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VISUAL CULTURE OF THE OPPOSITION IN POLAND OF THE 1980s

Introduction

Edited by

Katarzyna SZYCHTA-MIELEWCZYK

This topical section is devoted to the oppositional visual culture of the 1980s in Communist-ruled Poland. It is a set of texts in the form of contributory studies. These texts as well as other on-going queries and new publications, complement the state of research on the oppositional visual culture of the 1980s in Poland.

The issues dealt with the published texts cover a wide range of phenomena, involving not only art, in the sense of traditional fine arts, which is dependent on the diverse specification of projects fulfilled by creators of the 1980s. Besides paintings, sculptures, art installations, and art actions, there are other materials created on a massive scale, e.g., post stamps and cards, leaflets, or posters. Furthermore, the term “happening” is reserved for political rather than artistic events.

In this topical section, we would like to introduce the sixteen texts divided into three parts due to the issues they cover:

I Art. Artists – Groups – Communities – Events

This part is devoted to art issues. For starters, there are two syntheses about the underground art activities in two centres – Łódź and Koszalin: Alicja Cichowicz’s “An Outline of the Lodz Alternative Art Scene Activity in the 1980s” and Wojciech Ciesielski’s “Invisible Art. Independent Artistic Activities in Koszalin in the 1980s and

their Implications.” The subsequent three articles concern projects of individual artists. Karolina Lejczak-Pastuszka presents selected works of Leszek Sobocki, including, e.g., two of the *Brama* (Gate) cycle, in which the author, despite the common rapture over the winds of freedom in August 1980, seems to predict what would happen on 13th of December 1981 (“Intellectual Implicate. The Art Works of Leszek Sobocki in the European Solidarity Centre Collection”). Monika Krzencessa-Ropiak describes Andrzej Trzaska’s works created during his internment. In the internment camp in Strzebielinko, he created, for instance, a series of portraits of men; it seems that each (?) model has a beard (“Andrzej Trzaska. Creativity in the Internment Centre”). Then, Xawery Stańczyk presents the operations of Łódź’s Chaos Faza 3 Psychogallery, the co-creators of which were positioned on the margins of the artistic and cultural life as they were out of keeping with any current of the art of the period (“Chaos Faza 3 Psychogallery 1988–1989. »Cadio Rebel« 1984–1989. The Long 1980s, Underground, Phantom”). Another two articles refer to photography. Anna Dzierżyc-Horniak discusses photographic threads in three exhibitions held by Janusz Bogucki and Nina Smolarz. These are *Sign of the Cross*, 1983; *Apocalypse – light in darkness*, 1984 and *Labyrinth – a subterranean space*, 1989 (“From the Documentary to the Eternal Present. Photography in the Encounter with the Sacrum in Selected Examples of Projects by Janusz Bogucki and Nina Smolarz”). Kamila Dworniczak discusses the term “photojournalism” in the context of the First All-Poland Review of Sociological Photography that took place in Bielsko-Biała in 1980. It was accessible to the public for only five days because it was cancelled by the state’s censorship (“Reportage Photography and Strategies of Resistance. The First All-Poland Review of Sociological Photography (1980)”). This part is topped off by Artur Tajber’s article, in which the author reviews the current attitude to the 1980s by references to his own life experiences, including his period as an oppositionist; that is also how he has been facing the theme of this topical section (“Influences of the Repressive Apparatus and Dissident Circles on the Decline of Culture and the Regression of Art in Poland in the 1980s”).

