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## THE ROLE OF BISHOP OF PRZEMYŚL IGNACY TOKARCZUK IN THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANTI-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION IN POLAND

**Abstract.** This article presents the social activity of Ignacy Tokarczuk, the bishop of Przemyśl, influencing the emergence and development of the anti-communist opposition. In 2006, the hierarch was awarded the highest state decoration—the Order of the White Eagle—by the President of Poland for his work for democratization of social life and protection of human rights. The study aims to determine the bishop's role in the process of organizing and supporting opposition structures, especially in south-eastern Poland. It relies on the analysis of interviews, memories and scientific studies. Analysing interviews with members of the anti-communist opposition and clergy was of particular importance in the research process, which made it possible to describe and explain the bishop's attitude and behavior towards the anti-communist movement. It was stated that Tokarczuk's involvement in the activities of the anti-communist opposition appeared to be extremely important for the functioning of independent structures in the Subcarpathian Region, especially during the period of martial law in Poland.

**Keywords:** anti-communist opposition; Church communities; support; social resistance; totalitarian regime.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1989, the Polish People's Republic (PRL) became the leader of system transformations in Central and Eastern Europe. The Catholic Church, which is the only institution independent from the communist authorities, had undeniable merits in the process of overcoming communism, and the democratization of social life. In a totalitarian state like the PRL, the Church maintained a national identity and played an important role in the development of anti-communist opposition structures (Świda-Ziemia, 1997, p. 359; Marczuk, 1993, p. 20). The Church's involvement in the defence of fundamental human rights made it the most trusted public institution in the Polish People's Republic (Sztompka, 2007, p. 107).

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Church communities became a space in which groups and communities independent of communist authorities organized and functioned, not only of a religious but also of a patriotic nature. The ideas of independence and the aspirations for democratic change in the country found fertile ground in Church communities and attracted many supporters and propagators. Church structures had an infrastructure in which grassroots, independent initiatives could concentrate (Michel, 1995, p. 32). People who did not agree with the views of the ruling party found shelter in the Church from the rules of an oppressive totalitarian system. They could freely express their beliefs in religious communities without fear of repression, and develop opposition activities (Michnik, 2009, p. 203; Świda-Ziemba, 1997, p. 359).

In the Polish totalitarian-state reality, social resistance developed in parallel with the activities of the political opposition. The opposition aimed to create structures whose functioning was intended to overthrow or transform the system in order to reduce the hegemony of one party and to restore the subjectivity of society. On the other hand, social resistance manifested itself in spontaneous, unorganized and undirected opposition to the top-down imposed political and ideological system, which ran counter to the values commonly recognized in society. Both the activities of the political opposition and the social resistance aimed at systemic transformation, leading to the collapse of the communist regime (Kubat, 2010, pp. 41–42). The opposition in Poland found a natural ally in the Catholic Church, which was interested in restoring religious freedoms to citizens and in respecting human rights.

Buildings owned by Catholic communities hosted people of different beliefs, united by the desire to liberate the state from the totalitarian communist system. A symbiosis of opposition circles with the Church communities turned out to be possible due to the fact that it received strong support from some parts of the Catholic clergy, especially some hierarchs, occupying the most important positions in the structure of the Church (Nowacki P., 2016, p. 265). The Church allowed the Solidarity opposition to survive because it was influenced mainly by the hierarchs who remembered the communist terror of the 1950s (Karnowski, Zaremba, 2006, p. 148). The documents prepared by the 4th Department of the Ministry of the Interior (MSW) show that the attitudes and behaviours of Polish bishops towards dissident circles were different (MSW, 1988). The opposition was strongly supported by 25 Polish bishops out of 98 members of the episcopate. Others were characterized by an indifferent or reluctant attitude towards organizations undertaking an anti-communist activity.

Bishop Ignacy Tokarczuk became one of the most recognizable patrons of the PRL anti-communist opposition, known as a strong opponent of the totalitarian system. In the years 1966–1993, he served as the ordinary of the Diocese of Przemyśl (located in the Subcarpathian Region, south-western Poland). Together with Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland and Cardinal Karol Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II, he is considered by the former oppositionists to be one of the church figures who played an important role in opposing communist totalitarianism (Wielowieyski, 2016, p. 377; Póltawska, 2016, p. 307; Piłka, 2016, pp. 285–286). The anti-communist activity of Tokarczuk, in spite of the Iron Curtain, was widely known. The Western European and American press wrote about his opposition to communism and his violent criticism of the totalitarian regime. It was reported that the bishop rejected any Church policy aimed at a compromise with communists and was a leader of the clergy opposing the Polish regime. Tokarczuk was credited with presenting the Soviet Union as “the devil incarnate” and he was nicknamed “a hammer against the communists” (Wołczański, 1991, pp. 181–182).

Scientists often present the social and religious activity of Tokarczuk in the context of his courageous and determined public speeches opposing the assumptions of the communist system and its destructive impact on social life (Bober, 2006, pp. 123–140). Moreover, he is held up as the initiator of the social phenomenon involving the erection of several hundred churches (many of them illegally) without the permission of the state authorities (Tokarczuk’s most important achievements are presented in, among others, the following studies: Adamski, Rudnicka, 1991; Tokarczuk, 1992; Bar, Szal, 1993; Szypula, 1997–1998; Jedynek, 1998; Zimny, 2003; Bober, 2005; Garbarz, 2006; Krzysztofiński, 2012; Lipian, 2013; Krzysztofiński, 2016, 2019). However, the domain of the bishop’s activity which is scarcely discussed in the literature on the subject is his unprecedented commitment to the communist opposition and the merits of its survival, especially during Martial Law.

Therefore, I undertook research intended to show the contribution of Ignacy Tokarczuk as the bishop of Przemyśl to the operation of various groups of the anti-communist opposition in the Polish People’s Republic. The qualitative method I used, based on the analysis of existing sources, enabled me to recognize, describe, and explain Tokarczuk’s role in supporting the opposition, and determine his attitude and behaviour towards the anti-communist movement. Thanks to that I was also able to discuss not only its overt but also undercover social operations.

In my scholarly research of existing sources, I analyzed about a hundred published interviews and memories of clergymen and laypeople, including members of the anti-communist opposition who worked with the bishop. Some of them expressed their opinions on his activity supporting the anti-communist opposition and its activities aimed at increasing civil liberties in the social functioning under the communist regime. These people participated in the grass-roots action to a large extent and therefore had in-depth knowledge of the conducted research. My intention, among other things, was to extract knowledge about the role of Tokarczuk in the development of the anti-communist opposition from social conscience.

