


BROADCASTS BY ALEKSANDRA STYPUŁKOWSKA FOR RADIO FREE EUROPE'S POLISH BROADCASTING SERVICE¹

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ABSTRACT

Broadcasts by Aleksandra Stypułkowska for Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service

The purpose of the article is to show, based on selected examples, the journalistic and radio broadcast activity of Aleksandra Stypułkowska (alias Jadwiga Mieczkowska) for Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service, and to present the most important issues she raised on air, along with her unique way of argumentation. The study analysed audio and press sources. Available issues of the monthly magazine *Na Antenie* (1963–1989) were reviewed for her statements by applying a press analysis method in tandem with qualitative research. Because of the editorial requirements that the article had to meet, only certain press materials were included, and a number of news and literary programmes were excluded; these omissions will be addressed in a separate paper. However, some audio sources available on RFE's website were also selected applying a media content analysis method; namely, those which the author finds original as regards the subject matter and journalistic genre (in line

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with the case study method), and which make it possible to present a variety of issues raised by Stypułkowska, including her views on legal, socio-political and religious matters. This study can therefore be seen as a prelude to further research.

Keywords: Jadwiga Mieczkowska, Aleksandra Stypułkowska, Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service, radio broadcasts, *Na Antenie*

Introduction

The core mission of Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service was to oppose the destruction of Polish culture and strive to "rule people's hearts and minds" (Habielski 2019; Machcewicz 2007; Nowak-Jeziorański, Winowska 2016; Tatarowski 2005, 2012; Wejs-Milewska 2012). According to Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, head of RFE's Polish section (1952–1971), its journalists were to establish a bridge between the free world and the enslaved nation of Poland (Hajdasz 2006; Łatyński 1997; Nowak-Jeziorański 2005; *Wolna Europa przyciągało najlepszych 2012/Radio Free Europe Attracted the Best* 2012).

The article analyses selected broadcasts by Aleksandra Stypułkowska (alias Jadwiga Mieczkowska) on a variety of issues: political, legal, historical and biographical. Since RFE targeted a wide audience, among whom there were a fair number of believers (Habielski, Machcewicz 2018, p. 41), she also recorded religious programmes regarding Church-state relationships and state Catholic holidays, commenting on the most important events, including *The Pastoral Letter of the Polish Bishops to their German Brothers*, the 1966 Millennium celebrations, the debunking of the myth of "progressive Catholicism", the unmasking of the truth behind the PAX Association (Micewski 1981), the portrayal of the importance of John Paul II's pontificate, etc.²

To date, there have been few biographies, interviews and studies on the author of the RFE's *Fakty, wydarzenia, opinie/Facts, Events, Views*³ (Gawlikowski 2015, pp. 625–629; Grabowska 2002, pp. 215–219; Habielski 2008, pp. 2007–2009; *Panorama dnia/Daily Panorama* 1959, 1981; Tatarowski 2021, pp. 575–584; Żenczykowski 1982, p. 84). Stypułkowska was the only female in the original team of the Polish section of RFE⁴, where her voice was widely recognised between 1952 and 1982. She retired in 1974 but continued to work for the station (Habielski 2008, p. 207). Initially, she served as editor of a programme aimed at a female audience. Between 1952 and 1954 she was known for her radio novel entitled *W czterech ścianach/Within*

² The issues of the Millennium celebrations, the PAX Association and the pontificate of John Paul II in RFE are discussed by the author in her other publications.

³ In 2023, at the University of Białystok, an unpublished doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of Prof. Violetta Wejs-Milewska, PhD, by E. Andrzejewska entitled *On the Liberty's Side. The Ethical Dimension of Aleksandra Stypułkowska's Radio Writing and Socio-political Activity in Exile./Po stronie wolności. Wymiar etyczny pisarstwa radiowego i działalności społeczno-politycznej Aleksandry Stypułkowskiej na emigracji*.

⁴ For the first few years (1952–1958), the Radio operated under the name Voice of Free Poland, later changed to Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service.

