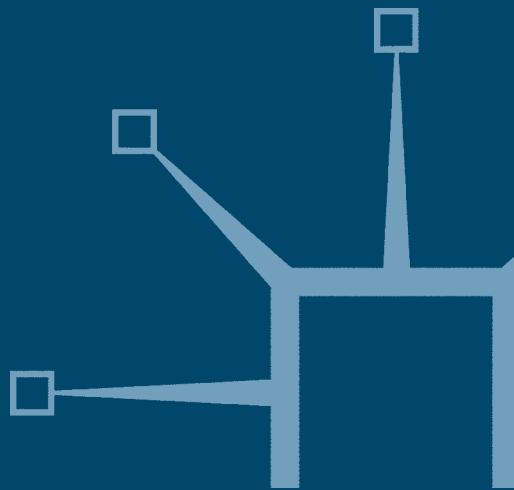


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Civil War in Poland, 1942–1948

Anita J. Prazmowska



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Preface

The study of the origins of the communist regime in Poland has attracted the attention of scholars during recent years, but they have been faced with the consequences of the inconsistent analysis which was all that was allowed during the communist period. The wartime period was presented as, on the one hand, a battle between the London government and the underground movement loyal to it, and on the other, the progressive forces led by the PPR in occupied Poland. Unfortunately the result of this government-sanctioned approach to recent history has been far from what might have been expected. While the official view could not be challenged, the alternative view, which could be neither put forward nor properly investigated, took root. Thus the general perception has been that during the course of the war left-wing and progressive programmes had not been discussed, while the London government and the Home Army underground were seen as patriotic. The relationship between the complex political debates of the wartime period and the anti-communist underground after the war has been largely ignored. The communist regime thus bears a heavy responsibility for not merely attempting to distort the study of its origins, but has also indirectly contributed to the unchallenged alternative approach to the subject in which the roles of good and evil were merely reversed.

During the Gorbachov period, Soviet-sanctioned policies allowed for the discussion of 'blank areas' in contemporary history, and for the first time made it possible for a fuller study of the relationship between Soviet objectives and the complex underground movements that emerged during the war. During the period which followed, Polish historians have been able to investigate ex-Soviet archives. The archives of the London government-in-exile and the exiled political and military leadership, which had been previously available, have recently attracted a more discerning and questioning scholarly community.

The result is that it is possible to approach the question of wartime resistance and plans for post-war Poland knowing that the majority of documents are now available. The composition of the London government-in-exile, its aims and plans to return to Poland after the cessation of hostilities have been now studied in detail. Likewise, its relationship to the underground movement in occupied Poland has been