#### 1. TOKARCZUK'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS COMMUNISM

The communist regime created a system which gave it unlimited power. In addition, the system was protected by the security apparatus, which guaranteed civil obedience and maintained the hegemony of the Party over society. Using the apparatus of repression and nationalization of private property, the authorities subjugated the citizens to the system (Pipes, 2008, pp. 166, 177). The Party elites shaped social consciousness, exercised absolute power, did away with opposition, and coordinated and controlled state apparatus (Tarniewski, 1975, pp. 69, 115). They also established laws for their own protection, claimed access to the circulation of information and controlled culture, science and education (Karpiński, 2003, p. 43). The totalitarian dictatorship created a false image of social life using slogans about real democracy. In fact, it had abolished democratic freedoms, persecuted religion and used widespread terror (Kersten, 1999, p. 11). By managing human resources in a monopolistic manner, it destroyed civic activity and self-organization (Iwaneczko, 2008, p. 32–33). The network of connections and interests created by the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland, within the partisan *nomenklatura* effectively prevented access to resources by other citizens from outside the party system. The actions taken by the communist authorities were a negative example of how to exploit social capital for particular interests. Networks of connections within the partisan structure were used to appropriate financial resources and block access to power and wealth for those not connected to the Party's elite (Tarniewski, 1975, pp. 111–112).

Tokarczuk's attitude to the anti-communist opposition in Poland was decisively influenced by his critical attitude to communism and the totalitarian

system based on the assumptions of Marxist ideology. The clergyman, born and raised in the Kresy (Borderlands), became better acquainted than other Polish hierarchs with the fundamentals of Marxist ideology and the mechanisms of the totalitarian system. He was convinced that the culturally and axiologically alien communist ideology and the Soviet repressive apparatus posed a mortal threat to the Polish nation (Krzysztofinski, 2017, pp. 272–273). The bishop supported the opposition because he saw it as the only real and significant political force that could force the authorities in the Polish People's Republic to make concessions in favour of the democratization of social life in a totalitarian state by peaceful means (Krzywiński, 2016, p. 210). Moreover, he was aware that the existence of a strong opposition would result in a gradual easing of the repressive religious policy towards the Catholic Church. The communist authorities repeatedly demonstrated that in a situation of social unrest inspired by anti-communist circles, to quell anti-government protests, they sought an ally in the Catholic Church (*Tajne dokumenty Państwo – Kościół 1960-1980*, 1996, pp. 398–403; Markiewicz, 1982, pp. 57–78). If communists had managed to pacify or destroy the opposition completely, then the ruling atheistic party would have focused its hostile activity on fighting the Catholic Church. However, this did not happen because the social position of the communist authorities was weakening with the gradual collapse of the totalitarian state into the depths of the economic and moral crisis (Zblewski, 2005, pp. 311–313).

Tokarczuk's knowledge and experience of communism were extensive. He studied philosophy and conducted scientific research in the field of sociology and Catholic social science. During World War II, he had an opportunity to experience the living conditions created by the communist regime in the eastern lands of the Polish state occupied by the Soviet army. At that time, he himself became aware of what the communist authorities were capable of and learned the reception of Marxist doctrine in social life. All of this practical experience allowed him to explore the threats that communism posed to Polish society (Tokarczuk, 1998). Communism neutralized civil society, replacing it with an apparatus of absolute state power. Society was becoming a haphazard and formless mass with no control over the political sphere. In reality, the state authority did not represent society, but took its place. Under communism, society could not fulfil its basic functions (Staniszkis, 2006, pp. 13–14). Thorough knowledge of communism and an observable statement of the consequences of its implementation in social life bred in Tokarczuk unambiguous negative emotions and strong feelings of reluctance towards Marxist doctrine. These factors led him to take resolute action in order to publicly reveal

the truth about the crime and the deceptive system and to constantly criticize it, revealing its pathologies gnawing at society (Ryczan, 2013, p. 20). In the Western European and American press, Tokarczuk was seen as a staunch and tireless opponent and critic of communism (Wołczański, 1991, pp. 180–183).

He also tried to convince other Polish bishops to embrace his anti-communist ideas. His efforts, however, had little effect. The historian Józef Wołczański (2017, p. 513) explains the passive attitudes of Polish bishops towards communism by examining the social and historical conditions: “In the vast majority of cases, conciliaristically inclined towards the state authority, as the governing apparatus or succumbing to veiled conformism under the euphemist brand of the virtue of prudence, they were unable to resist, and thus to confront, the actions that violated the autonomy and freedom of the Church. Even if they correctly assessed the essence of totalitarian and atheistic communism, they were not able to develop adequate tactics to confront it in everyday reality. Among the bishops, the hierarch from Przemyśl had few supporters, although some secretly expressed their support. It is not difficult to guess that Bishop Tokarczuk felt lonely or even saddened” (Wołczański, 2017, p. 513).

The members of the Polish episcopate agreed that the religious policy of the ruling party constituted a considerable threat to the religious freedom of citizens and the Church in Poland. Meanwhile, they differed in the methods of dealing with communists, which meant that the Polish bishops did not universally support the solutions applied by Bishop Tokarczuk (Gocłowski, 2016, pp. 156–157). Archbishop Gocłowski recalls that Cardinal Wyszyński “accused Bishop Tokarczuk of losing the sense of responsibility for the fate of Poland in his radicalism”, which is why the episcopate cannot “speak and act so unambiguously” (Gocłowski, 2016, p. 156). Tokarczuk’s activities in supporting the opposition, especially the Solidarity social movement, was also met with a lack of understanding on the part of the episcopate. According to Andrzej Friszke, bishops who functioned in ordered and hierarchical Church structures did not demonstrate an understanding of the logic of the dynamism of revolutions or large social movements (Friszke, 2014, p. 208).

Primate Wyszyński clearly restricted his contacts with representatives of the pre-August opposition and kept a safe distance and was cautious of them, assuming that the continuation of the communist system in the long term was unquestionable. He was sceptical about making changes by the anti-communist opposition in the realities of the People’s Republic of Poland. He focused his activities primarily on improving the functioning of the Church in a totalitarian state. Although the Primate met with dissidents, he tended to have limited

trust in them, especially if they had been party activists in the past (Łatka, 2019, pp. 304–305). Romuald Kukołowicz, the Primate's collaborator, recalls that the Cardinal had a negative attitude towards some oppositionists, especially those representing the Workers' Defence Committee (Kukołowicz, Bączek, 2001, p. 139). Bishop Bronisław Dąbrowski, secretary of the Polish Episcopate and a close collaborator of Wyszyński, took a similar stance. The clergy, both during the meetings of the Chief Council of the Episcopate and the plenary meetings of the bishops, were said to have referred to the democratic movements in Poland as the Jewish Freemasonry (Wołczański, 2017, p. 563). Some of the National Regulatory Authority leaders had a Marxist ideological background and were known for their anti-Church activities (Kieżun, 2012, p. 83). Tokarczuk strongly criticized the position of the Episcopal Secretary towards the opposition. According to him, bishops should not stand aside when society was waking up and rising against the totalitarian system. Various occupational groups, especially academic youth, blue collar workers and farmers, demanded respect for human rights. In its struggle against the regime, the Church finally received the social support it could not ignore. The insecurity would be interpreted as the hierarchy's indifference to civic initiatives and grassroots social movements and opposition activities. According to Tokarczuk, passivity would be plainly wrong and a sign of blindness and would create a catastrophic divide between the nation and the hierarchical Church (Wołczański, 2017, pp. 558–559; cf. Łatka, 2019, pp. 215–234).