II. Artefacts and Archives

The common theme of articles in the second part are references to various materials deposited in archives. Iwona Kwiatkowska and Ewa Konkel use images from the European Solidarity Centre's photo collection to present the background of making slogans (but not only slogans!) that were displayed on the walls of the Tricity of Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot, for example. In the text, they also relate to these types of actions pursued by the so-called dirty dozen, a group that was functioning within the structures of the union, NSZZ Solidarność ("Painted Freedom. The Voice of the Streets of the Tricity in 1980-1981"). Agnieszka Baćławska-Kornacka describes the exhibits of the temporary exhibition *Thread. Weaves of Freedom* (European Solidarity Centre, 2018), to indicate chosen items of clothing, "items with biography," connected with key moments in the political history of Poland ("Oppositional Biographies of Things. About the Exhibition *Thread. Weaves of Freedom*"). Maria Leśniowska discusses the diversity of materials kept in the archives, in this case – in the State Archive in Opole ("Posters, Postcards, Street Art. In the 'Service' of Solidarność. Iconographic Materials Kept in the State Archive in Opole"). Archival collections were an inspiration for myself – in the article "»We will Never Forget!« The Story of History Based on the Samizdat Post Stamps and Cards Distributed in the Polish People's Republic in the 1980s," I analyse over one thousand post stamps and cards, which are a basis to attempt to recapture the version of the history of Poland that attracted the attention of the oppositionists; simultaneously, I point out the events and/or people, that were the most often depicted on the underground prints. This part is completed by Kamil Kaliszuk's article. The author presents chosen musealia deposited in the Historical Archives of the National Commission of NSZZ Solidarity; these objects document how underground creators used materials available "on hand" to create historical artefacts ("»Something out of Nothing.« Manifestations of Improvised, Oppositional Creative Activity Kept in the Historical Archives of the National Commission of NSZZ Solidarność").

III Discussion

In this part, we situated three texts, in which the past converges with the present, or even can be a projection of the future.

The first one, an article by Jerzy Klimczak, is an analysis of the notes left by visitors on the interactive wall in the European Solidarity Centre, which led the author to describe the still living tradition of resistance against the contemporary social-political order. Apparently, it might seem that this article does not match this topical section. However, these notes form part of a huge museum installation that replicates the poster *Kardiogram* designed by Czesław Bielecki in 1980 ("Objection in the Past and Today. The Opposition Poster as a Museum Installation").

In 2021, much attention was devoted to Jakub Banasiak's book *Proteus Times. The collapse of the state art system 1982-1993. Martial law, the second thaw, political transformation*. So it is no coincidence that among articles referring to various creative actions of the 1980s, there are also two texts that discuss this publication: "A Collapse that Continues Till Today..." by Jakub Knera and "WE! Pathetic Collaborators..." by Józef Robakowski.

The social-political context of the 1980s in Poland (that is the strikes of August 1980, the fight for independence and self-governance of Solidarity, the period of Martial Law, and other events, up to the Round Table Agreement and parliamentary elections in 1989), affected many type of creations, both the work of artists, who work in various, new and traditional, art media as well as that of non-artists, non-professionals, who created occasional artefacts. They use similar topics, motifs, symbols, and narrations. That is why we consider applicable the use of the term "visual culture," enables creating not only a framework covering the diversity of phenomena in the 1980s but also the methods of their study concerning the formal and contextual analysis of those phenomena. These texts prove the cohesive character of the visual culture of the 1980s at the level of in-depth interpretation and indicate that it is a scientific field that requires further exploration.

I. Art. Artists - Groups - Communities – Events

Alicja CICHOWICZ

AN OUTLINE OF THE LODZ ALTERNATIVE ART SCENE ACTIVITY IN THE 1980s

The article describes the activities of the alternative art scene in Łódź in the 1980s and the most important events organized by this community: from *Construction in Process* in 1981, through the *Silent Cinema* [Nieme Kino] shown at The Attic [Strych] - the seat of Łódź Kaliska, the *Artistic Pilgrimage*, and the happenings of the Orange Alternative in Łódź (1988-89) to the exhibition *Dungeons of Manhattan* [Lochy Manhattanu] (1989).

