

**Dorota Suska\***

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9978-5116>

# The style of independent periodicals in 1979–1980 in the face of the dominant ideological discourse

## Introduction

1976 was a year which started a new period which unified all communities in the history of resistance against the system and the ideology of the People's Republic of Poland (PRL).<sup>1</sup> Social dissent was no longer aimed at only the ethical or economical dimensions of the communist authorities, but also at their political base, i.e. the system's counter-democratic nature and the non-sovereignty of the state. It naturally joined the criticism of public communication held hostage by the dominant ideological discourse (authoritative), held by a single-party government.<sup>2</sup> The institutional impact

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\* Ph.D. hab., Professor of Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Institute of Polish Studies; e-mail: [d.suska@ujd.edu.pl](mailto:d.suska@ujd.edu.pl)

1 *Opozycja małopolska w dokumentach 1976–1980*, selection and edition A. Roliński, Fundacja CDCN – Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2003, pp. V–XIV. The opposition consolidated around petitions and open letters (regarding planned changes to the constitution of the PRL, in defence of workers after protests in, e.g. Radom and Ursus). The opposition became more active also as a result of the events of 1977 in the Kraków student community: the death of Stanisław Pyjas and the repressions by the SB secret police (D. Suska, "Dyskurs wokół śmierci Stanisława Pyjasa (językowe strategie zarządzania kryzysem w prasie krakowskiej)", *Acta Universitatis Lodzianis. Folia Litteraria Polonica* 2017, issue 3(41), pp. 115–132).

2 I consider discourse as "the means of organising human activity, i.e. the set of communicational practices common for a community, which within various interactions define and negotiate content important for it, thus establishing axiological cooperation, preserve the applicable scenarios of communicational behaviour and the rules of their fulfilment through expressions (and/or non-verbal means)" (M. Wojtak, "O dyskursie religijnym, jego osobliwościach i przeobrażeniach", [in:] *Dyskurs i jego odmiany*, eds. B. Witosz, K. Sujkowska-Sobisz, E. Ficek,

of the system on the functioning of the press (e.g. control of permits for publication, paper allocations, etc.), and, most of all, the censorship of every text, enabled the authorities to control their content and form, which resulted in an increase in the volume of a “just” vocabulary of values, and the ideologisation of meanings.<sup>3</sup> Also, in that respect, 1976 was a break-through year as it defined the beginning of an independent circulation of communication in the form of samizdat press. In the period 1976–1989, samizdat developed dynamically proving society’s demand for a free flow of information; *Encyklopedia Solidarności* [Solidarity Encyclopaedia] indicates that over 5,500 such periodicals were in circulation at that time.<sup>4</sup>

### Independent periodicals

Samizdat periodicals concentrated the major opposition attitudes (voices) and resonated among that part of the social reality which remained outside the mainstream; thus, they carried implications of rejection, a critical dialogue with the dominant discourse and the newspeak, which was the linguistic emanation of that discourse.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the independent press of the late-1970s offers important material for discourse-focussed linguistic studies which consider collections of texts, i.e. how they were formed verbally, in conjunction (and mutual relationship) with their material and immaterial, ideological and institutional surrounding structure/ superstructure/ foundation.<sup>6</sup> The instances of practical applications of press genres can also be treated as the outcomes of the contemporary “communicational events”, as a genre (media genre in particular) forms through the existence within a specific time, place and culture of circumstances of linguistic communication, i.e. the broadly understood context of social practices of a period, as well as through various relations with those practices.<sup>7</sup> The conditions of

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Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice 2016, p. 71). The discourse included in the title should be further defined as ideological discourse, which creates a set of communicational practices, the basis of which are specific political convictions organised and institutionalised; the status of the dominant discourse means that it subordinates the official practices in every sphere (be it official, media, etc.) (B. Witosz, “Czy potrzebne nam typologie dyskursów?”, [in:] *Dyskurs i...*, pp. 22–24).

3 I. Kamińska-Szmaj, “U źródeł politycznego dyskursu dominującego w czasach PRL”, [in:] *Dyskurs i...*, pp. 122–129.

4 [www.encysol.pl/wiki/Skorowidz\\_prasy](http://www.encysol.pl/wiki/Skorowidz_prasy) [accessed on: 6.03.2018].

5 Vide, e.g.: M. Głowiński, *Nowomowa po polsku*, PEN, Warsaw 1991; J. Bralczyk, *O języku polskiej propagandy politycznej lat siedemdziesiątych*, Wydawnictwo Trio, Warsaw 2007.