Four Walls. Later she gained recognition for the moving documentary *Pamiętnik katyński/The Katyn Memoir* (1953), for which she received a Gabriel Award, a Catholic honour recognising excellence in broadcasting (*Pamiętnik katyński/Katyn Memoir*, 1953). A lawyer by profession, she had already gained several years of journalistic experience before joining the Munich-based RFE team. She made her debut in the London-based dailies *Dziennik Polski/Polish Daily* and *Dziennik Żołnierza/Soldier's Daily*, for which she was also a foreign correspondent in Scandinavia. In 1946, she co-edited the weekly *Wiadomości Polskie/Polish News* (Gawlikowski 2015, p. 626). While working for RFE, she developed her latent literary talents inherited from her parents.⁵ By addressing political, historical and religious issues, she became a target of communist propaganda. She was eventually discredited by her broadcasting colleague Wiktor Trościanko, who collaborated with the government of the Polish People's Republic.⁶

Jan Nowak-Jeziorański argued that Stypułkowska was among those who easily built “a sense of community” and could “establish a direct, almost intimate bond with her audience” (Nowak-Jeziorański 1991, p. 98). Her article entitled *Pod ostrzałem. Projekt nowego kodeksu karnego i opinia publiczna/Under Siege. Draft of the New Penal Code and Public Opinion* (1963, p. 4) was published in the very first issue of the monthly *Na Antenie*, which featured the most important Polish-language broadcasts emitted on RFE. Her rich socio-political and cultural journalistic output was reviewed by Lechosław Gawlikowski in *Who's Who of Radio Free Europe/Pracownicy Radia Wolna Europa* (2015, pp. 628–629). An important aspect of RFE's informative and anti-communist activity was the anniversary broadcasts, for which she was also responsible.

Methodology

The author's intention is to demonstrate, based on selected examples, Stypułkowska's rich journalistic and broadcasting output at Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service, where she was among the most prolific journalists, as evidenced by the fact that in just three years (1963–1966), 15 of her articles were published in *Na Antenie* (Orlik-Rückemannowa 1966, p. 8). This paper also aims to present the issues raised by Stypułkowska on air along with her journalistic mode of argumentation. To accomplish these objectives, the author performed an audio and press source analysis, while a press content analysis (Dąbrowska-Cendrowska 2019; Pisarek 1983) was applied to review Stypułkowska's statements within the available issues of the monthly *Na Antenie* (1963–1989). Because of the editorial requirements the article had to meet, only certain texts were included, while a number of news and literary

⁵ Her parents were the writer Władysław Rabski and the essayist Zuzanna Rabska (née Kraushar).

⁶ In his biography on Stypułkowska, Habielski explains that in 1969 she was alleged – falsely – to have been a kapo in a concentration camp during WW2.

materials were omitted and will be discussed in another paper. However, some audio sources available on the RFE's website were also selected applying a media content analysis method (Lisowska-Magdziarz 2004, 2006); namely, those which the author finds unique as regards the subject matter and journalistic genre (in line with the case study method), and which made it possible to present a variety of issues raised by Stypułkowska. This study is therefore not exhaustive and should be perceived as groundwork for further research. The selected research material was subjected to qualitative analysis against the background of existing scientific studies. At this stage, the method of literature analysis and criticism became helpful (Cisek 2010). The keywords used were the journalist's name and pseudonym (Stypułkowska, Mieczkowska). The sources included are listed in the Bibliography.

Criticism of the legal system

Any discussion on Stypułkowska and her journalistic style should begin with an insight into her legal expertise. When interviewed by Paweł Zaremba, she stated:

There aren't so many lawyers in our team and ultimately someone has to handle the legal issues, whether they be the problems of lawsuits against students, writers, or any theoretical problems such as the debate on the legal or civil code, etc. These are the interests and matters that I am predisposed to, given my education and former occupation (*Sylwetki pracowników Rozgłośni Polskiej RWE 1969/Who's Who of Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service 1969*).

