

International scientific conference
“Freedom Was Born in Poland. »Solidarity« and Opposition Movements in
Central and Eastern Europe in the 1980s”
Warsaw, 9–10 September 2025

Programme

Day 1 – 9 September 2025

9:00 am – 9:30 am Start of the conference

Panel 1

9:30 am – 10:00 am Dr Sebastian Pilarski (Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw) *On the Road to Freedom. NSZZ “Solidarność” in the Years 1980–1989.*

10:00 am – 10:20 am Dr Grzegorz Majchrzak (Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw), *The Message of the First National Congress of Delegates of NSZZ “Solidarność” to the Working People of Eastern Europe and Its Reception Abroad.*

10:20 am – 10:40 am Dr Michał Przeperski (Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw) *The White Swan and the White Eagle. Was European Freedom Born in Poland in the 1980s?*

10:40 am – 11:00 am Discussion

11:00 am – 11:20 am Break

Panel 2

11:20 am – 11:40 am Dr Andrzej Grajewski (“Gość Niedzielny”), *What Was the Influence of the “Solidarity” Movement in Poland (1980–1981) on Societal Attitudes in the Soviet Union? Methodological Challenges and an Attempted Answer.*

11:40 am – 12:00 pm Prof Nikolai Ivanov (University of Opole), *“Solidarity” and Soviet Dissidents: Attempts to Establish Cooperation.*

12:00 pm – 12:20 pm Dr Marzena Grosicka (Institute of National Remembrance, Kielce Branch), *Disinformation Activities Conducted by the Telegrafnoje Agentstvo Sovetskogo Soyuzu against NSZZ “Solidarność” in December 1980. A Case Study.*

12:20 pm – 12:40 pm Discussion

12:40 pm – 1:20 pm Break

Panel 3

1:20 pm – 1:40 pm Dr Burkhard Olschowsky (Federal Institute for Culture and History of Eastern Europe in Oldenburg), *NSZZ “Solidarność” from the Perspective of Workers and Authorities in the German Democratic Republic.*

1:40 pm – 2:00 pm Dr Sebastian Drabik, *Communist Propaganda against NSZZ “Solidarność” and the Opposition in the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia in the 1980s.*

2:00 pm – 2:20 pm Prof Dr hab. Mirosław Szumiło (Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw / Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin), *“Stopping the Polish Plague”. The Czechoslovak Authorities and NSZZ “Solidarność” in 1980–1981.*

2:20 pm – 2:40 pm Discussion

2:40 pm – 3:00 pm Break

Panel 4

3:00 pm – 3:20 pm Michal Klima (Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in Prague), *Poland as an Inspiration for Czechoslovak Independent Circles.*

3:20 pm – 3:40 pm Dr Peter Jašek (The Nation’s Memory Institute in Bratislava), *Contacts Between the Solidarity Opposition in Poland and the Slovak Opposition in the 1980s.*

3:40 pm – 4:00 pm Attila Apor (Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest / Trianon Museum), *History of the Duna Kör (Danube Circle). Environmental Protection as an Alternative in the Activities of the Hungarian Opposition in the 1980s.*

4:00 pm – 4:20 pm Discussion

4:20 pm – 4:40 pm Break

4:40 pm – 6:00 pm Panel discussion entitled “»Solidarity« – Inspiration and Hope: The Resistance of the Nations of Central and Eastern Europe to the Communist System in the 1980s” with the participation of:

dr. Peter Jašek, Historian of the Institute of National Memory (Slovakia)

dr. Réka Földváryné Kiss, Chairwoman of the Committee of National Remembrance (Hungary)

dr. Kamil Nedvědický, Deputy Director of the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (Czech Republic)

Moderated by: Dr hab. Cecylia Kuta, prof. UP JP II (Institute of National Remembrance ,Cracow Branch/ Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow)

Day 2 – 10 September 2025

Panel 5

9:00 am – 9:20 am Dr Daniel Filip-Afloarei (Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile), *Ceaușescu and “Solidarity” – An Impossible Comparison.*

9:20 am – 9:40 am Dr Klejd Këlliçi (University of Tirana) *The Triumph of the Counterrevolution. NSZZ “Solidarność” in the Perspective of the Albanian Authorities.*

9:40 am – 10:00 am Dr Karolina Skobejko (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw), *Gdańsk Seen from the South. The Reception of “Solidarity” in the Yugoslav Media in the 1980s.*

10:00 am – 10:20 am Discussion

10:20 am – 10:40 am Break

Panel 6

10:40 am – 11:00 am Dr hab. Patryk Pleskot, Prof UR (Institute of National Remembrance, Warsaw Branch / University of Rzeszów) *The Visit of the NSZZ “Solidarność” Delegation to Japan in 1981 as a Manifestation of the Union’s International Activity. A Case Study.*

11:00 am – 11:20 am dr Sebastian Pilarski (Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw), *Andrzej Słowik’s Illegal Stay in the West in the Context of Efforts to Affiliate NSZZ “Solidarność” with International Trade Union Centres.*

11:20 am – 11:40 am Dr Monika Komaniecka-Łyp (Institute of National Remembrance, Cracow Branch), *Contacts between the Solidarity Opposition and Representatives of the West in the Polish People’s Republic during the 1980s.*

11:40 am – 12:00 pm Discussion

12:00 pm – 12:20 pm Break

Panel 7

12:20 pm – 12:40 pm Dr Arkadiusz Kazański (Institute of National Remembrance, Gdańsk Branch) *“Charter ’84” and “Message to the Subjugated Nations of Central Europe ’87”. How the Underground Factory Commissions of NSZZ “Solidarność” on the Gdańsk Coast Fought for Independence.*

12:40 pm – 1:00 pm Dr Monika Litwińska (Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw), *On the Eve of the Great Change. The International Human Rights Conference in Mistrzejowice in 1988 as a Forum for the Exchange of Ideas, Experiences, and Projects of the “Solidarity” Movement and Other Opposition Organisations from Central and Eastern European Countries with Representatives of the Free World.*

1:00 pm – 1:20 pm Dr hab. Cecylia Kuta, Prof UPJPII (Institute of National Remembrance, Cracow Branch / Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow), *“Printing out Freedom”: The Influence of “Solidarity” on the Development of the Independent Publishing Movement in Central and Eastern Europe, 1980–1989.*

1:20 pm – 1:40 pm Discussion

1:40 pm – 2:20 pm Break

Panel 8

2:20 pm – 2:40 pm Dr Filip Gańczak (Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw), *“A Drowning Man Will Clutch at »Solidarity«”. Talks Between the Authorities of the German Democratic Republic and “Solidarity” in 1989–1990.*

2:40 pm – 3:00 pm Dr Artur Brożyniak (Institute of National Remembrance, Rzeszów Branch), *The Fall of the Communist System in Poland and Kazakhstan. An Attempt to Compare the Processes of Seizing Power.*

3:00 pm – 3:20 pm Dr Adam Chmielecki (NSZZ “Solidarność” / Foundation for the Promotion of “Solidarity”), *The Participation of NSZZ “Solidarność” Activists and Structures in the Democratisation of the Polish Political System at the Turn of the 1980s and 1990s, and Their Support for Democratisation Processes in Other Central European Countries.*

3:20 pm – 3:40 pm Prof Dr hab Krzysztof Brzechczyn (Institute of National Remembrance, Poznań Branch / Faculty of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań), *The Fall of Communism and the Political Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe in the Thought and Political Activity of “Fighting Solidarity”*.

3:40 pm – 4:10 pm Discussion and summary of the conference