The most important private art galleries in Lodz, as meeting places for independent artists and many artistic initiatives, were: Józef Robakowski and Małgorzata Potocka's Exchange Gallery, Antoni Mikołajczyk's Consulting Point, Ryszard and Maria Waśko's Archives of Contemporary Thought, Radosław Sowiak and Adam Paczkowski's Carpet Cleaning, Janusz Zagrodzki's Trace II, and Adam Klimczak and Jerzy Grzegorski's Eastern Gallery (on the East Street).

These underground places carried out counter-cultural activities resulting from the need to rebel against power and strive for full creative autonomy. But also from the need for a sense of community, collective work, linking independent artistic circles. This strategy was a continuation of this type of activity initiated in Poland by alternative artists, operating outside the state sponsorship already in the 1970s.

A decade later, especially during the Martial Law period, the resistance to the totalitarian system of power and the centralistic control of culture, which had been growing for years, turned into a boycott of state art institutions and the total separation of the creative circles from the official

artistic life, and at the same time the artistic milieu organized by the artists themselves was created.

Wojciech CIESIELSKI

INVISIBLE ART. INDEPENDENT ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES IN KOSZALIN IN THE 1980s AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

The text presents selected artistic events, related to the so called "independent movement" in the 1980s, in the former Koszalin Voivodeship. The author, quoting Jerzy Busza, emphasizes that the adopted artistic attitudes at that time constituted "a great triumph of normality over the abnormalities and burdensome inconveniences of everyday life," in the period of Martial Law and after it. After Janusz Zagrodzki, the creator of the term 'Private Art' [Sztuka Prywatna], the author draws attention to the aspect of the functioning of 'Pitch-in Culture' [Kultura Zrzuty] in the private and unofficial zones, and following the thesis of Józef Robakowski, to the sense of an individual and independent attitude as a superior element for the creation of art.

The first independent initiative of artists from the Koszalin area was a three-day event *After a Year* [Po Roku], organized cyclically from 1982 to 1988 in mid-December, led by Andrzej Ciesielski and Andrzej Słowik. Artists invited from all over the country were to present their current achievements.

Artistic Carol, Without a Slogan [Koleśa Artystyczna, Bez Hasła], organized on February 10-12 in Koszalin, 1984, was a response to the invitation of Koszalin artists to the Lodz's *Pilgrimage* organized a year earlier. It was the largest manifestation of the independent art movement in the region. The organizers were people participating in the Łódź event: Ewa Kowalska, Grażyna Bogusz Wolska, Andrzej Ciesielski and Stanisław Wolski. In all, 85 people from all over the country were invited, besides, many uninvited people came to the event on their own initiative, connected, among others, with the Pitch-in Culture [Kultura Zrzuty] movement.

For the Koszalin community, the open-air activity was also important, which was still related to the tradition of the Plein-Airs in Osieki organized since 1963, and ended after the introduction of Martial Law in 1981. This situation was to be changed by a series of open-air workshops organized under the slogan 'We invite you to work' in 1987-1989 in Karlino, and in 1990 in Darłowo. The initiators and first artistic commissioners were Andrzej Słowik and Maria Idziak, who in 1989 handed over this function to Wojciech Zamiara, and in 1990 to Andrzej Ciesielski.

The gallery At The Rectory [Na Plebanii] by Andrzej Ciesielski was also important for the functioning of the Koszalin community in the national artistic community. In the years 1986-1990, 34 meetings were held as part of its activities. He continued his work at the next My Archive Gallery [Galeria Moje Archiwum], operating in the years 1993-2001.

These initiatives, as well as many others undertaken in the 1980s, combined the extraordinary energy and unconventional courage of the participants. However, they did not result only from the confrontation with the political situation then, but, as in previous decades, from the immense value that permeates the spirit of art - the need for freedom.

Karolina LEJCZAK-PASTUSZKA

INTELLECTUAL IMPLICATE. THE ART WORKS OF LESZEK SOBOCKI IN THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CENTRE COLLECTION

The paper focuses on selected art works by the Cracow artist Leszek Sobocki, from the collection of the European Solidarity Centre. This group of works refer directly to the events related to Polish history in the 20th century, including the workers' demonstrations in December 1970, the strikes in August 1980, the rise of the Solidarity movement as well as the introduction of Martial Law. The presented art works show artist's attitude to the communist government and

its ruthless mechanisms of operation. They are a record of the human struggle for individuality.