Cardinal Karol Wojtyła, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Kraków, was open to the opposition, believing that the Church should participate in activities that could lead to systemic change. Therefore, in the communists' opinion, Wojtyła was more dangerous to the communist system than Wyszyński. In the Episcopate, there were clear divisions caused by the attitude towards the opposition, which resulted in the rise of two factions. The core of the first, favourable opposition were the hierarchs: Karol Wojtyła, Ignacy Tokarczuk and Henryk Gulbinowicz, while the other group—sceptical about the dissidents' activity—included bishops Bolesław Pylak, Jerzy Stroba and L. Kaczmarek. The election of Wojtyła as Pope, and the death of Wyszyński, followed by the appointment of Cardinal Józef Glemp definitely influenced the liberalization of the Episcopate's anti-communist political stance, and changed its attitude towards the Solidarity opposition (Łatka, 2019, pp. 110, 305–310). Glemp's conciliatory attitude towards the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland and his avoidance of tensions in Church–State relations marked the course of the Episcopate. The norms recognized in the group and the ties and control acted

to unify the attitudes and behaviour of the members of the Episcopate and centrally shaped their value system. These changes made Tokarczuk's anti-communist views more extreme and in contrast with the Episcopate.

Among the diocesan bishops of south-eastern Poland, Tokarczuk was perceived by the communists as the most radical opponent of the socialist system and the patron of the opposition and the diocese he led as a bridgehead for the fight against the totalitarian system (Jedynak, 2016, pp. 256–258). In the opinion of the Security Service, the majority of the ordinaries of the neighbouring dioceses of Przemyśl did not undertake any action contrary to communism. Only the bishop of the Sandomierz–Radom diocese, Edward Materski, was a supporter of the Church's harsh course towards government factors and supported various forms of pressure on the authorities. During his public speeches, he criticized the ruling party and the socialist system. He built churches without the permission of the authorities in the diocese he managed (Ministry of Interior, 1988, p. 120). Materski appreciated Tokarczuk's courage and also drew inspiration from the sacred building activity of the Przemyśl diocese (Żbikowska, 2001, p. 695). Bolesław Pylak, the bishop of Lublin, took a different stance towards communists and the opposition, not only avoiding any conflict with the authorities, but even declaring his loyalty to them (MSW, 1988, p. 158). This is probably why he was critical of Solidarity's demands and its opposition activity, and also forbade priests under his authority to collaborate with dissidents. He also accepted the rigours of Martial Law as a sad necessity and submitted to them, emphasizing loyalty to government agents (MSW, 1988, p. 158; Łatka, 2019, pp. 309, 313, 416). Similar political beliefs were presented by the Bishop of Tarnów Jerzy Ablewicz, who was in the group of hierarchs critical of Wyszyński's political stance (Łatka, 2019, p. 33). He advocated correct relations with the authorities and restraint in relations with Solidarity (MSW, 1988, p. 34). An intermediate position seemed to be supported by the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Lubaczów, Bishop Marian Jaworski. He maintained a reserved attitude not only towards the communist authorities, but also towards Solidarity. In his dealings with priests, he was said to express anti-communist beliefs. He was against any friction between government and society (MSW, 1988, p. 83). At that time, Tokarczuk's favourable attitude towards dissidents meant that the opposition in south-eastern Poland was expanding its structures and had popular support, and its cooperation with church circles was "clearly better than in other regions of the country" (Bukała, 2014, p. 325). In his relationship with the communist regime, Tokarczuk presented radical views and his attitude towards the totalitarian



system was intransigent. He believed that the communist regime was not a partner with whom it was possible to negotiate or cooperate, because it could not be trusted at all. He perceived all attempts at reaching an agreement with the communists as a danger consisting of betraying the interests of the Polish nation, which expected from its spiritual guides clear disapproval for the totalitarian methods of enslaving citizens (Nossol, 2016, p. 262). Tokarczuk was convinced that the communist totalitarian system tended to be unreformable and that there was no pragmatic capacity for evolution that could improve it (Żaryn, 2003b, p. 290). When the Episcopate was inclined to seek a rapprochement between the positions of the Church and the authorities, Tokarczuk advised restraint and caution, explaining that it was unlikely that communism would cease to be atheistic (Żaryn, 2003b, p. 294).

The Polish bishops, who remember Tokarczuk's speeches at the forum of the episcopal meetings, draw attention to his uncompromising attitude to communism. The Ordinary of Przemyśl never made a deal with a communist regime which, using lies, did not command social trust (Zimny, 2003, p. 151). According to Archbishop Alfons Nossol, the Ordinary of Opole, Tokarczuk was the most radical bishop in the Polish episcopate in terms of his attitude towards communists: "For him, everything was clear. Nobody could see this regime the way Bishop Tokarczuk did. He often argued that dialogue with communists was a waste of time. Communism cannot be improved or healed. Whoever believes in the possibility of changing communism is wrong. His perspicacity made him think this was the only way to guard against this system. He sharpened the gaze of the episcopate and the whole Church on how the communists could threaten society and the Church. The Church in Poland very much needed him. He opened people's eyes to the hypocrisy of the communist system, which could not be humanized" (Nossol, 2016, p. 263).

A similar attitude of Tokarczuk towards communism is described by Prof. Stanisław Grodziski (2009, pp. 6–7), a long-time lecturer at the Jagiellonian University. According to him, the hierarch was effective in exposing the true face of communism, which posed a threat not only to the Church but also to Polish tradition and culture: "In his actions and teachings, he clearly exposed the hypocrisy of a system that officially proclaimed respect for the religious beliefs of citizens while openly fighting the Church, against the will of the nation, he undertook atheistic activities, involving state institutions in the action of removing religion from the life of the nation. Stressing that communist ideology is alien to Polish tradition and culture, Ignacy Tokarczuk stated that it constitutes a threat to the existence and identity of the nation."

Tokarczuk's anti-communist radicalism turned out to be a serious obstacle in relations between the government of the Polish People's Republic and Vatican diplomacy. The Polish authorities complained to the Holy See, accusing the bishop of extremism hindering proper relations between the Catholic Church and the Polish government. It was supposed to be an organizer of political and anti-government provocations (Żaryn, 2003a, p. 100). Vatican officials tried to influence the behaviour of Tokarczuk in vain because the hierarchy was strongly opposed to any dealings with the communists (Casaroli, 1997, p. 27; Chmielowiec, 2009, p. 310). After all, he saw the negative effects of the diplomatic game undertaken by the PRL authorities, which, in his opinion, tried to evoke an erroneous belief that their good relations with the Church were the result of support for government initiatives in Poland (Zieliński, 2003a, p. 54).

