sanitary pads were handled out, the gathered chanted "No freedom without gnomes!" or ran around the main square of the old city to illustrate the term "galloping inflation" – sucked everyone into a vortex of ridiculousness: their participants adorned with red gnome hats, state power that sent intimidating militiamen to suppress the gnomes, as well as the insurrectionist masses readying themselves for another march under the slogan "Away with Communism!" Within the space reclaimed by the Orange Alternative – as much communal as not regulated by normal rules, as much threatened by the intervention of state militia as it was exterritorial – a community of truly equal individuals emerged, if only for a brief moment.

The first phase of "Solidarity" proposed a revolutionary equality of worthy people, aiming to create conditions for egalitarian participation in decision-making processes. The second phase, occurring after the revolution's defeat,

40 Agata Bielik-Robson, "Straceni inaczej. Dziwni trzydziestoletni i ich kłopoty z samo-określeniem" [Lost differently. Weird thirty-year-olds and their problems with self-definition], in *Wojna pokoleń*, ed. Piotr Nowak (Warszawa: Prószyński, 2006), 62.

41 See Waldemar "Major" Fydrych and Bronisław Misztal, *Pomarańczowa Alternatywa Rewolucja Krasnoludków* [Orange alternative dwarf revolution] (Warszawa: Fundacja "Pomarańczowa Alternatywa," 2008).

limited itself to achieving independence; it offered equality on a national basis but failed to acknowledge exclusion affecting women, non-heterosexual individuals, or members of the lower classes. The Orange Alternative, like a pataphysical culmination of Hegelian historical dialectics, proclaimed equality in ridiculousness. The gnome rebellion grounded its protest in everyday life, restoring people's memory of their ordinariness. It was neither an alternative to revolutionary imagination, nor to insurgent imagination, but rather a momentary victory of carnival, which suspended history for a few hours.

"Solidarity," Power, Remembering

After 1989, successive governments implemented their own memory policies, using the experience of "Solidarity" to legitimize pluralistic democracy, neoliberal transformation, and the healing of the decommunized Third Polish Republic. Simultaneously, various labour union authorities delved into their own archives, fighting under the banner of "Solidarity" for further restriction of abortion law or the inclusion of a religious confession in the preamble to the constitution. As a result, the memory of "Solidarity" – in case of both its original participants and subsequent interpreters – is always at risk of being instrumentalized by mainstream culture, media discourse, or governments supported by church-party alliances. The best evidence of this is that "Solidarity," a movement that fought for direct democracy, local autonomy, social ownership, and decentralization, can now be remembered as a right-wing Catholic national uprising.

Therefore, it is worthwhile, in my opinion, to consider memory as a tool for legitimizing resistance against authority. Ever more open interference in the remembering of memory – and, therefore, the shaping of the past – is currently the hallmark of power, as "he who controls the past not only determines the shape of the future, but also defines who we are."⁴² James V. Wertsch⁴³ writes in *Voices of Collective Remembering* that collective memory is a dynamic multitude of voices used by members of society. The specificity of this dynamic multitude lies in the fact that it emerges and enters the public space solely through communication. From this perspective, "to remember" means not only "to know that something existed," but also "to communicate that it existed." Therefore, according to Wertsch, there is no static "memory"; instead, there exists a processual act of remembering.

42 David Middleton and Derek Edwards, "Introduction," in *Collective Remembering*, ed. David Middleton and Derek Edwards (London: Sage, 1990), 10.

43 See James V. Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

From what was said above a rather straightforward question arises in the context of discussions about “Solidarity,” namely: how do we examine that memory in a way that would avoid transforming the multitude of voices from the past – those advocating for greater equality in decision-making – into a single, dominant voice? As long as we keep in mind that multiplicity, we hinder the instrumental use of the past by those in power. Furthermore, by remaining loyal to the myriad ideas of a fairer life embedded in the history of “Solidarity,” we extract from the past the conditions necessary for understanding ourselves today. Perhaps, that is exactly what is at stake here: not merely the short- or long-term memory, but another opportunity for achieving self-awareness.

Translated by Rafał Pawluk

Abstract

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Revolt in the Framework of Memory. “Solidarity,” Revolution, Rebellion

Entering into dialogue with M. Zaremba, Czapliński argues that the collective memory of the Solidarity movement (an aggregate of knowledge about the past and a search for justifications for current activities) was produced and reproduced; the dynamic supported revolutionary efforts in the period 1980–1981 (when memory turned out to be insufficient) and rebellious activities in the period from December 13, 1981 through 1989 (when the matrix of revolt suggested misguided solutions). Czapliński looks for the differences between these two periods not in the ideals that were proclaimed, but in the forms of communication that were elaborated – inclusive in the first period, hierarchical in the second. An important factor in “S” memory, according to Czapliński, is the “comical imperative” that undermined both the official language and the pathos of the opposition’s activities.

Keywords

collective memory, rebellious frameworks of memory, revolt against memory, revolution, rebellion, comical imperative