

Tomasz Kozłowski, *Anatomia rewolucji: Narodziny ruchu społecznego ‘Solidarność’ w 1980 roku* [Anatomy of Revolution: The Birth of Social Movement ‘Solidarity’ in 1980], Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej — Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2017, 471 pp., Monographies

Although much has been written since 1980 about ‘Solidarity’ and its genesis, for a long time there was no book which analysed the course of workers’ protests in August 1980 in a scholarly fashion, with the use of a broad spectrum of historical sources. The situation changed recently when the European Solidarity Centre published the book *Bunt: Strajki w Trójmieście: Sierpień 1980* (Revolt: Strikes in Trójmiasto: August 1980) by Anna Machcewicz (2015). It received deservedly positive reviews from historians, since this publication presented the reasons, the course and the effects of strikes which broke out in the Pomeranian Voivodeship in August 1980 in a style both attractive for readers — thanks to the journalistic background of the author — and balanced in its perspective.

The book by Tomasz Kozłowski reviewed here should be considered an even greater breakthrough in the research on this ‘Polish month’. Its author was already known through his numerous publications on the history of this social movement and other subjects, notably the prison system in the last decades of Polish People’s Republic, *Niezależne Zrzeszenie Studentów* (The Independent Student Association), farmers’ ‘Solidarity’, political manipulation of political trials in Poland after 1956, the secret details of ‘The Bridge’ operation (regarding Jews’ emigration from the USSR to Israel through Poland) and the establishment of commercial companies co-owned by nomenclature in the last years of the Polish People’s Republic. Kozłowski’s current project is a book on the reform of Polish intelligence services during the system transformation in Poland in 1989–90.

The author has to a large extent set himself challenges still more ambitious than those undertaken by Machcewicz. His book describes the events which took place not only in the Tri-City (*Trójmiasto*) of Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot, but throughout Poland. Kozłowski takes note of events preceding the August 1980 strikes — for example, he provides a detailed analysis of the July strikes, which are often summarized in a few sentences by other researchers — and his analysis takes into account a further stage of revolution then initiated: the first weeks of the trade union’s operation. The author’s period of interest ends with the registration of ‘Solidarity’, that is the trade union’s formal legalization. Nevertheless, the major difference between *Bunt* and *Anatomia rewolucji* is the adoption of a different approach and research goal. Machcewicz successfully reconstructed the events of summer 1980 in a typical historical manner, whereas Kozłowski has gone further, making a large number of factual findings and providing a multi-layered analysis of the events described, in which he uses categories applied by sociologists and political scientists to studies of social movements.

It is easy to notice the influence of Kozłowski's teacher Marcin Kula. Under his supervision Kozłowski defended his PhD dissertation in the social sciences related to political science in the spring of 2016. This thesis constitutes the basis of his book. After reading *Anatomia rewolucji* I have no doubt that Kozłowski may be included in the historical school created by Kula, characterized by the wide use of sociological methods in historical research. The title of the book, as Kozłowski has admitted, refers to his dissertation supervisor's classic work titled *Anatomia rewolucji narodowej (Boliwia w XX wieku)* (Anatomy of National Revolution (Bolivia in the Twentieth Century), 1999). The tendency to introduce inter-disciplinary approaches to his research were visible in Kozłowski even earlier. In his 2010 book *Bunt w bydgoskim areszcie śledczym w 1981 roku: Przejaw choroby więziennictwa w schyłkowym okresie PRL* (Revolt in Bydgoszcz Custody in 1981: A Symptom of Prison System Sickness in the Decadent Period of PRL, 2010) Kozłowski, while presenting complex reasons behind the protests of criminal prisoners, used the output of such sciences as re-socialization and criminology.

In *Anatomia rewolucji* Kozłowski's inter-disciplinary approach is much clearer. It results, as the author admits, from the perception of a certain incompleteness in the research on 'Solidarity' conducted separately by sociologists and historians. In book's introduction he states: 'Historians find and verify sources, describe facts, reconstruct the cause and effect process. They consider their work to be finished when they describe "what it was like", usually resigning from an attempt to compare, generalize or provide a synthesis'. Looking at the growing number of studies on the history of 'Solidarity' in different centres, which provide an enormous number of facts but few conclusions, this statement seems plausible. At the same time, Kozłowski is critical about the work of other researchers. 'But the aforementioned sociologists and political scientists usually use studies, not archive sources. The sense of their work is to construct consistent theoretical framework; a cogitation, which for a historian often seems to be a mere hypothesis'.

The author postulates, and more importantly, implements an approach combining the methods of both disciplines. Nevertheless he is clearly a historian. 'It is history, and, therefore, the historical method is the key element in this book, whereas sociology and political science play the role of supporting sciences. The basis of this work were sources and historical studies, which I attempted to complement using theoretical reasoning on revolution, mass mobilization or social movements, but correlation to historical findings was always the criterion of the usefulness of the theory. Adopting such practice is connected with a certain risk. It may be assumed with all likeliness that historians will criticize the insufficiency of the sources' — writes Kozłowski modestly, although it seems unlikely since his source base is extensive — 'while sociologists and political scholars will criticize insufficient theoretical expertise. Nevertheless, it seems that such an approach allows for a clear enhancement of our knowledge and progress beyond clichés'.