In the programme entitled *Divide et impera. Sytuacja adwokatury w Polsce/Divide et impera. The Situation of the Bar in Poland*, Stypułkowska addressed the nagging issue of the communists' efforts to disintegrate the integrity of the legal profession, "undermine social trust" and "create an air of prejudice" (Stypułkowska 1965, p. 1). She unmasked their methods, which were based on turning advocates against each other over financial matters, legislative change and denunciation. She exposed the "pasquinade" by the editor of *Prawo i Życie/Law and Life*, the official organ of the Association of Polish Lawyers. She criticised the fact that individuals who lacked professional merit but were obedient to the communist party were promoted to executive positions, giving specific examples and explaining the problem as follows:

The system, pretty much an egalitarian 'levelling down' at the expense of outstanding, hard-working and highly experienced barristers, not only rewards the – through no fault of their own – economically disadvantaged, but also the mediocre and lazy. Against this levelling down, the legal profession is justly protesting [...] since among these mediocrities, loudmouths are most readily recruited (Stypułkowska 1965, p. 1).

Another example of her legal commentary is the broadcast entitled *Sprawa Ludwika Haasa/The Case of Ludwik Haas*, which she begins as follows: “And again a political trial against intellectuals. And again a trial behind closed doors” (Stypułkowska 1966, p. 3). In an attempt to expose intra-party vendettas, Stypułkowska commented: “Why, in the case of Modzelewski or Haas, the ideological discussion took place not in the editorial office of *Nowe Drogi/New Roads*, but behind the closed doors of the courtroom is something that an uninitiated outsider will never know” (Stypułkowska 1966, p. 3). She also revealed that it was unknown when the trial took place and that “it was about an unspecified and illegal publication”, which led to the imprisonment of party members. In the broadcast, she objectively yet boldly addressed the issue of secret political trials and court verdicts in the People’s Republic of Poland.

Proces taterników/The Trial of the Tattranists (Stypułkowska 1970, pp. 5–7), which explored the absurdities of communist propaganda against Jerzy Giedroyc’s Paris-based periodical *Kultura* (1947–2000), also caught the audience’s attention. In *Na Antenie*, Stypułkowska reported on the trial of young intellectuals, the so-called “Tattranists”, held at the Warsaw Provincial Court. She defined the communists’ aims “as a desire to intimidate society, the youth above all, and any form of opposition, even if it fell within the framework of Marxism-Leninism” (Stypułkowska 1970, p. 5). She also interpreted the actions from a legal perspective, conceding that while the March trials were about combating alleged “Zionism”, the case of the Tatra mountaineering club targeted *Kultura* as part of the “struggle against ideological sabotage” (Stypułkowska 1970, p. 5). Explaining that the monthly’s editor – just like RFE – had become political enemy number one for the communists, she skilfully ridiculed their endeavours: “The trial elevates the periodical’s standing, presenting it as a foreign unit that poses an outright threat to the interests of the state, indeed its very existence. This is probably the first time in history when a low-circulation magazine for a narrow audience has been attributed with such qualities, power and impact” (Stypułkowska 1970, p. 5). She gave an extensive description of the detainees as well as the formal and substantive details of the case. The bill of indictment listed the act of collecting and compiling materials that slandered the People’s Republic of Poland, which had allegedly been instigated by the editor of *Kultura*, and then “the smuggling and distribution of these subversive materials” (Stypułkowska 1970, p. 5).

Stypułkowska’s publications on legal issues were marked by professionalism, argumentative logic and her marked opposition to the communist government in Poland. At times, she would replace a dramatic tone with a humorous voice to emphasise the absurdity of some cases and accusations.

⁷ The name alluded to the arrested members of a mountaineering club, who were accused of smuggling banned press materials across the border in the Tatra Mountains.