6 I. Kamińska-Szmaj, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

7 B. Witosz, “O potrzebie perspektywy multimedialnej w badaniach stylistycznych”, [in:] *Język w mediach. Antologia*, eds. M. Kita, I. Loewe, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice 2012, p. 59.

a moment in history, a moment of culture, including of political culture, leave the most visible trace in the style of a genre implementation (especially at the level of its determiners).<sup>8</sup>

In this article, I shall present the stylistic structures of selected journalistic articles, which constituted part of the independent discourse at the discussed time. In practice, the goal of the study entails a description of representative microstyles, outlining the functional interpretation of the identified means and stylistic devices, considering how they were related to the official model of public communication. A secondary matter would be to offer a detailed discussion of the genological statuses of the analysed texts, which, in most cases, was undefined; only some were announced explicitly as a *felieton* [a column] or a *komentarz felietonisty do...* [commentary of the columnist on...] (by their authors or the authors of later collections of independent periodicals), while others carried the character of extended commentaries or press discussion articles. In general, the press pieces selected for the analysis shared, in my opinion, not so much their genre determination, but their dominant columnistic intent<sup>9</sup>, which exceeded the individual profiling of their styles. The samizdat periodicals of the late-1970s entered such an area of social interaction in which the forms of permitted media expression were strictly defined and reduced to one propaganda intention and the corresponding style. Therefore, any attempt at dislodging the linguistic-axiological monolith of the newspeak and at exceeding the stylistic and pragmatic uniformity obviously triggered the already mentioned columnistic intent, which was (to various degrees) shared by all independent press articles.

The study material covers selected press articles diverse in terms of their styles from samizdat periodicals from the Lesser Poland region (which played a major role in the formation of the pre-August opposition) from 1979–1980: *Indeks* (subtitle: *Niezależne pismo studenckie*) [Independent student magazine], *Merkuriusz Krakowski i Światowy*, *Wiadomości Tarnowskie*, *Krzyż Nowohucki*<sup>10</sup>.

## Microstyles of contestation

In 1979, *Indeks* published an article entitled “Najweselszy barak” [The most cheerful barrack], inspired by its author’s meeting with Jerzy Jaskiernia, a communist youth activist. The reporting narration of its first part resembled, on a quotation basis, the propaganda model and its distinctive view of the world (Jaskiernia’s statements

8 M. Wojtak, “O relacjach dyskursu, stylu, gatunku i tekstu”, *Tekst i dyskurs – Text und Diskurs* 4, p. 71, [http://tekst-dyskurs.eu/images/pdf/zeszyt\\_4/Wojtak.pdf](http://tekst-dyskurs.eu/images/pdf/zeszyt_4/Wojtak.pdf) [accessed on: 6.03.2018].

9 E. Balcerzan, “W stronę genologii multimedialnej”, [in:] *Genologia dzisiaj. Praca zbiorowa*, eds. W. Bolecki, I. Opacki, Instytut Badań Literackich, Warsaw 2000, pp. 86–101.

10 I provide the details of all the analysed texts in the Sources section.

in direct speech), e.g. the image of the community of brotherly states of the communist bloc with the leading, and punishing if necessary, role of the USSR, the myth of the ruler/host who cares for a country, unity, equality, and freedom. The intentional accumulation of keywords, labels, euphemisms, and mental templates (the figure of the enemy) so abused in manipulative content triggered an ironic reading, and, in turn, obvious valuation of those means through a defined community of recipients (the communal “we”):

Byłem ostatnio na wystąpieniu towarzysza Jaskierni w Krakowie w klubie studenckim [...]. Towarzysz Jaskiernia zapewniał nas, że w Polsce nie jest tak źle, jak myślimy, choć **rzeczywiście nie ze wszystkim jest dobrze**. Twierdził, że nasz system polityczny jest lepszy od zachodniego, bo **u nas naród stanowi jedność** (a władza dąży do stworzenia jeszcze większej jedności) i panuje równość, **a na Zachodzie takiej jedności i równości nie ma, a są konflikty i bałagan**. Mówił, że **jest w Polsce wiele wolności i że więcej być nie może, bo mamy trudną sytuacją gospodarczą** i wtedy **łatwo jest wrogom mącić**. Jak się sytuacja poprawi, to władza da nam więcej wolności – a i tak jest u nas swobodnie, niż w innych państwach komunistycznych. Ostrzegął jednocześnie, że **są tacy** – w kraju i w bratnich państwach – **którzy chcieliby nam zrobić porządek**.

[Recently, I listened to a speech by comrade Jaskiernia in Krakow in a student club [...] Comrade Jaskiernia assured us that in Poland it is not as bad as we think, though **truly not everything is all right**. He claimed that our political system is better than the Western one because **in ours the nation is united** (and the government strives to create even greater unity), and there is equality, **while in the West there is no such unity and equality and instead there are conflicts and disorder**. He said that **in Poland there are many freedoms and that there could be no more because we have a difficult economic situation** and then **enemies could easily stir up the situation**. When the situation improves, the government will give us freedom, and even now it is free in our country, more than in other communist states. He also warned that **there are those**, in Poland and in brotherly states, **who would like to impose their order on us.**]

The exaggerated idyllic image of unity and prosperity looming from the “comrade’s” statements was contrasted with the second part of the text. Its column form was based on a specification of the propaganda expression of “brotherly states’ camp”, within which Poland existed, i.e. the title “most cheerful barrack”:

Towarzyszu Jaskiernio!