Kozłowski mentions two individuals whose research approach was particularly formative to his work. The first one is Marcin Kula, and the second — Walter Goldfrank. He writes about them in the following way: ‘The first of them is a historian who always aimed at conducting inter-disciplinary research, the effect of which was, for example, an inspiring book *Narodowe i rewolucyjne* [National and Revolutionary, 1991]. The second is a sociologist who deals, among other things, with the problems of revolution. He is the only scholar I know to have stated that being unable to effectively incorporate his study of revolution in Mexico into the earlier developed theories in the face of empirical and source-based research, [...] he stopped aiming at the construction of a general model’. One may mischievously comment that with this statement Kozłowski created a certain model of the environment of sociologists, in which he included all researchers *en bloc*. But we cannot dispute that the author is right when he sums up this line of thought by writing: ‘In my opinion this is the road which is worth following: on the one hand, not to limit oneself to the exhaustive analysis of sources, and on the other — not to absolutize theory’.

The key categories used by the author in his analysis are the concepts of ‘revolution’, ‘social movement’, ‘revolutionary social movement’ and ‘social mobilization’. Regarding their meaning the author refers to the works of both theoreticians and researchers dealing with the contemporary and historical events (such as the promoter of historical sociology Charles Tilly, the author of a book on European revolutions in the period 1492–1992). Kozłowski considers ‘Solidarity’ to be a ‘revolutionary social movement’. Regarding the features of the phenomenon of revolution he refers both to past events and to contemporary ones. He mentions the case of non-violent revolutions, a key issue in his subject of study. He calls ‘Solidarity’ a ‘hybrid revolution’ and believes that its key elements include its participants’ initiation of new social networks, emergence of a common identity and the implementation of changes in the state of social self-awareness.

The book’s bibliography shows the multidimensionality of the author’s research and inspiration. His broad use of foreign literature should be appreciated. Kozłowski, who is foremost a historian, conducted an extensive search for sources. His footnotes refer to documents from the Archiwum Akt Nowych (State Archives) collection (sections: CC PUWP, the Ministry of Justice, the General Prosecutor’s Office, Council of Ministers Office), the Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (Institute of National Remembrance Archives) (in Warsaw, Gdańsk, Szczecin and Wrocław), the National Commission of Independent Self-Governing Trade Union ‘Solidarity’ in Gdańsk, Karta Centre Archives (collection of Solidarity Archives Association) and Ossolineum Library in Wrocław. Due to this we have a rather equally distributed overview of materials created by the ruling authority structures and by participants of the emerging social movement. As far as facts relating to the events of the strikes are concerned, Kozłowski mainly refers to the first type of sources, while analysing the mechanisms of the movement’s development he mostly uses the latter group. Mem-

ories, journals and interviews of the strikes' participants were useful here, but so was the evidence provided by representatives of the other side of the dispute, that is the authorities.

Before Kozłowski turns to the characteristically analytical part of his work, he presents several dozen pages of synthetic but simultaneously detailed description concerning events between July and October 1980 based on his source-based research. It is not possible to present all his findings here, but it is worth mentioning his description of the key moment of the strike in the Gdańsk Shipyard on 16 August. The demands of the shipyard workers were accepted and the strike for a while was put on hold. It was subsequently resumed already in the cause of solidarity, since its participants demanded the fulfilment of demands presented not only by the workers of a single enterprise, but across all enterprises. Kozłowski dissects the myths which increasingly tend to dominate in historical narratives of this event. Put as simply as possible: it was allegedly a relatively docile Lech Wałęsa who ended the strike, going against the opinion of Anna Walentynowicz, and she saved him by keeping the workers in the shipyard, together with Alina Pienkowska and Ewa Ossowska.

Of course there are elements of truth in this version of events, but Kozłowski is the first one to display all its complexity. First, by referring to numerous sources he clearly shows that the majority of the shipyard workers were tired with the protest and had demanded its end. Second, it is a myth that workers were kept in only by the actions of Ossowska, Pienkowska and Walentynowicz — they are the most remembered, but Kozłowski proves that other individuals were also involved. Third, contrary to Anna Walentynowicz' accounts made in later years and to historians who have since uncritically repeated her, at that time there was no dispute between Walentynowicz and Wałęsa on this matter. Walentynowicz did not initially protest against the decision to end the strikes, and she was present when the strike committee made this decision. Kozłowski proves this clearly through reference to available sources. In a 1980 interview Walentynowicz recounted the agreement with the shipyard's management in the following way: 'And — strangely enough — we agreed to it and Mr. Wałęsa announced that the strike was finished. But later we realized — it was really a while later — what would happen to those enterprises which had helped us'. Moreover, as Kozłowski stresses, in a November 1980 meeting with workers in Łódź she defended Wałęsa: 'We voted for it: the strike is finished, we leave the shipyard. It was only then, and we were so tired because everything had happened so quickly, that I called a break since Lech Wałęsa had no microphone; he was hoarse, his vocal cords were broken and he could not speak [...] we go outside and then it happens that the crew ask us with tears in their eyes, "What have you done?"'. These accounts given before the escalation of conflict and radicalization of attitudes should be considered more reliable than the later accounts by Walentynowicz condemning Wałęsa for a decision allegedly made by him alone. But a different picture is given in many publications. It is a pity that Kozłowski's book is not more polemic on this matter, as well as on others.

