
Abstracts

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Abstracts

Agata Zborowska
Objects and ways of life in the Polish People's Republic (PRL) or what can be found in Andrzej Siciński's archive?

The article examines the ways of life in PRL through objects. It focuses on Andrzej Siciński's survey about ways of life in Poland during the late seventies. In the first part of the article, the author discusses the problem of re-using qualitative data in humanities as well as the danger of their decontextualisation and misuse. In the following part, she analyses the materials from the perspective of everyday objects. The theoretical framework of the analysis is determined by the category of „lifestyles of things” formulated by Marek Krajewski.

Marcin Rychlewski
Rock Culture in Polish People's Republic (PRL). An Investigation

The following article investigates the PRL's rock culture through the lens of reception, as it was not only Polish but, first and foremost, Western music that was listened to. The author reveals educational character of contemporary music journalism. The article also describes rock culture against the framework of two binaries: tape vs. vinyl LP recordings and public vs. private. Further, it questions the independent character of Jarocin rock festival that served as a freedom substitute sanctioned by the state.

***Natalia Grądzka,
Antoni Michnik,
Mateusz Migut,
Klaudia
Rachubińska,
Xawery Stańczyk***
***Machine for making
authenticity: the
twists and turns of
Polish popular music
in the 1980s***

The authors present an adaptation of Clifford's „machine for making authenticity” diagram (from his seminal essay „On Collecting Art and Culture”) to the Polish popular music scene in the 1980s. Studying changes in the reception of four Polish popular music acts in the years 1979–1989, the authors test the limitations of the possible application of Clifford's chart. Clifford originally distinguished two axes of classification: *art vs culture* (i.e. *masterpiece vs artefact*) and *authentic vs inauthentic*. The authors suggest that the same art-culture system of interpretation was common in the reception of popular music in Poland in the late 70s and early 80s, when several important bands were formed. Using excerpts from contemporary music press, the authors analyze the way four seminal bands (Kombi, Bajm, Republika, and Tilt) shift between the different quadrants of the art-culture diagram. Following Clifford's stress on the historicity and the dynamic, ever-changing nature of the “machine for making authenticity”, authors acknowledge how the trajectories of classification of these bands were influenced by different agents in the popular music discourse: journalists, music critics, fans, other musicians, and artists themselves. In conclusion, the scope of applicability of this interpretational model (originally conceived for museum-type material culture) to popular music is explained.

Piotr Karendat
***Jarocin Festival in
the Time of Polish
People's Republic:
History, Function,
Significance***

The article describes the history of the Jarocin Festival in Polish People's Republic – the only festival in the whole Eastern Bloc where young people, not only spectators but also performers, were able to express their own opinions, manifest their independence and antipathy for current political situation. It also presents the development of the festival, shows how it changed during 10 years of its existence in Polish People's Republic, discusses the difficulties involved in its organization, the profiles of the spectators as well as its meaning for and influence on young people. It also consider such issues as the functions and the real purpose of the Jarocin Festival.

**Grzegorz
Dąbkowski**
**The Controversies
over „Big-beat”
in the Polish
Journalism in 1960s**

The aim of this paper is to analyse the articles about rock music written by Polish journalists, music critics, musicologists and musicians in the 1960s. In Poland, rock music was called „big-beat“ due to the government’s negative attitude to the Western music. However, the authors of the analysed articles expressed very diverse opinions on the „big-beat“ music. Key words: rock music, Polish journalism, 1960’s

Patryk Wasiak
**„Muscle knots of
monstrous size and
lots of naked bodies”.
Popular culture, new
media technologies
and the legitimization
of the socialist
cultural project**

The article aims to show how the popularity of video recorders and satellite television in the Polish People’s Republic in the late 80s has become the subject of debate on the social role of media and the socialist cultural apparatus. Cultural magazines of the era criticized satellite TV programs and hugely popular Western movies available on video cassettes as productions that promoted “brazen Americanism” and posed a threat of “satellite colonialism”. The author reveals that such debates on the new media and popular culture were part of a broader discussion on the negative “imaginary West”. Articles in question described in great detail the triviality and cruelty of action movies and pornographic content that the new media provided access to. The article also argues that texts of that kind functioned as a legitimization of socialism as a system where the development of culture was not to be tied to profit, as it was in the West. The socialist system of cultural production and distribution was to constitute a better alternative by providing access to cultural education. Instead of primitive contents of popular culture, the socialist cultural project was to provide the citizens with valuable culture representing “universal values”.

Marcin Kowalczyk
The Polish Bruce Lee: Examination of Eastern Martial Arts in the Culture of PRL (Polish People's Republic)

During the first two decades after the Second World War, judo was the most popular martial art in communist Poland. Karate and kung-fu came much later (in the 1970s) and were treated with suspicion by the authorities, just as everything that got through from the West. Since the 1960s, the culture in the People's Republic of Poland tried to tame martial arts, adopting them to its goals. Judo as an efficient system of fighting became an important part of youth literature. Some elements of martial arts can also be noticed in Polish movies. However, the wide audience had an opportunity to look at the Asian and American martial arts movies thanks to the popularization of home VHS players during the 1980s. This boom made Bruce Lee an icon. Despite the many successes of the Polish practitioners and the immense popularity of judo, karate, and kung-fu in communist Poland, martial arts never became a leading theme in literature or film. They were always either part of the background, a complement of the character, or they expanded the metaphorical meaning of the work. A Polish Bruce Lee was a thinker rather than a fighter.