Ja wiem, że Polska jest najweselszym barakiem w obozie. **Ja wiem, że tu kiepsko karmią, ale za to wolno sobie kwiatek do pasiaka przypiąć.** I na apelu nie pilnuje się tak bardzo, aby wszyscy na baczność stali. I listy wolno częściej dostawać. **I nie wolno tak gryźć zeków jak w innych barakach – tylko spodnie czasem poszarpią i człowieka przewrócą, jak się z kolumny wychylić [...]**

Ja wiem, towarzyszu Jaskiernio, że **u nas łatwiej zekowi, bo stoi w kącie kapliczka i nie burzą, a ostatnio nawet medaliki przestali przy kipsiszu zabierać.** Ja wiem, że u nas zeki mówią między sobą, co chcą, a w innych barakach się boją (choć coraz mniej). Ja wiem, że ostatnio nawet do karceru przestali za to wsadzać i stukacze chodzą zmartwieni.

[Comrade Jaskiernia!

I know that Poland is the most cheerful barrack in the camp. **I know that the food they serve is poor, but you can always put a flower in the lapel of your striped uniform.** And no one is so strict about everyone standing at attention during a roll call. And you're allowed to receive letters more often. **And fellow zeks will not get so much bitten as in other barracks – only their trousers will get sometimes tattered a bit and they may get toppled over when they leave the column [...]**

I know, comrade Jaskiernia, **that at our place it is easier for zeks because in the corner there is a shrine and they do not demolish it, and recently they even stopped taking away holy medals when doing personal searches.** I know that at our place zeks can say whatever they want to among themselves, while in other barracks they are afraid (though less and less). I know that recently they even stopped throwing them into solitary confinement and snitches are very troubled by that.]

At the base of the thus outlined metaphor of the Polish political system there lay the Lager reality (known since the 1970s from underground translations of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago: 1918–1956*), producing its approximation through, e.g. typical lexical choices (e.g. "zeks" denoting "prisoners") and the experiences of Nazi concentration camps. The use of historical facts so strongly marked in the memories of Poles and the association of the existing government with the described systems of captivity had a major discrediting potential. The columnist was consistent in developing his graphic narration giving it the sense of a common accusatory speech directed through Jerzy Jaskiernia to "the bosses": the authorities with the "red epaulettes". The other descriptions of camp life created an allusive interpretation of the current social relations (feigning dialogue, minor concessions towards the Catholic Church), the distribution of internal and external political forces (the threat of an external intervention), and the motivations behind the government's actions:

Ale wy nie udawajcie, że jesteście razem z nami i nie zasłaniajcie w czasie rozmowy czerwonych pagonów. Wam się ten obóz podoba, nam nie. Wam się podoba, jak tu na apelu równo stoją i zeki i funkcyjni – przed naczalstwem. I jak idą do pracy kolumną, śpiewając. [...] Wam się nie podoba, że tam za drutami ludzie chodzą jak chcą, sami wybierają, kto nimi rządzi i krzyżeć na siebie nie dają.

Wy byście chcieli, żeby w naszym baraku był porządek i żeby lepiej karmili i żeby funkcyjnym było lepiej – jak w Dachau, a nie jak w workuckich łągrach. Ale wy jesteście za tym obozem, a my nie.

Towarzyszu Jaskiernio! Więc cała różnica między wami z czerwonymi pagonami, a nami – zekami, jest ta, że wy byście chcieli, żeby ten obóz zawsze istniał i się rozszerzał [...] A my marzymy o tym, by nie żyć za drutami. I myślimy o tym, jak zrobić, aby nie było już więcej tych drutów i psów, i takiego naczalstwa.

My nie wiemy, czy dożyjemy tego. Ale wy myślicie, że ten obóz będzie trwała wiecznie, a my wiemy, że wszelkie obozy się kończą [...] I wiemy, że bywają w historii dni, gdy padają wieżyczki strażnicze i gdy wychodzi się na wolność.

[Comrade Jaskiernia! I know that you have to talk to us without putting pressure on us, because the bosses of the barrack are accountable for peace before their superiors, because if, God forbid, tanks will have to arrive here, think how much petrol alone costs.

But don't pretend that you are with us together and do not hide when we're talking behind your red epaulettes. You like this camp, we don't. You like it when during a roll call both zeks and functionaries stand in straight lines – in front of the bosses. And when they go to work in a column singing. [...] You don't like it that behind the wires people go as they please, they themselves choose who governs them and they do not allow anyone to shout at them.

You would like to have order in our barrack and that they would feed us better and that functionaries had it better – like in Dachau rather than in Vorkuta Gulags. But you support this camp, and we don't.

Comrade Jaskiernia! So, the whole difference between you with the red epaulettes and us, the zeks, is that you would like for this camp to exist forever and for it to develop [...] While we dream of not being behind the wires. And we are thinking what to do so that there are no more wires and dogs and such bosses.

We do not know whether we'll live to see that. But you think that the camp will endure forever, whereas we know that all camps end [...] And we know that there are days in history when guard towers are toppled and when people become free.]