The communists, referring to the postulates of normalization of relations between the state and the Church, demanded that the episcopate pacify the rebellious bishop. They believed that the hierarchy, through conflicts with representatives of the authorities, hindered the normalization of relations between the state and the Church. In 1979, Archbishop Bronisław Dąbrowski, the Secretary of the Polish Episcopate, called on the Chancellor of the Przemyśl Curia, Zdzisław Majcher, to visit Warsaw. He informed him that the authorities would arrest Tokarczuk unless he withdrew from supporting the illegal construction of religious sites in the diocese of Przemyśl. The chancellor interpreted the meeting with Dąbrowski as a clear attempt to intimidate and blackmail the Ordinary of Przemyśl, forced by the communist authorities, who wanted to break the unruly clergyman using the secretary of the episcopate to do so (Wołczański, 2017, p. 555). Regardless of the complaints made by the communists against Tokarczuk to Church authorities, the Security Service used provocations aimed at discrediting the inconvenient bishop. He was accused of collaboration with the Gestapo and being of Ukrainian descent. These activities constituted disintegration and disinformation intended to undermine the authority of the hierarchy (Zamiatała, 2019, p. 208).

Pressure on Tokarczuk did not change his attitude to the communist authorities. On the contrary, they strengthened his conviction that he was pursuing the right policy towards the communists. The bishop of Przemyśl accused the secretary of the Episcopate of succumbing to the authorities and being manipulated by them, instead of decisively defending him. In a letter to Archbishop Dąbrowski, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the latter's attitude: "The Party aspires to set up the entire Episcopate in such a way that it would in some way support its rule in the country (as it did in Hungary) in the name

of alleged national unity; common work for superior purposes, moral renewal, etc. Behind these beautifully sounding slogans lies a constant desire to manoeuvre and instrumentalize the Polish Church in such a way that it would be a tool of the authorities' policy [...]. The fundamental question remains what should be the position of the Secretary of the Episcopate, who is privy to these intentions of the authorities. Whether he should, together with the authorities, put pressure on the delinquent to force him to make compromises that are immoral in this case, or rather give him strength and courage to behave properly. All the more so because I did no harm to the Church or the Nation" (Tokarczuk, 1997, pp. 96–97, 100).

It can be deduced from Tokarczuk's statement that he expected a stronger support for his ideological line from other hierarchies, especially from the authorities of the Polish Bishops's Conference, including the president, Cardinal Józef Glemp. Meanwhile, the incumbent primate was known for his amicable attitude towards the communist authorities, which he repeatedly expressed, especially during meetings with representatives of the government (*Wystąpienie kierownika...*, 1996, p. 372; Zieliński, 2003b, p. 370). Tokarczuk's and Glemp's attitude towards communists was clearly different, often causing tension between them. The Primate had different views on relations with the communist authorities compared to the bishop of Przemyśl and was critical of the clergy's radical statements to the PRL government (Drozdowski, 2016, p. 102; Tokarczuk, 2016, p. 368).

Tokarczuk's anti-communist activity was closely monitored by the SB. The hierarch was closely surrounded by secret SB operatives (Chmielowiec, 2003, p. 76). Based on their delations, the SB officers came up with the following assessment of the bishop's attitude towards the communist authorities: "Since taking up the post of ordinary, he has shown a decidedly negative and hostile attitude towards the assumptions of the PRL political system and the political and administrative authorities. In his public speeches he sharply criticizes the system, the PRL authorities and the government's policy. He accuses the Polish People's Republic of having plunged the country into an economic, social and moral crisis because of its political system. He blames the authorities for this situation. He blames the authorities for the inappropriate agricultural policy, collectivization, for alcohol addiction among citizens, for loosening morals, for the act of abortion, for imposing Marxist ideology on the nation for preferring atheism, for falsifying the history of the Polish nation, for fighting against crosses, for using force and lying to the nation" (MSW, 1988, p. 189).

The activists of the ruling party permanently attacked Tokarczuk, arguing that his public speeches had nothing to do with the line of dialogue and understanding between the state and the Church. The bishop was accused of obstructing the maintenance of order and internal peace in the state. He was accused of failing to respect the highly cultural and tolerant resolutions of the Second Vatican Council. In the opinion of communists, Tokarczuk presented the PRL system in a demonic way, as the embodiment of all social and moral evil, falsehood and hypocrisy. His rhetoric was to be aimed at exciting the crowds who listened to him and arousing hatred against the authorities. It was also stressed that his position was far removed from the official enunciations of the Episcopate and the speeches of other leading representatives of the hierarchy (KC PZPR, 1982, pp. 25–26, 29). Tokarczuk was able to continue his activities, to the discomfort of the authorities, because he had the support of Pope John Paul II, who, albeit not taking an official stand, informally consented to the bishop's support of social resistance and building structures facilitating the rebirth of civil society. Summing up Tokarczuk's involvement in the defence of human rights and religious freedom, Pope John Paul II wrote: "In the very difficult moments of the recent past, you defended the rights of the Church and true justice for the flock entrusted to you, never compromising" (John Paul II, 1991, p. 6).

Tokarczuk could count on similar understanding and support from Wyszyński who defended him. When the communists demanded that the Episcopate put an end to Tokarczuk's activities, the Primate took the side of the attacked priest (Tokarczuk, 2007, p. 427). Despite his cautious and wait-and-see attitude towards the opposition, the Cardinal consented to the anti-communist activities undertaken by the bishop of Przemyśl. At times he criticized his radical views and relentless attitude towards the communist regime, believing that the whole Episcopate could not take similar confrontational action. The Primate accepted the effective methods used by the bishop of Przemyśl, although protested against by the authorities, to develop the professional pastoral ministry, and he appreciated the reorganization of parish structures and the expansion of the network of sacred buildings, independent of the state authorities. He defended the Tokarczuk against the attacks of the communists. In his opinion, Tokarczuk's pastoral methods, which were incompatible with the laws of the time, were justified because they met the needs and expectations of the society, which could not realise its fundamental right to free exercise of religion (Żaryn, 2003a, p. 100). The Primate even claimed that he was intrigued by the bright spot of the Przemyśl diocese on the ecclesiastical map of Poland,

“because miracles are happening there”, which confirm that the bishop of Przemyśl is right (Frankowski, 1991, p. 9). Tokarczuk could not count on such support from Glemp, for whom Tokarczuk’s anti-communist narrative was becoming a serious problem and disturbing proper relations with the PRL authorities. Glemp tried to limit the bishop’s speeches in the forum of the Episcopate, which encouraged opposition to the communists (Kindziuk, 2010, pp. 224–225). In contrast, Tokarczuk openly criticized the Primate’s position during episcopal meetings, claiming that he was organizing freedom initiatives and presenting a submissive attitude in matters of pastoral activity aimed at satisfying the needs of the faithful (Kindziuk, 2010, p. 210).