Monika KRZENCESSA-ROPIAK

ANDRZEJ TRZASKA. CREATIVITY IN THE INTERNMENT CENTER

The objects, memorabilia and photographs that have been collected at the European Solidarity Centre (ECS) since 2008 relate primarily to the period of activity of the democratic opposition from 1970 to 1989. The core of the ECS art collection is the art of the 1980s related to the independent culture movement, which resulted from the rejection of official, government-backed art after the imposition of Martial Law. In 2009, a collection of drawings made in most unusual circumstances was added to the collection of the European Solidarity Centre. Almost 400 bearded male faces were drawn by Andrzej Trzaska, an artist from Gdańsk. The author of the portraits was interned in Strzebielinek, near Wejherowo, for over six months. He was arrested for his involvement with the Trade Union Solidarity. The artist created not only male portraits in the internment camp, he also represented the cells, the yard and the camp buildings. He is also the author of many camp 'postage stamps,' which were a characteristic element of the creativity of internees not only in Strzebielinek. Andrzej Trzaska was an artist who had the gift of versatility: he was involved in painting, ceramics, drawing and jewellery making; perhaps this very feature combined with the urge to create allowed him, in the situation of internment, confinement and isolation, to produce an extraordinary record of the time. He studied painting at the State Higher School of Visual Arts in Wrocław and in Gdańsk; he took part in many exhibitions in Poland and abroad. Portraits from Strzebielinek are available on the website of the European Solidarity Centre. Many of the people drawn are still waiting to be identified. This year (2021), to mark the anniversary of the introduction of Martial Law, an exhibition of Andrzej Trzaska's scanned portraits has been organized in Strzebielinek.

Xawery STAŃCZYK

**CHAOS FAZA 3 PSYCHOGALLERY
1988–1989. “CADIO REBEL” 1984–1989.
THE LONG 1980s, UNDERGROUND,
PHANTOM**

Psychogallery Chaos Faza 3 was functioning in Łódź for only 8 months, from June 1988 to January 1989. Its ephemeral character was closely linked with the kind of art performed by the creators of the site: fleeting, situational, and underground. A challenging and confrontational attitude, both in the aesthetic and political aspect, positioned the main figures involved in the Chaos Faza 3, Sławomir Kosmynka (a.k.a. “Cadio Rebel”) and Ewa Bloom Kwiatkowska, on the margins of the artistic and cultural life of the 1980s. At the same time that was the margin that broke the discursive frames of that period. The themes of fascism, violence, and anarchy, which were explicitly present in the creativity of the Chaos Faza 3 circle, transgressed the veins of the academism, the neo-avantgarde that was just gaining its institutional status in those days, and the so-called church art. Despite their expressive capacity, artworks by Kosmynka and Bloom Kwiatkowska were not contained in neo-expressionism, while their provocative features did not locate them close toward neo-dadaism, nor surrealism. The article describes the actions and attitudes of the artists associated with the Chaos Faza 3 gallery in the light of their own manifestos. The aim is to expose the specificity, originality, and subversiveness of their works in the context of the phenomena of the 1980s culture. The crucial categories in this undertaking are the long 1980s, underground, and phantom.