The quoted speech was at the same time a metaphor of an impossible dialogue between society and the authorities on the fundamental principles of the state. The columnist assigned himself the role of a representative of the community, he

further specified the “we” (my) in contrast to the plural “you” (wy) – he vividly indicated the differences, yet he avoided simplified evaluations which in turn emphasised the axiological dimension of the message. The persuasive quality of the text was ensured by various repetitions (syntactic, lexical and structural) and stylisations (e.g. connecting similar structures beginning with the conjunction “i” (and), colloquial lexis, and word order imitating a spontaneous narrative) which, providing indications of linguistic and textual games<sup>11</sup>, amplified the contrast between the common determinations and the appearances of a propaganda expression. At the same time the author forecast further events in the country expressing an explicit warning but also a proposal for common reflection:

Towarzyszu Jaskiernio! Ja wiem, że są u nas funkcyjni, co by chcieli porządku, aby im było łatwiej rządzić [...] Ale czy pamiętacie, jak kilka lat temu, w sąsiednim baraku zeki się zbuntowali i zanim wjechały czołgi, zdążyli trochę tych najgorszych funkcyjnych wydusić [...]. **I pomyślcie, towarzyszu Jaskiernio, co będzie, jak się coś stanie, i czołgi nie wjadą, bo będą gdzie indziej potrzebne, albo tam na górze – w naczalstwie obozu – uznają, że to za dużo kosztuje, a z naszym barakiem i tak wciąż same kłopoty [...]**

Towarzyszu Jaskiernio! Ja wiem, że wy macie pistolety u pasów i psy. **Ale nas jest o wiele więcej, a i wśród was niektórzy mają dość obozu [...]** A tu zeki szumią coraz bardziej [...]

Towarzyszu Jaskiernio! Ja jestem człowiek spokojny i wierzący i chciałabym wtedy tylko jednego. Aby z was nie zrobiono na miejscu krwawej masy, ale **żeby wszystko było spokojnie i sprawiedliwie** – jak w Norymberdze. A jeśli i tego nie chcecie, to **wytłumaczcie na czas tym na górze, aby pozwolili wam znieść druty, odesłać psy, odpiąć pistolety i zastanowić się razem z nami, co z tym wszystkim zrobić.**

[Comrade Jaskiernia! I know that there are functionaries here who would like order so that they could rule more easily [...]. But do you remember when a few years back in a neighbouring barrack, zeks rebelled and before tanks finally arrived, they managed to stifle some of the functionaries [...]. **Just think, comrade Jaskiernia, what will happen when something happens and tanks won't come because they will be needed somewhere else, or there at the top, among the bosses of the camp, they decide that this is costing them too much and there are constant problems with our barrack either way [...]**

Comrade Jaskiernia! I know that you have guns at your belts and dogs. **But there are many more of us and even among you there are those who have had enough of the camp [...]** And here zeks are rustling more and more [...]

<sup>11</sup> D. Kępa-Figura, “Performatywność w komunikacji medialnej”, [in:] *Performatywne wymiary kultury*, eds. K. Skowronek, K. Leszczyńska, Wydawnictwo Libron – Filip Lohner, Krakow 2012, pp. 243–255.



Comrade Jaskiernia! I am a peaceful man and a man of faith and then I would wish for only one thing. That you are not turned into a bloody mass on the spot but **rather that everything is calm and just** – like in Nuremberg. And if you don't want even that, then **convince in time those at the top to allow us to remove the wires, send away the dogs, unfasten the guns and think together with us what to do with all that.**]

Irony was the base of the stylistic nature of the discussed text. Before delving into further analysis, it should be noted that irony constituted the dominant stylistics of all of the analysed texts, which seems justified in the case of articles the purpose of which was to dismantle a language based on semantic deformations.

The next text: “Lenin bombed” (*Merkuriusz Krakowski i Światowy*) referred to an attempted bomb attack on a statue of Lenin in Nowa Huta on the night of 17 April 1979. The broader background was the cult of the leader, which since the early-1970s had been amplified by the authorities through increased propaganda efforts, and which was equally contested by the society by, e.g. such actions as the one discussed in the text.

The play with the readers is visible already at the level of the title: the cult figure of the communist echelon was combined with a verb from the language of the “hostile West”. The ironic effect was expanded in the body of the text through lexical play based on polysemy, the tension between literal and figurative meanings, the phraseological meaning (“pustka wewnętrzna” [internal emptiness], “obalić na bruk” [topple to the ground]), and hyperbolisation (“zbrodniczy wybuch” [criminal explosion]):

W nocy z 17 na 18 kwietnia [1979], na dwa dni przed rocznicą urodzin Wodza, zbrodniczy wybuch urwał Iljiczowi spory kawał nogi i omal nie obalił go całkowicie na bruk. Lenina uratowała ponoć pustka wewnętrzna: zamiast natrafić na solidny opór litego brązu, gazy powstałe przy eksplozji rozproszyły się wewnątrz maszerującego kolosa i tym sposobem pomnik ocalał.

[On the night of 17 April [1979], two days prior to the birthday of the Leader, a criminal explosion tore off a large part of Ilich's leg and nearly toppled him to the ground. Lenin was, so they say, saved by an internal emptiness: instead of striking against the strong resistance of solid bronze, the gas produced during the explosion spread inside the striding colossus and thus the statue survived.]