Despite numerous and serious accusations made by the representatives of the authorities, Tokarczuk was consistent in his attitude towards communists. When the collapse of the communist system in Poland was already sealed in 1989, the bishop warned the opposition against entering into the so-called Round Table Agreement with the discredited regime. He was also against the Episcopate getting involved in political dealings between the opposition and the communist authorities. He believed that the opposition should not be embarrassed by agreements with the communist regime, which was already in a state of agony. Moreover, he was afraid that if the Round Table Agreement had any negative effects, society would hold the Catholic hierarchy accountable for the failures. According to testimonies of the Episcopate representatives, Tokarczuk’s critical opinions regarding the agreement with the communists at the Round Table did not find sympathy and approval among the vast majority of Polish bishops. They believed that Tokarczuk’s attitude “put a brake on the creation of a new reality” (Stefanek, 2016, p. 343).

Some of the oppositionists had a similar opinion to the bishop of Przemyśl. According to them, the defeat of the communists in the first partially democratic elections undermined the sense of the agreements made at the Round Table and the backroom deals made in Magdalenka which limited the democratization of the state. The election of Jaruzelski as President was to be an example of commitments that unnecessarily bound the opposition. The circles associated with “Gazeta Wyborcza” touted the principle: “Your president, our prime minister” (Terlecki, 2010, p. 160).

## 2. THE ATTITUDE OF THE BISHOP OF PRZEMYŚL TOWARDS THE ANTI-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION

In many countries, the removal of autocratic authority from power and the democratization of social life were only possible thanks to revolts and mass social movements. The popular mobilization of the people's masses led to the collapse of anti-democratic systems. By advocating on behalf of the disadvantaged and excluded, social movements prepared the ground for the development of democracy. Charismatic leaders played an important role in the development of social movements. The source of mass mobilization was deprivation, which sparked feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration and provoked violent behaviour. Such deprivation was often linked to human rights violations or economic deterioration. Mass mobilization was facilitated by group solidarity and the integration of individuals into social networks. The development of the movement has influenced the formation of its strategies and organizational forms (Koopmans, 2010, pp. 330–335). In some countries, social movements have been a source of social change because they have been a manifestation of opposition to amoral power that violates human rights.

Tokarczuk's support of the opposition was not political in nature, but a practical application of Catholic social teaching. According to Church doctrine, citizens had the right to oppose political authority if it violated the fundamental human rights and moral norms that underpin the social order and constituted law (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2005, p. 262). Catholic social teaching recognized conscientious objection when the authorities coerced citizens into actions that were contrary to the moral law, especially those that violated personal dignity and human freedom. The refusal or failure to act contrary to the moral law became not only a duty but a fundamental right of the human person (John Paul II, 1995, p. 142).

A manifestation of the citizens' protest against the social reality of the totalitarian state was the Solidarity social movement, which, born in the wake of social revolt, became a harbinger of a new quality of social life. The movement brought together people who sought defence against dishonesty, abuse of power, human rights abuses, unfair distribution of wealth, protectionism, corruption, privileges of the Party's nomenklatura, exploitation of influence and bureaucracy (Touraine, 2010, p. 84). Solidarity sought to liberate society from the hegemonic domination of the party nomenklatura, fought against the privileges of the ruling class and wanted to limit the monopoly of communist power, and advocated democracy and civil rights (Touraine, 2010, p. 110).

The emergence of the movement and public support for Solidarity aroused the concern of the communist authorities, who saw in social protest a threat to their own *status quo*. Indeed, social movements were an important factor in social change. Collective action manifested in social movements could lead to the transformation of the social structure, especially if it took the form of widespread protest. They transformed the existing social order by creating a new social reality. The collective values with which the participants of the movement identified themselves motivated them to take specific actions, and also became a stimulus for the formation of social organizations of which the participants of social movements were members. Shared values and norms, as well as social ties, networks of relationships and mutual trust formed the basis for creating structures with a democratic character. The organizations that emerged from the movement ensured the continuity of collective action and continued the mission of the social movement through structures that replicated specific behaviours and appealed to ideas as a source of identity (Porta, Diani, 2009, pp. 152–153). The spontaneous August social movement and the social organizations based on its ideals, such as the Solidarity of Workers and Farmers, strengthened opposition structures in the People's Republic of Poland. Solidarity was born above all in connection with the Catholic Church. The presence of the Church in the life and consciousness of Poles and their attachment to the Catholic religion provided the movement with its Christian character. A sense of national identity and religious practices shaped the private lives of Poles, while communist rule was seen as foreign and imposed by the Soviets. The Church was the only institution which resisted foreign totalitarian power, defended human rights and advocated the democratization of social life. The Solidarity social movement and the Church were united by common anti-totalitarian ideas. In many situations, the Church had a stabilizing effect on the social movement and called for moderation, which some activists assessed as undermining the mobilization of people's forces (Touraine, 2010, pp. 90–91).

Tokarczuk believed that the ideas propagated by the anti-communist opposition expressed the expectations of society, which wanted to break free from totalitarian enslavement and build an independent state. A vast majority of Poles identified with Solidarity ideological programme, who saw in the Solidarity opposition not only a resistance against the privileges of the communist nomenklatura and the unequal treatment of citizens, but also an initiator of the moral renewal of society (Świda-Ziemba, 1997, p. 346). The Solidarity programme took into account the assumptions of Christian ethics and the social teaching of the Church, which upheld human rights and promoted the

principles of social solidarity and the common good (Pacula, 2009, pp. 265–266). According to sociologist Jerzy Szacki, Solidarity was “a kind of moral crusade” of a society trying “to regain its rights, which appeared to be absolutely unquestionable precisely because they were the rights of the collectivity” (Szacki, 1994, p. 142).

Solidarity became the first and only socio-political organization in the communist bloc that was independent of the authorities and influenced their decisions. Strikes and demonstrations were carried out to confirm its power. The social movement gathering millions united various groups and occupational categories, especially workers’ and farmers’ communities (Karpinski, 1990, pp. 11–12). It demonstrated an ability to build strong social ties and networks and had the potential to resist repressive mechanisms. The movement revealed citizens’ expectations and social trends, and in particular highlighted the need for a national community. The Poles wanted to build in solidarity a new social order based on universal values and moral norms. By reaching for religious language and symbols, the Solidarity movement revealed not only its political motivations anchored in Catholic social teaching, but also pointed to religious inspirations, especially since many opposition activists had church communities as their bastion (Michel, 1995, p. 189). Solidarity became the third social force alongside the state and the Church. The dynamism of the development of the Solidarity organization, the widespread enthusiasm and mobilization of society and the belief in the victory of good over evil transformed the social reality of the People’s Republic of Poland for ever. Solidarity caused cracks in the monolithic structure of the communist state, and gave hope for the liberation of Poland from communist totalitarianism (Friszke, 2006, p. 10).