On political life

Stypułkowska began her reflections on the termination of the socio-literary weekly *Nowa Kultura* (1950–1963) as follows: “It survived for 13 years. It had both supporters and opponents. We were not among those who shared the political views of the team working for the Warsaw-based *Nowa Kultura*. We would often argue with its co-authors” (Stypułkowska 1963c, p. 3). She continued by praising the efforts of successive editors in maintaining a bond with readers and a relative freedom of speech. She delved into the situation of the official organ of the Union of Polish Writers under successive editors-in-chief. She presented a profile of Paweł Hoffman, who lost his post and “fell into disgrace” for printing Adam Ważyk’s *Poemat dla dorosłych/Poem for Adults* in 1955, since communists demanded that editors should “toe the party line” and promote socialist realism (Stypułkowska 1963c, p. 3). Later she also mentioned a political thaw in the editorial office of *Nowa Kultura*, which allowed it to address the issues of the Home Army and Poles deported to Russia. Another example was when Wiktor Woroszyński (editor-in-chief between 1956 and 1957) managed to expose the consequences of the 1956 Poznań protests. He was followed by Stefan Żółkiewski, under whom the weekly became “colourless” and the circulation declined. The next editor-in-chief, Hieronim Michalski, was described as “a man lacking personality”. Stypułkowska also described the fortunes of the rebellious authors collaborating with *Nowa Kultura* against the background of political events, describing the team as a “close-knit community acting against the apparatchiks”. She called *Nowa Kultura* “liberal” to the extent that it could be under the communist regime, appreciating the loyalty of the writers during “ferments” and layoffs. When compared to *Przegląd Kulturalny* (1952–1956), Stypułkowska regarded the “biography of *Nowa Kultura*” to have been “more colourful” because it did not transform into yet another clone of the party-controlled *Trybuna Ludu*. Also, unlike *Nowa Kultura*, *Przegląd Kulturalny* – the official organ of the Council for Culture and the Arts – did not undergo turbulent staff changes. Under the editorship of Jerzy Andrzejewski and Gustaw Gottesman, the weekly – known for its broad socio-cultural profile and inclination to discuss controversial issues – would continually adapt to the changing political situation.

Later in her broadcast, Stypułkowska compared the attitudes to the thaw in the two magazines. She mentioned a survey conducted in 1956 by *Przegląd Kulturalny* entitled “Jak widzę współczesną sztukę rewolucyjną?”/“How do I see contemporary revolutionary art?”, which discussed “the calamity of writing things that are never allowed to be published”, “the tragedy of the Home Army soldiers”, and a debate on scientific freedom. Articles in both weeklies gave viewers an insight into the opinions circulating in literary milieus at the time. Stypułkowska regarded the votes for freedom of speech that were voiced during the thaw as “more enduring” in terms of expression and the position of literature. She closed her account with a brief remark on the launch of yet another periodical called *Kultura* (1963–1981), which was a merger of *Świat*, *Nowa Kultura* and *Przegląd Kulturalny* under the editorship of Janusz Wilhelm, “who earned a terrible reputation within creative

circles”. Stypułkowska gave a fair, factual and objective assessment of the periodicals, exposing “the communists’ efforts to combat the freedom of the press” (Stypułkowska 1963c, p. 3).

In an article entitled *Żeby władze chciały ino chcieć/If only the Authorities Wanted to Want* Stypułkowska commented on a text published in *Polityka* called *Polacy u sąsiadów/Poles at their Neighbours*, stating that a journalistic embargo had just been broken when the number and locations of Poles relocated to the USSR were quoted. She explained that, “The weekly *Polityka* apparently received the censors’ permission to publish dry statistical data taken from official Soviet statistics [...] these dry figures reveal the fourth partition of Poland, the crimes of the deportations and the hecatomb of the gulags” (Stypułkowska 1965, p. 7). Stypułkowska called for the need to deal with difficult issues and historical narratives as a prerequisite for good neighbourly relations. At the same time, she objected to the “quarter-truths” and newspeak given in official press statements, arguing that even in “the Soviet Union there was an open debate on the gulag system” (Stypułkowska 1965, p. 7). On behalf of this unique, forced Soviet-Polish diaspora, she courageously demanded their rights to access Polish education and culture. She asked why the government in Poland did not treat the Polish diaspora in the USSR the same as the Polish diaspora in France. She was also outraged by the claim that “repatriations were terminated for lack of applicants” and promoted the idea of “negotiating a partner statute” with Russia.