The humorous modifications of names, lexis featuring various scopes of application in non-standard combinations and contexts triggered expressiveness and, in turn, they assigned value to the activities of the authorities:



Uciecha w mieście była wielka. Rozeszła się pogłoska, że **Aleja Róż przemianowana będzie na Aleję Inwalidów**. Wściekły był na pewno jeden człowiek, mianowicie mistrz Konieczny, którego według naszych źródeł z ASP, milicja wyciągnęła z łóżka o czwartej nad ranem, aby własnoręcznie gipsem i czernidłem **zreperował wodza rewolucji**. Ciekawe, czy **Lenin był jeszcze w okresie gwarancyjnym?**

[Joy in the city was huge. There spread a rumour that **Roses Avenue will be renamed Invalids Avenue**. However, one man must have been furious, that is master Konieczny, who, according to our sources at the Academy of Fine Arts, was dragged by the police from his bed at 4:00 in the morning to personally apply gypsum and blackwash to **repair the leader of the revolution**. I wonder **whether Lenin was still under guarantee?**]

A seemingly light-hearted argument, maintained within the poetics of a colloquial almost gossip-like piece (“ponoć” [so they say]), consolidated the community strongly and marked events and persons close to it in terms of principles: directly or through allusive circumlocutions which assumed common knowledge shared by the sender and the recipients regarding important events (e.g. “maj 1977” [May of 1977]: death of Stanisław Pyjas). It was accompanied by a “dismantling” of the newspeak, as the identification of the manipulative mechanisms of nomination and lexical templates actually did deprive it of its power of influence:

[...] cierpiała przede wszystkim opozycja, na którą zwała się fala rewizji, przesłuchań i zatrzymań. Wyglądało to w pierwszej chwili groźnie – zupełnie jak maj 1977, ale akcję błyskawicznie przyhamowano i już 20 kwietnia, przemawiając pod zreperowanym Leninem, sekretarz Barcikowski uznał za stosowne zwolnić opozycję z bezpośredniej odpowiedzialności. **Zrobił to oczywiście techniką nowomowy, tzn. oskarżył opozycję o stwarzanie takiego klimatu, w którym mogą się rodzić podobne pomysły.**

[...] the opposition suffered the worst, as they were hit by a wave of revisions, interrogations and arrests. Initially it seemed ominous, just as in May of 1977, yet the operation was quickly toned down and already on 20 April when speaking in front of the repaired Lenin, Secretary Barcikowski deemed it proper to relieve the opposition of any liability. **He, of course, did that using the technique of newspeak, that is, he accused the opposition of creating such an atmosphere in which similar ideas may form.**]

A different construction and stylistic principle offered the framework for another text published in the *Merkuriusz Krakowski i Światowy*: “Okólnik 13/PO czyli o zasadach podziału łupów” [Circular 13/PO, or on the rules of dividing the loot]. The polemical article focussed on an order issued at that time regarding

the taxation of unrevealed income only of the so-called private initiative, but not of state officials. The polemic was based on an article from the official press, the theses of which were reported upon with an exaggerated emphasising of the achievements of the article's author, which in turn led to ironic mocking. Similarly to the previous texts, this one also featured elements of newspeak and its typical mechanisms – clearly marked (indicated with graphic meta-linguistic commentary) depreciating of those who used them for manipulative purposes:

Pan Adam Teneta jest w prasie krakowskiej specjalistą od niewdzięcznych tematów. Tylko w ciągu minionej jesieni **podjął odpowiedzialne zadanie** obrony przydziałów (Dziennik Polski nr 139) dewizowych, **uczył nas kochać milicjantów i ubowców w ramach kampanii** „35 rocznica powołania MO i UB”, a ostatnio **daje odpór wroziej plotce, szerzącej się** w związku z okólnikiem Ministerstwa Finansów z 3.09.79 w sprawie „opodatkowania dochodów ustalonych na podstawie znamion zewnętrznych”. Oto zatem konkluzje naszego autora: „... Człowiek pracujący i żyjący uczciwie, nawet na wysokim poziomie, nie ma tu najmniejszego powodu do obaw... Może bać się kanciarz, łapownik, oszust, mankowicz i złodziej... Coraz szersze kręgi społeczeństwa żądają od kompetentnych władz bliższego zainteresowania się grupą takich, co żyją jako <ptaki niebieskie>”...

„... A może plotki (na ten temat) mają też inny, **określony, ukryty sens**: spowodowanie ogólnego społecznego zaniepokojenia?” (podkreślenie moje – B.)

**Jednym słowem, huzia na pasożytów i mącieli, czyli kwintesencja policyjnego myślenia.**

[Mr. Adam Teneta specialises in the Krakow-based press in difficult topics. Only last autumn **he undertook the weighty task** of defending foreign currency allowances (Dziennik Polski issue 139), **he taught us how to love policemen and the UB secret servicemen in the** “35th anniversary of establishing the Citizen Police and the Security Office” **campaign**, and more recently, **he has been rebutting the hostile rumour** regarding the circular of the Ministry of Finance dated 3.09.79 on the “taxation of income established based on external indicators.” Here are our author's conclusions: “... A man who works and lives honesty, even at a high level, has absolutely nothing to worry about here... Who should be worried are the swindlers, bribers, frauds, cash register leakers and thieves... A growing number of citizens demands competent authorities to focus more closely on the group of triflers”...

“... Or maybe the rumours (on the topic) have another **specific yet implicit meaning**: to cause general anxiety in society.” (emphasis – B.)