Before Solidarity emerged as a social movement, Tokarczuk supported other forms of civil opposition to the communist dictatorship. Members of various organizations representing the anti-communist opposition unanimously claim that Tokarczuk and his closest associates supported the oppositionists materially and morally (Żaryn, 2003b, p. 394). Particular emphasis should be placed on the aid given to the anti-communist opposition before 1980. Few priests had the courage to stand up for the opponents of a still strong totalitarian state. After a surge of strikes and social protests occurring in June 1976 due to the announced draconian price rises, many demonstrators were arrested. Mass street protests of dissatisfied people, especially in Radom, Ursus and Płock, were forcefully pacified by the communist regime. On the side of the dissatisfied and rebellious society, the bishop of Przemyśl intervened with the authorities



in the case of the arrested and repressed workers. He officially supported the Committee to Defend the Workers (later transformed into the Committee for Social Self-Defence KOR), which organized legal and material assistance for the arrested and their families. He supported a group of priests from Przemyśl who appealed to the Marshal of the Sejm to make a motion to investigate the legitimacy of the actions of security officers and the violations of law committed by them during the June events in Radom and Ursus (Bober, 2005, p. 236).

Conscious of workers and farmers' desire to organize themselves into independent unions, Tokarczuk supported grassroots initiatives of communities forming opposition organizations (Żaryn, 2002, p. 338). He met with representatives of opposition groups and encouraged them to act for the benefit of Polish citizens and to defend human rights, which was a rare phenomenon among hierarchs before the 1980 Solidarity uprising (Krzysztofiński, 2017, pp. 738–755). The audience with the bishop of Przemyśl constituted, in the opinion of the decision-makers, “a form of ennoblement in opposition circles” (Brożyniak, 2014, p. 198). In the parishes of the Przemyśl diocese, with the consent of the Ordinary, underground press was distributed and books were published without censorship (Bober, 2005, p. 237). Józef Baran, a collaborator of the Committee to Defend the Workers and opposition activist, is certain that Tokarczuk was a very important spiritual leader and patron of the anti-communist opposition: “For us, Bishop Tokarczuk was an authority, a spiritual leader. We were not disappointed, he was the patron not only of the KSCHZR [Komitet Samoobrony Chłopskiej Ziemi Rzeszowskiej, Committee for Peasant Self-Defense of the Rzeszów Land], but also of many initiatives being born then in relatively few environments of the pre-August opposition. At that time (after 1977), the Committee did not have the best reputation among bishops and clergy [...]. His person and his steadfastness certainly made it easier for him to remain in opposition, in difficult situations, and under constant tension. He was a protective umbrella for us. We knew that the bishop would always be our support. At that time, Bishop Tokarczuk was widely known in Poland because he showed how to behave towards the authorities” (Baran, 2016, p. 19).

After the establishment of Solidarity for workers in the Subcarpathian Region, the bishop was its patron and spiritual guardian, and the Church of the Przemyśl Diocese integrated opposition circles (Kleszczyński, 2014, p. 207). He participated in the most important ceremonies and personally celebrated religious services for members of the independent trade union of workers (Fryc, 1992, pp. 18, 22, 26). An opposition activist and co-founder of the National Regulatory Authority, Jan Józef Lipski, believed that Tokarczuk—by

publicly defending human rights—shaped civic dispositions to fight for a free Poland. In his activity, the oppositionists found inspiration and a model to follow (Lipski, 1983, p. 93). The importance of Tokarczuk's support for the oppositionists was appreciated by Lech Wałęsa, the leader of Solidarity, who thanked him by writing: "I have before my eyes a valiant defender of the rights of the Church, a faithful Shepherd of God's people and an exceptionally good and noble man, whose wise advice and kindness I myself have benefited from many times" (Wałęsa, 1991, p. 7).

The birth of the Solidarity social movement was an extremely important event and a personal success for Tokarczuk. He believed that workers' circles did not allow themselves to be subordinated to the party nomenklatura and did not identify with Marxist ideology, but felt a bond with the Church and sought moral renewal. During a meeting of the Episcopate in Jasna Góra on 26 August 1980, he said that priests should meet the problems of working people and should support their just demands (Żaryn, 2003b, p. 420). It seems that the bishop fully sympathized with the accurate assessment of events formulated by one of the leaders of the August strikes, Bogdan Borusewicz: "Raising millions of people in a fortnight was an achievement matching the scale of an uprising. And importantly, it was an uprising that was fought bloodlessly. [...] The strike ended with defeating totalitarianism. August challenged the essential core of communist ideology: the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was the proletariat that said no to communist authority. [...] All that is left of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a bare dictatorship" (Terlecki, 2010, p. 28).

Tokarczuk did not limit his support to workers' circles, but at the same time became strongly involved in activities for rural communities. He supported financially and morally the grassroots and independent initiatives of farmers' activists (Kura, 2014, p. 289). On his initiative, pastoral groups of farmers were established in the diocese of Przemyśl. In these communities, the idea of peasant self-government developed, which resulted in postulates to create farmers' unions independent of the communist regime. Church communities—galvanizing peasants into action—made a significant contribution to the creation and development of a solidarity movement in rural areas. The cooperation of Catholics and clergy had been building solidarity and civic awareness of the society. In the Church communities defending the rights of working people, civic attitudes were formed and grassroots structures of independent organizations were created (Frankowski, 2016, p.143). If Gdańsk was the cradle of workers' Solidarity, then the diocese of Przemyśl became the incubator of farmers' Solidarity (Kamiński, 1992).

In the opinion of the oppositionists, Tokarczuk was involved in the establishment of the Committee for Peasant Self-Defense of the Rzeszów Region in 1978, which was the precursor of the farmers' Solidarity movement (Szkutnik, 1995, pp. 137–138; Gliwa, 2014, pp. 187–188). His support for independent peasant initiatives influenced the attitudes and behaviors of priests, who willingly took part in actions promoting agricultural postulates concerning the creation of the farmers' Solidarity movement (Baran, 2016, p. 18). The Diocese of Przemyśl, in which the grassroots initiatives of independent peasant organizations were particularly visible, became the arena of struggles to legalize the farmers' Solidarity. The Rzeszów–Ustrzyki agreements concluded in February 1981 between the protesting farmers and the communist authorities made it possible to legalize the Solidarity Trade Union of Individual Farmers representing the interests of the Polish countryside (Roszkowski, 1995, pp. 52–53).

The leader of farmers' unions, Gabriel Janowski, believes that the involvement of the bishop of Przemyśl in defending the interests of Polish peasants was of great importance in the process of organizing the farmers' Solidarity and creating a nationwide farmers' pastoral ministry: "Bishop Tokarczuk played a leading role in the contemporary rural community as a man of extraordinary authority and simplicity, possessing the ability to win people over. Although he was not a key figure on a national scale in the Commission for the Pastoral Care of Farmers, he had a great influence on its activities. He supported the Pastoral Care of Farmers by ordering his priests to ruthlessly help in this work. He has repeatedly said that people need to be prepared to be good citizens. His support and memory of the Solidarity Trade Union of Individual Farmers were invaluable" (Janowski, 2016, p. 164). According to Janowski (2016, p. 163), the social teaching of Tokarczuk was treated by farmers "as a temporary programme of the peasant movement and leaven for the establishment by the Polish Episcopate of a nationwide Pastoral Care of Farmers".