Political issues were the second largest and most important subject in which Stypułkowska took a keen interest, presenting them in line with the ideological agenda set by Jan Nowak-Jeziorański.

On the freedom of the Church and the status of religion

“Millions listen to RFE, as do I. Your broadcasts have my complete approval; the only reservations I have are about religiosity, but even there I do understand the intentions.” Thus wrote a listener of Radio Free Europe’s Polish Broadcasting Service to the editor (*Opinie z kraju o audycjach RWE/Views from the country on RFE broadcasts* 1970, p. 4). Religious broadcasts were exceptionally important for Stypułkowska, especially those protecting the Church and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński during his imprisonment. In her broadcasts, she also revealed the painful truths and tragic stories of clergymen such as Bolesław Kominek, Władysław Findysz and Marian Pirożyński.

The rulers of the People’s Republic of Poland planned a covert and long-term anti-church campaign, suppressing Christian tradition and culture from the public sphere in Poland while declaring constitutional freedom and falsely proclaiming religious freedom in the national media (Dudek 1995; Dudek, Gryz 2003; Żaryn 2003). In response to this campaign, in 1953, Nowak-Jeziorański insisted that the radio team defend the Church by virtue of a document entitled *Kampania Głosu Wolnej Polski dotycząca polityki reżimu wobec Kościoła/RFE’s Strategy on the Regime’s Policy towards the Church* (Habielski, Machcewicz 2018, pp. 179–185;

Nowak-Jeziorański 2005). It was felt that presenting the facts on air would be most effective, and a series of sixteen broadcasts about the PAX Association and “progressive Catholics” was launched, exposing their secret aim of dismantling the Church from within (Nowak-Jeziorański 1994). The diversionary nature of the actions taken by so-called “patriot priests” and “regime Catholics” was also exposed. The mission was demanding and the radio journalists had to scrupulously verify every piece of information, especially when the state media spread propaganda about not combating religion, but only opposing the political activities of various members of the clergy who were fighting the system. Simultaneously, the communists waged an offensive against the Vatican on the assumption that its policies were contrary to the Polish *raison d'état*.

The special broadcasts produced by Stypułkowska were creative, uniting, interesting and poignant. Among them were Christmas specials that referred to the difficult political situation in the People's Republic of Poland at that time. A broadcast from 24 December 1954 entitled *Puste miejsce przy wigilijnym stole/An Empty Place at the Christmas Table* was dedicated to the imprisoned Primate Stefan Wyszyński. Stypułkowska used authentic statements from Church dignitaries from all over the world, which gave it an international dimension. These included sermons by Primate of England and Portugal (Bernard Gryffin and Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira), the Archbishop of Toulouse Jules-Géraud Saliege, the Bishop of Seranton County in Pennsylvania Henryk Teofil Klonowski, and the guardian of Poles in exile Józef Gawlina. They all asserted moral and spiritual support for the Primate of Poland, calling him “a Polish convict and prisoner”, “a martyr for faith and freedom”, “a symbol of a shackled Catholic Poland”, “the shepherd long awaited by Poles”, “a lone man behind the wall”, and “he who gives testimony” (*Puste miejsce przy wigilijnym stole/An Empty Place at the Christmas Table* 1954). The Primate was portrayed as a lonely prisoner praying for his persecutors. A “prayer for the Silent Church” was advocated and words of encouragement conveyed, showing solidarity with compatriots back home. Gawlina solemnly reassured the audience that Wyszyński had not been “ripped from the hearts of the faithful”, thus confirming his authority. The Christmas programme was acoustically enriched by the skilful application of reflective, literary and musical content. It concluded with a touching prayer recited by a child.

Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service eagerly produced programmes reporting on the harassment of Church hierarchs, something the national media had remained evasively silent about. RFE exposed the communists' methods, debunked fake news and defended clergymen indicted in political trials. Even religiously indifferent members of the editorial board and those reluctant to follow Catholic practices became involved in protecting the Church. Named an “ardent mother of the Church” (Habielski 2008), Stypułkowska often addressed the issue of Church-state relationships in the 1960s. She devoted a series of broadcasts to *The Pastoral Letter of the Polish Bishops to their German Brothers*, presenting the circumstances behind its creation in the context of Polish-German relationships. Meticulously reviewing the accounts of the event in the national and foreign press, she supported

the initiative of the Polish Bishops. In the programme *Jeszcze o orędziu biskupów/ More on the Pastoral Letter* (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6), she attempted to ascertain the reasons behind the campaign against the Church launched in December 1965 and to demonstrate the communists' propaganda methods. She wrote:

The reasons for unleashing a campaign of an intensity unseen since 1953, i.e., the imprisonment of Cardinal Wyszyński, are obvious. After all, the Millennium celebrations are coming. The party and state authorities want to employ the Millennium not only to secularise Polish history, but also to impose the view that the present government is the sole heir of that history [...]. The Church with its thousand years of Christianity [...] spoils the plans of the party functionaries (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6).

Stypułkowska argued that the campaign was intended to undermine the authority of the Primate and the Church. She claimed that his popularity was growing among the faithful, owing to his ability to maintain the unity of the Church and the support granted by Popes John XXIII and Paul VI. She quoted the words of a *Le Monde* commentator on “the ridiculous accusations against Cardinal Wyszyński, ludicrous even to those who proclaim them” cast to create “a counterbalance to the mood of religious zeal” in view of the upcoming Millennium celebrations (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6). She also pointed to the distorted – “by means of omission” – text of the Primate's sermon of 19 December 1965, as printed in a propaganda brochure by *Polonia* Publishing House, the purpose of which was to ridicule Wyszyński. In response, Stypułkowska reliably quoted the omitted fragments of the Primate's speech.

She was also critical of the distorted text cited from a West German monthly on Warsaw radio and the pro-Soviet propaganda newspaper *Sztandar Młodych* concerning *The Pastoral Letter of the Polish Bishops to their German Brothers*. A passage that did not fit the propaganda line had been removed, thus forging the idea that the Polish Episcopate compromised the principles of Polish foreign policy. Stypułkowska also illustrated the method of omission with the example of Archbishop Bolesław Kominek's interviews in foreign media. Stypułkowska stated that the official media in Poland ignored the interviews he had given to the Austrian weekly *Die Furche*, in which he claimed that “the main misunderstanding lies in the fact that *The Pastoral Letter* is interpreted as a political document” (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6). In her pursuit of accuracy, Stypułkowska also cited another “reprehensible case of omission” – a document justifying why the Primate was denied a passport to attend the opening of the Millennium celebrations in Rome. She pointed out that while “the letter addressed to the secretary of the Episcopate, Bishop Choromanski, was widely disseminated in the press and on the radio, the Episcopate's response to the accusations made in writing was never publicised anywhere” (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6).

Stypułkowska also reported on the recurrent accusations against Polish bishops. In the aptly worded headline *Małe słówko a duży fałsz/A Small Word but a Big Deceit*, she traced the altered quotations from *The Pastoral Letter* and the German

bishops' reply printed in the national magazine *Forum*, proving that the text had been distorted to alter its meaning and be used in the anti-church campaign.