**In short, attack the parasites and troublemakers, that is the essence of police thinking.]**

The ironic mocking stylistics did not, however, deprive the column of its cognitive value, especially in its second part (which mocked the circular and its consequences), the style of which resembled that of an expert opinion yet combined with an accessible graphic translation (“innymi słowy” [in other words], “spróbujemy dojść na drodze analitycznej” [let us try to arrive through analysis]):

Nie mogąc przyjąć za dobra monetę wyjaśnień p. Tenety, **spróbujemy** na własną rękę zanalizować inkryminowany dokument. **Stanowi on konkretną interpretację przepisów art. 131 dekretu z 1946 roku** o postępowaniu podatkowym. Artykuł ten przewiduje możliwość dodatkowego opodatkowania obywateli, niezależnie od innych obciążeń skarbowych, jeżeli suma jego wydatków wykrytych przez urząd finansowy przekracza jego ujawnione dochody. **Innymi słowy, jest to podatek od dochodów nielegalnych.**

[Since the explanations by Mr. Teneta cannot be accepted at face value, **let us** analyse the incriminated document on our own. **It constitutes a concrete interpretation of the provisions of Art. 131 of the decree of 1946** on tax procedure. That article assumes the possibility of additional taxation of citizens, regardless of other fiscal encumbrance, if the sum of their expenditure uncovered by a revenue office exceeds their stated income. **In other words, it is a tax from illegal income.**]

The reliable image of the sender, expert in nature, could be treated as an element of persuasive strategy since the clarification of the reality led to lifting lies from it, and it remained in contrast with the emptiness of official communications. Compared to the factual discussion, the words which existed in the newspeak (e.g. “praworządność” [law-abidingness], “Polska Ludowa” [People’s Poland]) also acquired real meaning, breaking free from their propaganda distortions:

Z formalno-prawnego punktu widzenia dwa aspekty dokumentu wydają się istotne.

**Po pierwsze**, okólnik nr 13 narusza konstytucyjną zasadę równości obywateli wobec prawa. Urzędnik wydziału handlu rady narodowej może bezpiecznie za zebrane łapówki wystawić sobie dom, byle nie nazbyt kosztowny, natomiast np. taksówkarz będzie się musiał tłumaczyć, skąd wziął pieniądze. Gdyby Polska była krajem praworządnym, tego typu dyskryminacyjny przepis podlegałby zaskarżeniu przed Trybunałem Konstytucyjnym.

Po drugie, **w praworządnym państwie** obywatel przyłapany na utajeniu części dochodów podlega po prostu karze, podobnie jak wszelka inna kradzież. W **Polsce Ludowej** inaczej: państwo nie pyta o źródła nieudokumentowanych dochodów, zamierza je tylko opodatkować. **Czyli po prostu** chce wyegzekwować swój udział

w łupach. **To bardziej przypomina zasady działania mafii sycylijskiej, niż europejskiego państwa.**

[From a formal-legal point of view, two aspects of the document seemed significant.

**First of all**, circular no. 13 violates the constitutional principle of equality under the law. An officer of the department of trade of the national council can safely use the bribes he had collected to build a house provided it is not too lavish, while, e.g. a taxi driver will have to prove from where he got his money. If Poland was a law-abiding country, such discriminatory regulations would be subject to appeal at the Constitutional Tribunal.

Secondly, **in a law-abiding country**, a citizen caught having hidden a portion of their income is simply subject to a penalty, as is the case with any other theft. In **People's Poland** it is different: the state does not ask about the source of undocumented income, all it intends to do is tax it. **In simple terms**, it just enforces its share in the loot. **That resembles the principles according to which the Italian mafia works more than a European state.]**

“Wkładasz kopertę – wyskakuje królik, czyli Wyborcze Hokus-Pokus” [You fill an envelope and a rabbit jumps out, or the hocus pocus of election time] (*Krzyż Nowohucki*) was a commentary on the elections of 1980 to the PRL's Sejm and the National Councils:

23 marca odbyły się kolejne w Polsce Ludowej wybory do Sejmu i Rad Narodowych. Jak łatwo było przewidzieć, i tym razem wyniki nie przeszły śmiałych oczekiwań – frekwencja bliska ideału i także wyniki głosowania. No, może z okazji niezbyt pomyślnej – delikatnie mówiąc – sytuacji w kraju, wyniki w porównaniu z wyborami z poprzednich lat opadły o kilkadziesiąt procent.

ChWLP<sup>12</sup>, jak większość ugrupowań demokratycznych, wskazywała na niedemokratyczny i fikcyjny charakter wyborów – członkowie Wspólnoty nie wzięli udziału w tej **impresji** – o czym lojalnie, jak na uczciwych obywateli przystało, poinformowali z specjalnym oświadczeniu [...].

[On 23 March, new elections in People's Poland were held for the Sejm and the National Councils. As one could have expected, once again the results did not exceed bold expectations: the attendance was near-perfect and so were the results. Well, maybe due to the somewhat unfavourable, to say the least, situation in the country, the results when compared to previous elections fell by a few dozen percent.

ChWLP<sup>13</sup>, like most other democratic groups, indicated the undemocratic and fictive nature of the elections: the members of the Alliance did not participate in

<sup>12</sup> Chrześcijańska Wspólnota Ludzi Pracy [Christian Alliance of Working People].