*Anatomia rewolucji* describes the genesis of mass strikes extensively. Referring to numerous sources the author displays the widespread feeling of relative deprivation, the sense of abasement and inequality (which resulted, he emphasizes, in the dignity facet of the protest), the authorities' departure from ideology and awareness of their own corruption. The author emphasizes the experience of strikes from previous years, referring not only to the well-known 'Polish months' but also minor economic protests which broke out regularly in the 'Gierek decade' (the 1970s). The necessary element for revolution to materialize was the ideology which bonded the emerging social movement. Kozłowski mentions its internally differentiated nature and the significance for its emergence of the Twenty-One Demands, especially that of establishing independent, self-governing trade unions. Kozłowski writes quite a lot about the significance of religion: 'In the case of the strike in Pomerania voivodeship we have on the one hand an attachment to religious symbols and ceremonies, which allowed for the formation of an emotional community. On the other — a conviction that this struggle was not a matter for the Church, which in any case took the stance of an observer and the voice of common sense'. It is worth pointing out that in support of this thesis's validity Kozłowski refers to minutes of a meeting held by the Main Council of the Polish Episcopate — a source not easily available to most historians. Other important factors included the crisis of the Polish communist authorities, which the book describes in detail, and activities of the democratic opposition led by the Free Trade Unions of Pomerania.

The analysis of the strike wave itself is probably the book's single most valuable contribution. The author has worked hard to gather statistical materials on the protests which took place in July, August, and — often forgotten — also in September 1980. One of the main issues which interests Kozłowski is the strike wave's spread. In July 1980 strikes broke out spontaneously; as the author mentions, an important role was played by the news about other successful protests, broadcast by the Polish station of Radio Free Europe.

Kozłowski's presentation of protests in the Pomerania voivodeship in August 1980 is very interesting. In the chapter titled 'Republika strajkowa' (The Strike Republic) he describes the everyday life of shipyard workers, their emotions (positive and negative), and the circulating rumours. He has not forgotten about the leaders of the 'strike republic' indicating differences between Wałęsa, who was older, well-known by the workers, and was elected chairman — and the significantly younger Andrzej Kołodziej from Gdynia shipyard, who came to the leadership by virtue of his activities.

Kozłowski categorizes different actors in those events, such as the experts who advised the striking workers and social movement brokers, whom he calls 'political tourists' and 'political emissaries'. He writes of them: 'Tourists found themselves in the Pomerania voivodeship by accident; they forwarded information about observed events *en passant*, not expecting to achieve any particular effect. Political emissaries had in turn a specific goal and were not accidental persons. Those who were sent, for example, from Gdańsk to other centres, were

supposed to aim at the spread of protests and winning support for their demands. Those who converged on Pomerania from other centres mostly sought advice on how to organize themselves, to express their support and ask for support in return'. The contacts and social networks created at that time were of key importance not only during the strikes themselves but also in the first weeks of establishing the union.

Kozłowski appreciates the importance of new systems of communication which enabled the strikes. Besides direct communications he largely discusses clandestine publications, leaflets and public announcement systems. They also played an important role after the signing of the accords. On the whole when writing about the emerging social movement Kozłowski does not treat 31 August 1980 as a key turning point, although he states that it had major significance for the movement's change of character from spontaneous to one more organized. Writing about the establishment of the trade union, Kozłowski mentions numerous activities aimed at slowing down its members' social mobilization, which nevertheless were unsuccessful and the union was registered. It is worth mentioning that the author had already published very interesting documents about the backstage manipulation of this matter by the authorities of Polish People's Republic.

In sum, Kozłowski's work is the fullest historical study of the foundational moment that was August '80 and the establishment of 'Solidarity'. The main value of this work lies in its inter-disciplinary character, practical application of theory, in-depth source inquiry, and its courage in formulating its own interpretations. At the same time Kozłowski evidently writes of these events in a way divorced from the disputes between historians on the subject. I am a bit disappointed by the lack of a polemical claw in this book. Kozłowski presents his vision of events without necessarily referring to theses presented by other researchers, including ones that are very well-known and politically defined. I would consider this a shortcoming, but perhaps, given the continuous invasion of political disputes into historiography, the author's restraint should be considered a virtue?

*Jan Olaszek*  
*(Warsaw)*

*(Translated by Elżbieta Petrajtis-O'Neill)*  
*(Proofreading by Yelizaveta Crofts)*