Anna DZIERŻYC-HORNIK

**FROM THE DOCUMENTARY TO THE
ETERNAL PRESENT. PHOTOGRAPHY IN
THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE SACRUM IN
SELECTED EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS BY
JANUSZ BOGUCKI AND NINA SMOLARZ**

The article is an attempt to look at the phenomenon of oppositional art in churches through selected exhibitions by Janusz Bogucki and Nina Smolarz. From the second half of the 1970s, Bogucki developed the concept of “return to home and place of worship” in response to the artistic Tower of Babel he saw at documenta 5 in Kassel (1972). In this idea, rediscovering the sacrum and the sacrum of art became a key issue. The text describes their three most important projects: *Sign of the Cross* in the church of Divine Mercy and St. Faustina in Warsaw (1983), *Apocalypse - light in darkness* in the Holy Cross church in Warsaw (1984), and *Labyrinth* – a subterranean space in the Church of Lord’s Ascension in Warsaw (1989). Photography played an important role in these projects, so they are analyzed from this perspective. The photos used in the discussed exhibitions evoked the memory of facts of the distant past or yesterday, and along with the memory - the thoughts and emotions associated with it. Bogucki and Smolarz introduced these documentary images into a space saturated with prayer and art, into the atmosphere of sacred architecture. In this way, they imposed the atmosphere of a place where life facts are seen in the perspective of eternity. The aim of these treatments was to create a sense of community and experience of the sacrum.

Kamila DWORNICZAK

REPORTAGE PHOTOGRAPHY AND STRATEGIES OF RESISTANCE. THE FIRST ALL-POLAND REVIEW OF SOCIOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHY (1980)

The First All-Poland Review of Sociological Photography in Bielsko-Biała (1980), consisting of three main exhibitions and several accompanying exhibitions, was closed by the censor five days after its opening. The article analyzes the concept of the exhibition and the discussions taking place within it. Particular attention was paid to the need to reconstruct the history of socially engaged photography in Poland, born during the “Solidarity Carnival.” An important element of this reconstruction process was the redefinition of the tradition of humanist photojournalism, shaped in the West and developed in Poland since the 1950s. The reflection on The First All-Poland Review of Sociological Photography contributed to rethinking the tension between photojournalistic practices becoming part of the visual language of the propaganda of PRL, on the one hand, and creating the area of “cultural resistance” on the other.

Artur TAJBER

INFLUENCES OF THE REPRESSIVE APPARATUS AND DISSIDENT CIRCLES ON THE DECLINE OF CULTURE AND THE REGRESSION OF ART IN POLAND IN THE 1980s

The author attempts to revise the description of the processes taking place in Poland in the 1980s from the perspective of today. He addresses this problem from the standpoint of a participant, witness and observer looking backwards. The thesis, which is the basis for the re-evaluation, is the conviction, strengthened over time, that the source of many negative consequences visible recently in the field of artistic and socio-political culture, is a series of consecutive strategical mistakes and malpractices from the 1980s to the second decade of the 21st century.

II. Artifacts and Archives

Iwona KWIATKOWSKA
and Ewa KONKEL

PAINTED FREEDOM. THE VOICE OF THE STREETS OF TRICITY IN 1980-1981

The totalitarian system of communism consistently controlled the flow of all information to the public about the real state of the country, the economy, and the actions of the government. This monopoly on information was seriously broken in August 1980. From the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk and other striking factories on the coast, information about the events taking place began to spread. It spread so widely and effectively that it crossed national borders. The forms of reaching the public in the pre-Internet era were varied and depended on the ingenuity of the opposition. Underground and strike-period printing houses produced thousands of leaflets, posters and bulletins reporting on the days of the strikes and the pictures of photojournalists, showing crowds of people solidarily supporting the striking crews, ran around the world. Meanwhile, large painted inscriptions summarizing the strike demands appeared on the shipyard walls. Their number and consistent renewal made it impossible for the security forces to remove them completely from the sight of residents who curiously stopped by the walls. One of the people who took up the task of painting the slogans was Zygmunt Błażek, an employee of Gdańsk Unimor electronics factory. After the August strikes ended, Błażek gathered a group of enthusiastic young people around him, and he set out to paint slogans on the walls and sidewalks of the Tricity. The painted slogans “spoke” directly to the residents about their desire for freedom, bypassing the ubiquitous cen-

sorship and the hypocrisy of the public media. The painters’ work, often at risk of arrest, was immortalized by Tricity photographers, thanks to whom these dialogues with society reached the rest of the country.