<sup>13</sup> Chrześcijańska Wspólnota Ludzi Pracy.

the **event**, a fact which they thoughtfully, as honest citizens should, announced in a special statement [...].]

The text was saturated with vocabulary determining and connoting values and assessments. However, the depreciative evaluation of the described event and the electoral manipulations were mainly achieved by contrasting the gravity of the event with its placement within the area of references defined by such terms as: “impresa” [event], “magia” [magic], and “cyrk” [circus]. It is also worth indicating the persuasive addressing of the text (“jak wiadomo wszystkim” [as everyone knows]), which imitated the interactive nature of a question, and the allusive references to the method of forging the results, which enabled the author to construct a unity of values and language:

**Jak wiadomo wszystkim, mistrzowie białej magii mają swoje bombowe numery**, których tajemnicy strzegą jak oka w głowie, dlatego też trudno się dziwić, że **podobnie czynią mistrzowie magii czerwonej**. I nie rozumiem, dlaczego niektórzy nie mogą pojąć, jak to się stało, że z Punktu Wyborczego na os. Ogrodowym w NH, milicyjny radiowóz zabrał mieszkankę tego osiedla, Halinę Mycielską.

Dlaczego? Przecież zwracając uwagę wyborcom, że ich obowiązkiem jest przechodzenie przez kabinę niezależnie od tego, czy mają ochotę kogoś skreślić czy nie, **mogła zepsuć jeden z najlepszych tegorocznych numerów naszego cyrku**. Nie dziwny się więc, że odwieziono ją w południe do Szpitala Psychiatrycznego [...] Ale, jako że **w szpitalu magii – jak na razie – nie uprawiają**, ob. Mycielską zwolniono następnego dnia do domu.

[As everyone knows, the masters of light magic have their trademark numbers, the inner working of which they keep hidden and guard with their lives, no wonder then that **the masters of red magic do the same**. And I don't understand why some cannot comprehend how it happened that a police car took Halina Mycielska, an inhabitant of the Ogrodowe residential complex in Nowa Huta, away from a Voting Point in the complex.

Why? It is obvious that by pointing out to voters that their responsibility is to pass through a booth regardless of whether they felt like voting or not, **she could had spoiled one of the best numbers of our circus this year**. So, let's not be surprised that she was taken at noon to the Psychiatric Hospital [...] But since **magic is not done, for now at least, in hospitals**, citizen Mycielska was released home the following day.]

The course of the social ritual organised by the authorities was also discussed in the text published in 1979 by the *Wiadomości Tarnowskie*: “Niedziela czynu partyjnego” [The Sunday of the patriotic deed]. It began in the style of

a communication of the propaganda of success, with an accumulation of worn templates, patterns of speaking about the government. In order to emphasise the ironic effect in the depiction of the deeds of the leader, the author of the text ostentatiously violated the principle of stylistic validity (a description verging on sacralisation):

Dnia 23 września wszyscy usadowiliśmy się wygodnie w fotelach i z narastającym napięciem oczekiwaliśmy „Wieczoru z Dziennikiem”. Powód ku temu był nie lada: oto, jak co roku, mieliśmy okazję się przekonać, że **nasz przywódca – tow. Gierek – to nie żaden tyran i despota, lecz nasz, swój chłop, robotnik z krwi i kości, z dziada pradziada. Widzieliśmy, jak dostojnie trzymał w rękach łopatę i jak to prozaiczne narzędzie nabrało w jego rękach rangi symbolu klasy pracującej. To podnosi na duchu.**

Wszystko zaś sprawiła Niedziela Czynu Partyjnego. **Szczęśliwy, kto dostał łaski grabnięcia grabkami lub kucia oskardem niedawno wylanego asfaltu. Wszak my to wszystko dla siebie, od siebie, Polsce i światu, na przekór zgniłej Ameryce...**

[On the 23rd of September we all sat comfortably in our chairs and with growing tension awaited the *Wieczór z Dziennikiem* news show. The reason for that was not trite: there, like each year, we had the opportunity to see that **comrade Gierek, our leader, is no tyrant or despot, but rather one of ours, one of us, a worker made of flesh and bone, like his forefathers before him. We saw how he nobly held the shovel and how that common-place tool acquired in his hands the status of the symbol of the working class. That elevates your spirit high.**

And everything that thanks to the Sunday of the Party Deed. **Joy to those who are granted the gift of using the rake or hammering newly laid asphalt with a pick. Why, we do all that for ourselves, from ourselves, for Poland and the world, against the rotten America...**]

The expressiveness of the stylisation (the conventionality and “newspaper” character of public language) was emphasised by the fact of contrasting it with the “appropriate” message – one which was laconic and colloquial in form: We have already learnt the outcome of the Sunday deed.