It is worth noting that Tokarczuk was not involved in the game that the communists tried to persuade the Episcopate members to play. In exchange for various offers from the authorities, the hierarchs were to move away from the opposition and, at the same time, support some of the demands advocating the release of political prisoners. Some bishops accepted this moderate course by Primate Józef Glemp. Tokarczuk belonged to a small group of Episcopate members who opposed the double play and were clearly in favour of the Solidarity opposition (Dudek, 2005, pp. 80–81).

Particularly important for the anti-communist opposition was the support of Tokarczuk during martial law, introduced by the communist regime on 13 December 1980. The communist authorities formally abolished Solidarity. To survive, the union built underground structures and carried out illegal, conspiratorial activities. It urged society to continue resistance, made it more difficult for the party to regain control over society, and weakened its hegemonic role in the state (Friszke, 2006, p. 10). The bishop of Przemyśl unequivocally took the side of the terrorized nation and of Solidarity. He strongly defended the outlawed union by sharply criticizing the authorities, and warned the Episcopate so that the hierarchical Church would not be instrumentalized as an “extinguisher” of opposition and social resistance (Żaryn, 2003b, pp. 385–386). In addition, he undertook a large-scale action to support repressed underground activists. The support provided strengthened the links between Solidarity activists and church communities, which worried the local authorities. However, not all priests supported the actions promoted by the bishop. Behind the scenes, they even expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the ordinary was involved in supporting the opposition (Iwaneczko, Pisuliński, 2003, pp. 401–407). The support shown to Solidarity in the Przemyśl diocese definitely went beyond the standard support organized for opposition activists in other regions of the country. The bishop launched mechanisms at the diocesan and parish level to organize various kinds of aid for repressed union activists. He inspired priests to become personally involved in pro-independence activities. The clergy integrated the opposition circles, organized patriotic ceremonies, and kept Solidarity ideas alive in society and convinced of the need for union revival (Bukała, 2014, pp. 323–325). In Tokarczuk’s public speeches, he demanded an abolition of the repressive rigour of martial law, appealed for the release of imprisoned Solidarity activists led by Lech Wałęsa and demanded that the authorities allow independent trade unions to function freely (MSW, 1982, pp. 45–47). On Tokarczuk’s order, the parishes of the Przemyśl diocese collected money, food, medicines and other things that were given to the repressed and their families. Legal advice was organized for people made redundant for opposition activities and for interned families. In parishes, medical aid was provided to the victims, and parcels with food, clothing and cleaning products were distributed. A collection of gifts for the families of miners killed in the “Wujek” Coal Mine was held. Support was provided to Solidarity activists interned in detention centres on the territory of the Przemyśl diocese (Brożyniak, 2012, p. 33). The Chaplain of Solidarity, Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, came to Tokarczuk for advice and help, which he found difficult to get from his

superiors in Warsaw. Popiełuszko received strong support and encouragement from the bishop of Przemyśl to continue working for the benefit of the working class (Jedynak, 2006, pp. 33–35). The bishop met with Solidarity and KOR activists headed by Adam Michnik. Michnik expressed his appreciation for the bishop of Przemyśl for his wisdom and strong personality. He claimed to value him for giving him a sense of security and for the support that the anti-communist opposition receives from him. Tokarczuk also spoke highly of Michnik, who declared that the secular left is ready to discuss with the Church without prejudice (Tokarczuk, 2016, p. 369). The historian Rafał Łatka believes that “in fact, the only ordinary who continuously supported in word and deed the opposition activity was Bishop Ignacy Tokarczuk (“he did it also with the help of subordinate priests”) (Łatka, 2019, p. 16). Until the end of communism, the diocesan Church of Przemyśl led by Tokarczuk provided a constant and reliable base for anti-communist opposition activists (Bober, 2019, p. 59).

The Security Service was perfectly aware that the Ordinary of Przemyśl “was an ardent advocate” for the Solidarity opposition. The SB agents reported that the bishop had induced opponents of the communist regime to engage in various forms of opposition and protests against human rights violations by the authorities. He initiated the establishment of the Pastoral Care of Farmers at the Polish Episcopate, which continued the programme of NSZZ Solidarność RI (Individual Farmers Solidarity Movement), which was banned by the communists (MSW, 1988, p. 189). The money given to underground Solidarity structures by the Przemyśl Curia paid the penalties imposed on opposition activists, and for the services of lawyers defending convicted oppositionists (Kamiński, 2016, p. 187).

The support of the bishop of Przemyśl given to the opposition was manifold. Of particular importance for underground organizations were the funds transferred to the opposition activity. Typically, they were large sums (Nowacki W., 2016, p. 271). Zygmunt Błaża, a Solidarity activist claims that Bishop Tokarczuk had a perfect knowledge of the material needs of the opposition who was being harassed by the Security Service: “I said that we lacked funds for our activities, including the printing of tissue paper—the bishop went to his bedroom and brought 100 thousand zlotys. At the time it could buy a large Fiat. When giving the money, he said it was for the activity we had been talking about” (Błaża, 2016, p. 46; Bazdyła, 2016, p. 27). Zbigniew Sieczkoś, the chairman of the Solidarity movement in Rzeszów, recalls that in 1988 Tokarczuk donated 3 million zlotys to the Solidarity movement to set up a printing house (Sieczkoś, 2016, p. 329). Another opposition activist, Adam Cichocki, persecuted in the

PRL era—reports that in 1980, when he was a student of the Catholic University of Lublin, he and his colleagues planned a hunger strike against the repression of the communist authorities. While he was seeking moral support, he came to visit Tokarczuk, who welcomed him in the bishop's house, showed him trust, supported the peaceful form of protest and financially supported him: "He gave me 200 zlotys and said it was for food and the journey home. That was a lot, almost half of my school fees. Then we said goodbye. The bishop did not question me about anything, nor did he interrogate me; he trusted me and treated me very well, disproportionately to my position in relation to his office" (Cichocki, 2016, p. 73). Marek Kamiński (2016, p. 187), the Solidarity leader in Przemyśl, believes that the help he received from the bishop had a decisive influence on the functioning of local opposition structures: "Had it not been for Tokarczuk, we wouldn't have survived, we'd have died for lack of funding". Artur Brożyniak (2012, p. 33), a historian from the Institute of National Remembrance in Rzeszów, also believes that the underground structures of Solidarity in the South-Eastern Region owe their survival to the bishop of Przemyśl.