Agnieszka BACŁAWSKA-KORNACKA

OPPOSITIONAL BIOGRAPHIES OF THINGS. ABOUT THE EXHIBITION THREAD. WEAVES OF FREEDOM

Objects can be the carriers of historical narratives. Patriotic fabrics with a high emotional load and individual ‘CV’ (related to the biography of a specific owner or social group) are especially predestined for this. This allowed viewers of the exhibition *Thread. Weaves of Freedom* (2018, European Solidarity Centre) to identify more closely with the story about the Polish road to independence. Objects from the 1980s were juxtaposed with patriotic fabrics from earlier decades to invite visitors to travel in time: through partitions, exiles, enthusiasm for the first independence, the years of World War II, the period of communism, the emerging opposition and the rise of Solidarity until the second independence in 1989. The costumes from the 1980s and the genealogically related items from the period of the lack of Polish statehood presented at the exhibition are a record of the dramatic past, becoming its historical source. Although worn by individual people, they were a record of the collective experience of the nation, because they were connected by a community - a thread - “a trace of absent presence,” from which the national identity is woven.

Maria LEŚNIEWSKA

**POSTERS, POSTCARDS, STREET ART.
IN THE ‘SERVICE’ OF SOLIDARNOŚĆ.
ICONOGRAPHIC MATERIALS KEPT IN
THE STATE ARCHIVE IN OPOLE**

Activists and sympathizers of Solidarność, fighting for the freedom of the Polish nation, resorted not only to demonstrations, strikes and rallies. They tried to reach the consciousness of Poles also through literary works and iconography referring to historical figures and events. Traces of this activity are kept, among other things, in the State Archive in Opole. Especially rich collections of stamps, cards and postcards from the period of the struggle against communism are gathered in the Eugenia Łysiak and Ryszard Hawryszczuk Collections. Mostly these are materials created by internees in the Grodków and Nysa detention camps. This documentation is an interesting source for research into the activities of regional structures of Solidarność.

Katarzyna SZYCHTA-MIELEWCZYK

**„WE WILL NEVER FORGET!” THE STORY
OF HISTORY BASED ON THE SAMIZDAT
POST STAMPS AND CARDS DISTRIBUTED
IN THE POLISH PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC
IN THE 1980s**

In the 1980s, in the Polish People’s Republic, the activity of the underground publishing houses was expanding. In the samizdat, there were thousands of various prints, which were a common carrier of historical motifs. The conducted research involves over 1000 printed items including post stamps and cards, which were published to commemorate events and/or people from the past.

The underground creators often refer to the Second World War – in the analysed materials, there are over 400 printed items devoted to, e.g., the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the invasion of Poland, chosen battles, especially the Battle of Monte Cassino, the Katyn Massacre,

the Warsaw Uprising. Other popular events are, e.g., the decreeing of the Constitution of the 3rd May 1791 (14 items), the national uprisings (72 items), the restoration of Poland’s sovereignty (86 items). It is also worth noting that there are events that were not exposed as, e.g., the Battle of Grunwald (only one item); it can be assumed that it was not promoted by underground publishing houses as it was promoted by the communist authorities.

The historic motifs are reproduced not only on postage stamps but also occasionally on, e.g., postcards and envelopes. These kinds of prints were a part of oppositionists’ visual language. The transmitting and receiving strategies were not formalized whereby quite consistent. It can be assumed that such prints could arouse social historic awareness especially in the case of events and/or people that were a ‘terra incognita’ in the politics of memory in the Polish People’s Republic.