Poznaliśmy już bilans niedzielnego czynu. Wiemy, **jak on przebiegał właściwie: jak co roku prace poszły na marne [...]** Tysiące ludzi przepracowała tysiące roboczogodzin na darmo. **Normalka.**

[We know **how it properly occurred:** just as every year, the work was futile [...]  
Thousands of people worked thousands of man-hours in vain. **Typical.**]

## Conclusion

The analysis of the selected stylistic approaches of independent press articles enabled me to indicate in it, with the backdrop of the dominant discourse, the patterns of contesting interactive practices. The column character as the dominant communicational intention in the texts at the stylistic-pragmatic level existed, as noted by Edward Balcerzan<sup>14</sup>, through the application of “play on signs”, “play on form”, both critical and ludic use of the language as a repository of forms and stereotypes to shatter moral, mental and social structures. A similar thing applied to the functionality of the discussed style-building devices intended to unveil the mechanisms of newspeak and, in turn, negate its ideological background and the activities of those who managed it. The stylistic development of the independent press was associated with producing a significant (meaningful) tension between that which was common, conventional and formulaic and that which was new, which “irritated” the old propaganda models.<sup>15</sup> The column nature of the discussed texts entailed stylistic diversity, which was a by-product of the applied structural and genre adaptations and mainly play on language (lexical, textual, and intertextual). At the level of linguistic determiners, I identified in samizdat press an extension of the array of stylistic devices (from various registers and styles) on the one hand, and, on the other, the inclusion into that array elements of newspeak through quotations: in contexts which indicated its manipulative nature, which revealed its lack of communication, and which utilised secondary propaganda meanings for building comicality and irony.

The styles of the analysed texts were also influenced by the world they discussed: the expansion of the range of the discussion of public affairs, which sometimes updated specialist lexis; also, the development of an interpretative community through a community of a language which justified a turn for the colloquial. Colloquialisms diminished the official nature of the communication, they shaped the position of the author closer to the readers, who communicated with views using accessible language, which enabled him to approximate the proposed image of the world.

The persuasive undertone of samizdat press articles resulted from the clashing in it of two organisations of communication and their entailed axiological organisations. Nonetheless, in the discussed representatives of independent press discourse, despite being created for those groups within the society which were unified in their opposition towards that which was offered by the dominant discourse, one could notice a certain degree of openness to a possible dialogue outside their community of shared values. That entailed the limitation of the

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<sup>14</sup> E. Balcerzan, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>15</sup> Such a function of play of language was indicated by K. Skowronek, M. Rutkowski, *Media i nazwy. Z zagadnień onomastyki medialnej*, Wydawnictwo Lexis, Krakow 2004.



rhetoric of conflict: a bipolar valuation (*we vs. they*) was accompanied by attempts to move from the category of political enemy to the category of opponent, while exclusive labelling was replaced with criticism of specific behaviour and anti-values, though in a mocking, ironic tone. In the broader perspective, the attempts made by the journalists at lowering the ideologisation of communications, which was visible in the column-like character of the style, could be viewed as indications of open relations, typical of public civil discourses built on the respect for the other side<sup>16</sup> – that was the point at which its contrast to the dominant discourse, which precluded any possibility of communication outside its own community of shared values or negotiations in terms of the image of reality preserved in newspeak, was the strongest.

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<sup>16</sup> E. Bobrowska, “Wspólnota dyskursywna i wyobrażona w analizie dyskursów publicznych”, *Media i Społeczeństwo* 2013, issue 3, pp. 16–18.

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Dorota Suska

## Styl niezależnej publicystyki prasowej z lat 1979–1980 wobec ideologicznego dyskursu dominującego

### Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest stylistyczny opis publicystyki drugiego obiegu z końca lat siedemdziesiątych, która była tekstową emanacją ówczesnego dyskursu niezależnego. Autorka przeprowadza analizę reprezentatywnych mikrostylów,

dokonuje funkcjonalnej interpretacji rozpoznanych środków i zjawisk stylistycznych z uwzględnieniem ich relacji do oficjalnego wzorca komunikacji publicznej. Omawiane teksty publicystyczne cechuje stylowa heterogeniczność, która jest pochodną adaptacji konstrukcyjnych, gatunkowych, ale przede wszystkim gier językowych (leksykalnych, tekstowych, intertekstualnych). Zauważa się z jednej strony rozszerzanie repertuaru środków stylistycznych (z różnych rejestrów, stylów), z drugiej – włączanie do tego repertuaru elementów nowomowy w kontekstach, które ukazywały jej manipulacyjny charakter.

**Słowa kluczowe:** dyskurs ideologiczny, prasa drugiego obiegu, publicystyka, nowomowa, styl.

## The style of independent periodicals in 1979–1980 in the face of the dominant ideological discourse

### *Summary*

The goal of the article is to offer a style-focussed description of samizdat press articles from the late-1970s, which were the textual manifestation of the independent discourse at that time. The author analysed representative microstyles and conducted a functional interpretation of identified stylistic devices and phenomena, considering how they were related to the official model of public communication. The discussed texts were stylistically diverse, which was a by-product which came from structural and genre adaptations, and mainly play on language (lexical, textual, and intertextual). On the one hand, one can note an expansion of the array of stylistic devices (from various registers and styles) and, on the other, an inclusion into that array of the elements of newspeak in those contexts which indicated its manipulative nature.

**Keywords:** ideological discourse, independent press, journalistic articles, newspeak, style.

**Dorota Suska** – Ph.D. hab., professor of Jan Długosz University in Czestochowa. Areas of scientific interest: mediallynguistics (press discourse, communication in the Internet, media onomastics), cultural linguistics, stylistics, language culture.