Robert Dudziński
Insurmountable contradiction: Milicja procedurals within the genre system of the 1960s

The article attempts to describe a particular crime movie genre that developed in Poland in the 60s, i.e. procedurals involving the socialist law enforcement (milicja), such as *Dwaj panowie „N”* (dir. T. Chmielewski, 1962), *Spotkanie ze szpiegiem* (dir. J. Batory, 1964), *Hasło „Korn”* (dir. W. Podgórski 1968), *Zapalniczka* (dir. K. Szmagier, 1970) and a television series, *Przygody psa Cywila* (dir. K. Szmagier, 1968–1970). The features of the genre included, among others, the presentation of law enforcement as a smoothly operating collective machine that relies on the joint effort to capture the criminal, and a realistic portrayal of law enforcement procedures as the show's main attraction. Consequently, productions in question do not rely on plot and mystery but on a spectacle of sorts, a look behind the scenes of investigations, chases and arrests. The text is also an attempt to place the genre within a broader cultural context and to explain why such formula was viewed as potentially attractive by the viewers and acceptable by the state.

Natalia Lemann
The Great Silence in
(Polish) Outer Space:
Social Science
Fiction with(out)
Women in the Polish
People's Republic

The aim of this paper is to examine Polish social science fiction developed in the 1970s and 1980s as an anti-feminist literary genre. Applying a cultural studies approach the author shows how science fiction literature is linked with social life. The comparative juxtaposition of Polish and Western SF reveals how dissimilar they are in the manner of women's representation. Even these days in Polish science fiction there is no feminist subgenre. This fact is very symptomatic, but unperceived by scholars. The author argues that in the novels by Janusz Zajdel, Edmund Wnuk-Lipiński or Marek Oramus women are never leading heroines, but only a "decoration", described by their beauty and sexual attractiveness. Through analyzing the language and depictions in the established literary works of the above mentioned writers, the author comes to a conclusion about the cultural climate and social life in the decline of PRL, as a time when women were not seen as equal partners, both in the political and family life. Finally, author suggests a connection between the manner of depicting women in social SF and their insignificant participation in the anti-communist political opposition, such as the „Solidarity” movement.

Grzegorz Wójcik
Women's
Emancipation in
1960s and 70s as
Seen in "Woman and
Life" Magazine

The article attempts to consider the phenomenon of women's emancipation at the beginning of the 1960s (Władysław Gomułka's government) and the 70s (Edward Gierek's leadership). It focuses on the emancipation phenomena through the women's work, their family life, sexuality and consumption spheres. Moreover, it compares the modes of achieving independence by women during the two decades. It concludes that while in 1970s, just as a decade earlier, there was still demand for women's work in „male” industry branches, the shift occurred in the discourse on sexuality. In 1960s the only topic related to the intimate sphere was the popularization of contraception among Polish women. Ten years later the magazine discussed topics such as sexual satisfaction and marital infidelity. These conclusions confirm the liberalisation of mentality among the citizens of Poland during Edward Gierek's government.

***Marek
Hendrykowski***
**Stalinism behind the
Double Guard**

The article is devoted to the poetics of socialist realism in cinema in the specific context of popular culture. From this point of view author examines two unknown Polish full-length documentary films (made in 1953 and 1955) abandoned in the Stalinist period and recently rediscovered in the National Film Archive in Warsaw. The common subject of both of them is boxing. Marek Hendrykowski describes the political limitations and ideological taboos of the early 1950s cinema in Poland and discusses various aspects, dimensions and meanings of those two films by proposing a new reading of them.

Małgorzata Roeske
**Fashion or
Nostalgia? Polish
People's Republic
(PRL) in the social
imagination of
contemporary Poles**

Twenty-five years after the system transformation in Poland, the times of the Polish People's Republic (PRL) are still vivid in the social imagination of Poles. Despite all the problems of inefficiency and repression, most people from the older generation still consider these times to have been a kind of "golden age". Another phenomenon is the fascination with and the fashionable presence of communism (not in the political sense but that of lifestyle) among Poland's young generation, which obviously cannot be rooted in nostalgia in the case of people who cannot remember those times. The author analyses the causes, mechanisms and to some extent also the consequences of these two phenomena: the popularity of and nostalgia towards the PRL. The theoretical analysis indicates that nostalgia and fashion both have their sources in the post-modern social condition, but each of these phenomena has not only different recipients but also varying backgrounds and is based on separate mechanisms. For the older generation the cultural artefacts create a sense of the generational community and identity, while the young Poles consider communism and everything related to it as a synonym of nonsense and the grotesque. PRL's pop culture and vintage style is their own, specific cultural heritage. Within 25 years, the culture of inefficiency has become very original "export product", something they can be proud of.

Julia Banaszczyńska
**The Land of Milk
and Honey. On the
Egalitarian Character
of Milk Bars.**

The three consecutive parts of the article are an attempt to describe the history of milk bars. Although their existence in Poland dates back further than the time of the PRL, it was in those days that they were booming. It seems that during the transformation they were forgotten and treated as the relic of unwanted past. Today we can talk about their renaissance. The paper is also an attempt to identify the sources of this phenomenon and their connection to the social changes in Poland.