Kamil KALISZUK

**“SOMETHING OUT OF NOTHING.”
MANIFESTATIONS OF IMPROVISED,
OPPOSITIONAL CREATIVE ACTIVITY
KEPT IN THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES
OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION OF
NSZZ SOLIDARNOŚĆ**

The Historical Archives of the National Commission of NSZZ Solidarity (AKKS), based in Gdańsk, apart from archival materials related to the functioning of probably the most famous trade union in Poland, also keep numerous museum objects. Among them, one can find a wide range of artistic manifestations of people engaged in the opposition activities against the authorities of the Polish People’s Republic. These are primarily leaflets, posters, postcards and postage stamps of the underground postal service, badge pins attached to clothing, pennants, decorative calendars, and furthermore banners, commemorative medals, coins, tapestries, devotional articles, sculptures, paintings, photographs of inscriptions on the walls and others.

The authors of many of these artworks were not professional artists. Among them there were amateurs, employees of state-owned factories or enterprises not directly related to the world of art, driven to action by personal interests, the need to manifest themselves in the face of the reality, and specific circumstances. In the course of their creative activity, they struggled with various difficulties related to the limited access to materials, the lack of a studio or the need to keep their efforts secret.

A selection of some of the material effects of such activities kept in AKKS from the 1980^s, are presented in the article. It seems that they can serve to illustrate the methods used by the oppositionists – with artistic spirit – in struggling with the encountered obstacles, in efforts which often allowed the creation of “something out of nothing.”

III. Discussion

Jerzy KLIMCZAK

OBJECTION IN THE PAST AND TODAY. THE OPPOSITION POSTER AS A MUSEUM INSTALLATION

The aim of the article is to present the role of a museum installation in the European Solidarity Centre (ECS) based on the opposition poster *Kardiogram* by Czesław Bielecki. In the installation in the permanent exhibition in the ECS it has the form of an interactive wall on which guests leave cards with messages they wrote down. Despite the fact that decades have passed since the original poster was created, the installation, acting as a type of commemorative book, is a place used for expressing objections and fears about the current socio-political order in Poland. Although in a changed context and time, such a use by visitors to the permanent exhibition of the ECS may constitute the basis for a thesis about the continuation of the tradition of opposition. The article outlines the history of Czesław Bielecki's poster, analyzes the messages left and presents preliminary conclusions. This article is a research reconnaissance.

Jakub KNERA

A COLLAPSE THAT CONTINUES TILL TODAY. REVIEW OF THE BOOK BY JAKUB BANASIAK *PROTEUS TIMES*. *THE COLLAPSE OF THE STATE ART SYSTEM 1982-1993. MARTIAL LAW, THE SECOND THAW, SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION*

This article is devoted to Jakub Banasiak's book *Proteus Times. The collapse of the state art sys-*

tem 1982-1993. Martial law, the second thaw, political transformation. The author deals with the period of changes of the visual arts sector from the period after Martial Law to the first half of the 1990s after the political transformation in Poland. Reviewing this 500-page publication, I would like to draw attention to the three most important threads touched upon by Banasiak, which make his book worth attention and broaden the discussion on patronage and state interventionism in the area of culture.

The first concerns the changes, which gradually lasted almost a decade, and not just a year, as is often accepted when talking about 1989. The second concerns adopting a perspective that rejects the totalitarian paradigm, i.e. looking at the period of the Polish People's Republic of in a broader spectrum, taking into account the many factors of its functioning through the prism of both the pros and cons of the system. The third one concerns describing the artistic scene without moralizing and not only in the dualism of collaboration-resistance, but also outlining a broader view of the context in which Polish art functioned in those years.

I would also like to draw attention to the enormous amount of work Banasiak has done by conducting numerous searches, interviews and archive analyses, as well as to the enormous contribution his book makes to the discourse on the legacy of patronage in the Polish People's Republic and how it can be applied to today.

Józef ROBAKOWSKI

WE! PATHETIC COLLABORATORS...

Harsh criticism and a polemic with the book by Jakub Banasiak *Proteus Times. The collapse of the state art system 1982-1993. Martial the second thaw, political transformation*, written in the form of an open letter by Józef Robakowski, who is one of the most important artists and witnesses of the history of art that Banasiak writes about in his book.