For some oppositionists, it was important to have the support of Tokarczuk who in his public speeches exposed the methods used against political prisoners. The anti-communist opposition activist Wieńczysław Nowacki is convinced that he survived the repression of the Security Service thanks to the bishop of Przemyśl. Tokarczuk ordered the priests to publicly reveal during the Sunday services in churches the truth about the inhuman treatment of Nowacki, who was handcuffed to a hospital bed by the Security Service, in the course of a hunger protest: "On Sunday, in all churches in Przemyśl, before the sermons, information was given that I was being treated inhumanly, handcuffed to a bed. Then I found out that it was Bishop Tokarczuk's will. It was a hunger strike that lasted over 40 days. Thanks to this intervention, Bishop Tokarczuk saved my life because I was utterly exhausted. After a few days, I was taken to Kraków, where a medical commission ordered my release" (Nowacki W., 2016, p. 272). Also another anti-communist opposition activist (later the voivode of Przemyśl) Jan Musiał claims that the regular help received from the bishop during a very difficult period of his life proved invaluable, as it contributed to saving his life: "After a serious illness, I was admitted to hospital. After the intervention of Bishop Tokarczuk, some seminarians donated blood for me. During this period, I was paid from the bishop's private funds. When I was in hospital, my wife was receiving my salary. Until 1989, I was his dependant. I owed my survival in the 1980s to Bishop Tokarczuk. He trusted me, although he had not known me before. Thanks to him I went on a pilgrimage

of Catholic journalists to Rome (I was not granted a passport for the next one)” (Musiał, 2016, p. 255).

The bishop created in the Przemyśl diocese a base for the growth of the opposition, with which he cooperated until the fall of communism (Bober, 2005, p. 237). The structures of the diocesan social organization managed by Tokarczuk played a very important role in the development of social resistance in Subcarpathia. The involvement of the region’s inhabitants in various forms of independent organizations helped citizens regain their subjectivity, shaped a new awareness and enhanced their ability to take grassroots initiatives, thus preparing them to build a civil society in the future (Iwaneczko, 2008, pp. 31–34). The bishop’s support for the opposition was not implicit because he was aware of the different ideological trends represented by the anti-communist circles and, moreover, he saw different interests of opposition activists (Dworak & Żakowski, 1985, p. 12; Szpor, 1987, p. 4). Therefore, he appealed to priests to be cautious and not to use parish buildings, especially churches, for political agitation. Anticipating divisions and divisions within Solidarity, he warned priests against too much involvement in the internal affairs of the union and its activists: “Oppositionists come for conversations and seek closeness with hierarchies and clergy because we have a common foe—communism. When the situation changes, when the common enemy disappears, they will go their own way” (Ryczan, 2016, p. 313).

Tokarczuk’s indisputable achievement was to unite people with different views and interests around the idea of anti-communist opposition. By integrating the society in religious groups and local communities, he prepared a fertile ground for the development of a social movement opposing the totalitarian regime. A former oppositionist and senator, Jan Draus, is convinced that independent groups of workers and farmers organized by the bishop of Przemyśl within the framework of professional pastoral ministries were incubators for the development of the grassroots self-government movement and the opposition to the totalitarian system: “All these pastoral initiatives formed a Catholic society in opposition to the communist system. They also provided support not only for Solidarity but also for the political parties formed in the late 1980s. This journey of Bishop Ignacy Tokarczuk to build social subjectivity and Christian formation at the level of the diocesan Church, outside the state structures, still inspires admiration and respect to this day. After all, it led to national independence and the sovereignty of the Church in Poland. In the Diocese of Przemyśl, the independence of the Catholic Church was achieved even before independence came” (Draus, 2003, p. 115).

## CONCLUSION

By opposing totalitarian enslavement by the authorities of the Polish People's Republic, citizens were shown that human rights and dignity needed to be protected from the communist authorities. His public speeches criticizing the repressive totalitarian system mobilized individuals and local social groups to undertake independent activities that opposed the policy of the communist regime. The anti-communist activity of Ignacy Tokarczuk, the bishop of Przemyśl, released social capital, strengthened social resistance and gave courage to the people who broke the barrier of fear and took up grassroots actions in line with the opposition activity. The activity of Tokarczyk was met with recognition not only from the Polish independence circles but was also highly regarded outside the borders of the Polish People's Republic. Despite the Iron Curtain, the Western European and American press showed the impressive achievements of the bishop, perceiving him as a steadfast anti-communist and inspirer of grassroots social rebellion.

A particularly important element of Tokarczuk's anti-communist activity was the permanent support for the opposition, especially in the Subcarpathian Region. The bishop met with opposition activists and encouraged them to undertake, continue and develop various forms of activity to build social structures independent of the authorities. The dissident movements were often incubated by church communities, where oppositionists could freely express their beliefs and organize meetings. Support for the opposition became particularly important during martial law when Solidarity became part of the underground activity and was definitely being destroyed by the Security Service. At that time, Tokarczuk publicly stood up for the imprisoned and repressed members of Solidarity, demanding that the authorities release them and stop harassment. The bishop organized financial support for the underground opposition structures. He donated money that was used to pay the penalties imposed, to provide legal aid to repressed members of the opposition, to support imprisoned families and to support independent publishing activities. In the buildings owned by the Church, there were dissidents in hiding from the Security Service. The aid given to the opposition during Martial Law not only contributed to its survival but also strengthened the independent structures of Solidarity, accumulating social capital, which in subsequent years facilitated the defeat of the communist regime.



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#### ROLA IGNACEGO TOKARCZUKA – BISKUPA PRZEMYSKIEGO W POWSTANIU I ROZWOJU OPOZYCJI ANTYKOMUNISTYCZNEJ W POLSCE

##### Streszczenie

W artykule przedstawiono działalność społeczną biskupa przemyskiego Ignacego Tokarczuka, wpływającą na powstanie i rozwój opozycji antykomunistycznej. W 2006 roku hierarcha został odznaczony przez Prezydenta RP najwyższym odznaczeniem państwowym – Orderem Orła Białego za działalność na rzecz demokratyzacji życia społecznego i obrony praw człowieka. Celem badań było określenie roli biskupa w procesie organizowania i wspierania struktur opozycyjnych, zwłaszcza w południowo-wschodniej Polsce. Eksplorację przeprowadzono w oparciu o analizę wywiadów, wspomnień i opracowań naukowych. Szczególne znaczenie w procesie badawczym miała analiza wywiadów z członkami antykomunistycznej opozycji i duchowieństwem, która pozwoliła opisać i wyjaśnić postawę i zachowanie biskupa wobec ruchu antykomunistycznego. Stwierdzono, że zaangażowanie Tokarczuka w działalność opozycji antykomunistycznej okazało się niezwykle ważne dla funkcjonowania niezależnych struktur na Podkarpaciu, zwłaszcza w stanie wojennym.

**Słowa kluczowe:** opozycja antykomunistyczna; wspólnoty kościelne; wsparcie; opór społeczny; reżim totalitarny.