In the next section entitled *Kto to sprawdzi?/Who is to verify that?*, she analysed the "distortion of content" when sentences were cited out of context, taken from publicly unavailable documents and from the foreign press, e.g., an extract from the February 1966 issue of the Italian Jesuit journal *Civita Catholica*, in which she found a distorted translation. With her lawyer's eye, Stypułkowska meticulously compared and analysed the texts, highlighting inadequacies and concluding that, "Those behind the campaign against the Primate will not shrink from any slander" (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6). She cited accusations that appeared in the national press, saying that Wyszyński allegedly praised "Hitler's struggle against communism" (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6). Applying numerous quotations and corrections to defend the Church, she also argued: "We understand that Primate Wyszyński may not want to stoop to cheap polemics, but we believe that in the name of truth some things must still be made public" (Stypułkowska 1966b, p. 6). The examples of falsifications, omissions and distortions employed for the purposes of anti-church propaganda were intended to make RFE recipients aware of the methods developed by the Office for Religious Affairs in the People's Republic of Poland.

In another article in *Na Antenie*, entitled *Miesiąc pamięci zapomnienia/A Month of Oblivious Memory* (Stypułkowska 1966a, p. 5), Stypułkowska wrote about the anti-church campaign and political struggle during the 21st anniversary celebrations at Auschwitz-Birkenau and Stutthof. Outraged by "attacks on Church representatives" in speeches held at the Stutthof Cemetery, she wrote:

Last Sunday people from all corners of the country gathered at the Stutthof Cemetery. And what did they hear? Kliszka's rallying speech. Political vendettas and distorted history. False accusations and threats (Stypułkowska 1966a, p. 5).

Demanding a fair review of the events, she called it an act of "sacrilege that even atheists do not know", describing it as "un-Polish conduct". With social care from the Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy only available to a "chosen few", she demanded remembrance for the survivors, arguing that, "All those who went through hell deserve the full protection of the state" (Stypułkowska 1966a, p. 5). She supported her opinion with the example of former concentration camp prisoners in France, who received a high pension from the government. She also asked about war reparations owed to Poland, and the moral and material responsibility for this issue in the People's Republic of Poland. Standing up for the disadvantaged, Stypułkowska recalled debates on lowering the retirement age for concentration camp prisoners, while lamenting the fact that only those "docile and subservient to Moczar's line" were deemed worthy of merit by the Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy (Stypułkowska 1966a, p. 5).

Since RFE's religious programmes were not only ceremonial in nature, but also addressed issues of Church-state relationships, Stypułkowska did not shy away from alluding to the socio-political situation in the country in her broadcasts.

On cultural heritage and history

Stypułkowska's historical and biographical broadcasts can be illustrated with two examples. The first is a reportage entitled *Vevey: Ostatni postój pana Henryka/ Vevey: Henry's Last Stop* (1963), an account of her journey to Vevey on Lake Geneva in Switzerland in search of memories and memorabilia of Henryk Sienkiewicz, who died there in 1916. Somehow justifying her visit, she opens the programme with a short talk to a tourist guide there, who appears to have no idea that Sienkiewicz died there. Next, she goes to the hotel where the Sienkiewicz couple spent their last moments together, describing in colourful detail its surroundings and the room they rented. She even finds an old guest book from 1915 with an entry by Sienkiewicz and his wife. In addition, she tells the audience that the funeral took place in November in a small Catholic church, and from a conversation with the local parish priest she learns that the novelist's body was kept in the church chapel, where a memorial plaque can be found today. In the church hang images of Our Lady of the Gate of Dawn and Our Lady of Częstochowa. The reporter wonders whether it was in Vevey that Sienkiewicz may have written his very last work entitled *Wspomnienie/Recollection*. In a local newspaper, she finds a note on his death, an obituary and an account of the funeral. Stypułkowska also quotes the Pope's words on the occasion that were printed in the press. The audience learns about the Sienkiewicz Fund established for orphans. On the trail of the writer, Stypułkowska finds herself in Freiburg, where she meets Alfons Bronarski, a professor of Slavonic studies and guardian of the Polish diaspora in Switzerland, whose account of the Sienkiewicz's final moments, written on 17 November 1916, she quotes on air:

At dinner time he beckoned his wife into the room from the dining hall where she had gone, and feeling unwell, he asked for a priest. He knew that death was imminent. Having no strength left to make his confession, he was given absolution, received Holy Communion and said a prayer with his family. He then asked to be left alone, but they refused. His head slumped against the pillows and he was gone. His last words included the regret: 'I have not lived to see Poland free' (Stypułkowska 1963b, p. 6).

The second example of a biographical-historical broadcast is *Król Stefan zmarł nagle/King Stephen died suddenly* (1965; Stypułkowska 1965, p. 2), which Stypułkowska produced in opposition to the controversial thesis that King Stephen Báthory had been poisoned put forward by Herman Zdzisław Scheuring in his posthumously published book *Czy królobójstwo? Krytyczne studium o śmierci króla Stefana Wielkiego Batorego/Was it a Regicide? A Critical Study on the Death of King Stephen Báthory the Great* (London 1964). Adopting the role of a genuine investigative journalist, Stypułkowska asks a series of probing questions, searching for answers in the available sources and literature on the subject, and presenting the events against the historical and political background of late 16th century Poland. Particularly interested in the king's final days, she depicts them in a manner that verges

on sensationalism, citing a number of speculations. She lists eleven scenarios and known medical diagnoses, probably taken from the above-mentioned book. Later, in a letter to the editor published in *Na Antenie*, she effectively defended herself against the allegations voiced by the author's widow, Zofia Scheuring, who accused her of appropriating the copyrights, the method of reasoning and all the quotations, thus "overshadowing the author of the book" (Letters to the Editor 1966, p. 8).

The last of the thematic blocks briefly discussed here portrays Stypułkowska as an intelligent tracer of historical events with a view to reconstructing the biographies of prominent Polish figures.

Conclusions

An analysis of the broadcasts produced by Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service that were also published in the monthly magazine *Na Antenie* reveals that there were far more contributions from male than female journalists. It can thus be surmised that Aleksandra Stypułkowska was among the few women there. Addressing difficult legal, socio-political and religious issues, she became not only a defender of the Church and of those wronged by the state in Poland, but also an inquisitive detective tracing selected biographical mysteries. An element naturally woven into her work was also literary issues. She often referred to the latest press publications, which showed her good knowledge of the press market and new releases. Her broadcasting style, creative approach, and journalistic talent conclusively place her among the outstanding women of Radio Free Europe's Polish Broadcasting Service.

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STRESZCZENIE

Audycje Aleksandry Stypułkowskiej w Rozgłośni Polskiej RWE

Zamierzeniem postawionym w artykule było ukazanie na wybranych przykładach aktywnej działalności publicystycznej i radiowej Aleksandry Stypułkowskiej (pseud. Aleksandra Mieczkowska) w Rozgłośni Polskiej RWE. Celem opracowania była odpowiedź na pytanie dotyczące najważniejszej problematyki poruszanej przez nią w eterze wraz ze swoistym sposobem argumentacji. W opracowaniu posłużono się analizą źródeł audialnych i prasowych. Przejrzano dostępne zeszyty miesięcznika *Na Antenie* (1963–1989) pod kątem wypowiedzi autorskich dziennikarki, stosując metodę analizy prasy wraz metodą jakościową. Ze względu na wymogi edytorsko-redakcyjne postawione przed artykułem wybrano tylko niektóre materiały prasowe. Pominięto liczne programy informacyjne i literackie, które należałoby omówić osobno. W publikacji uwzględniono także wyselekcjonowane źródła audialne dostępne w serwisie internetowym Radia Wolności metodą analizy zawartości mediów. Z zespołu audycji wzięto pod uwagę te, które zdaniem autorki były oryginalne pod względem tematycznym i różniły się gatunkiem dziennikarskim zgodnie z metodą *case study*. Chciano ukazać przy tym różnorodną formę publicystyczną uprawianą przez Mieczkowską. W artykule omówiono wypowiedzi o tematyce prawniczej, społeczno-politycznej i religijnej. Opracowanie stanowi przyczynek do dalszych dociekań.

Słowa kluczowe: Jadwiga Mieczkowska, Aleksandra Stypułkowska, Rozgłoszenia Polska RWE, audycje radiowe, *Na Antenie*

