

Tomasz Czarnota

(Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7702-9053>

Access to Archival Holdings in the Archives of the Communist Party on the Example of the Archive of the Voivodeship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in Lublin

*Udostępnianie zasobu w archiwach partii komunistycznej
na przykładzie Archiwum Komitetu Wojewódzkiego
Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej w Lublinie*

ABSTRACT

The exploration of the research topic of the access to archival holdings collected by the communist party in Poland results from the need to capture the party's approach to this task, considered today as one of the most important functions of historical archives. The direct reason for initiating research in this area was a complete lack of literature on the implementation of this function by the Archive of the Voivodeship Committee of the PZPR in Lublin and the poor state of research on the same issue with regard to the PZPR archives from other centres and on a national scale.

In the course of the research proceedings, questions were asked about the reasons, practices, extent and recipients of this task at the AKW in Lublin. The research employed deductive, inductive and statistical methods. The following types of sources were used to analyse the issue: internal standards of the leadership of the PZPR regulating the area of making the resources available in its archives, minutes from the meetings of the heads of the archives of the PZPR voivodeship committees taking into account the problems of making the documents available and cyclical reports prepared by the heads of the AKW in Lublin.

Making the resources available evolved from a restrictive approach to relative liberalisation within several decades of the existence of AKW in Lublin. The manifestation of the liberalisation was that over time, users also included members of other parties and non-partisans in addition to the dominant number of party members (employees of the party apparatus and activists). In terms of numbers, the second place was taken by students of various universities and the third place was taken by researchers. The AKW in Lublin was visited on average by twenty to sixty users per year. The increased frequency of their visits to this archive was often associated with important anniversaries of the par-

ty for which the celebrations were being prepared. On the other hand, it is possible that the decrease in the number of visits in some cases was related to the social and political crises in the country, such as December 1970 and the introduction of martial law in Poland. Making archival materials available to external users throughout the entire existence of the AKW in Lublin, i.e. from the 1950s to the 1980s, was subject to rationing. Access to documents was granted by the secretary of the Voivodeship Committee responsible for the propaganda sector. This was meant to prevent unauthorised persons from being provided with information that could jeopardise the image of the PZPR and its current policy. The majority of the research topics carried out by the users of the AKW resources in Lublin were those that directly or indirectly affirmed the activities of the party and the communist government, for example the history of youth organisations, the activities of the UB, MO and ORMÓ, and the consolidation of the communist government in Poland.

The general conclusion of the findings is that the archives of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin served primarily the needs of the party. They contributed in particular to the development of a propaganda useful version of its own history and the history of other socio-political organisations, institutions and circles, which in the period of the People's Republic of Poland were heavily influenced by the party.

Key words: archives of voivodeship committees of the PZPR, access to archival resources, Voivodeship Committee of the PZPR in Lublin, users of archival resources

If any task of archives can be said to reflect the political relations in the state, and in particular serves as the measure of civil liberties, it is certainly the task of making resources available. The boundaries of these freedoms, in turn, are determined by the scope and conditions under which they are exercised, as well as the number and nature of the restrictions on access to archives. On the other hand, research topics which may be realised thanks to archives allow us to discover the assumptions of the historical policy pursued in a given country. Although the issue, or more broadly: the objectives of archive users result at least partly from their own interests and the needs of the institutions they represent, archives, especially in non-democratic countries, have a considerable impact on them, for example through permissions granted to access their resources.

The author presents a range of issues connected with making archives available to the public, somewhat perversely in relation to the archives of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), a party which can hardly be recognised as an advocate of any freedoms, including the freedom to conduct scientific research. Until now, including the period up to 1989, the issue of making archival resources available in the archives of the voivodeship committees (Polish: *Archiwum Komitetu Wojewódzkiego*, AKW) of the PZPR has rarely been discussed. At the same time, observations made on this subject are usually rather succinct¹. What is more, there are no such references at all

¹ See W. Horst, *Kancelarie i archiwa Centralnego Komitetu Wykonawczego Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Partii Robotniczej i Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej*

with regard to the archives of voivodeship committees of the PZPR created after the administrative reform in 1975. The general information contained in this article concerning the availability of resources in the archives of the aforementioned party is contained in normative acts issued on an ad hoc basis by the party's governing bodies and in the minutes of briefings or meetings held for the heads of the Records Departments/AKW of the PZPR. To illustrate the important details related to the practical implementation of this function in a specific chronological and territorial context, the author used information on the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin, which to some extent reflect what was happening in other facilities. The information comes primarily from reports drawn up by this archive.

To be more precise, the author would like to point out that making resources available, according to the definition used by Dariusz Grot, means allowing interested recipients, basically those identified by name, to have access to documents indicated by them². For this reason, other forms of using archival holdings have been omitted, including the issue of copies, certificates of party affiliation or employment, etc. The issue of using the materials by AKW staff to prepare papers, articles, materials for exhibitions (catalogues) and source publications, which was connected with popularisation activities and supporting the so-called ideological and educational work, was also omitted.

MAKING ARCHIVAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN LIGHT OF PZPR LEADERSHIP STANDARDS

As mentioned above, the access to documents kept in the archives of the PZPR was, like any other dimension of its activity, defined by the party leadership. Their decisions were issued as resolutions, guidelines, instructions and regulations, fully or partially devoted to this area. It should be noted that the norms on making archival materials available are not numerous, especially when compared to other issues related

Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej (1944–1990), Warszawa 2006, p. 242 (in relation to the execution of this function by WHP/ZHP/CA KC PZPR archives see *ibidem*, pp. 239–247); H. Kozłowska, *Wojewódzkie archiwa partyjne i ich działalność informacyjna w 1974 r.*, 'Z pola walki' 1975, 4 (82), pp. 265–269; A. Moćko, *Byłe Archiwum Komitetu Wojewódzkiego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej i jego zasób*, in: *50 lat Archiwum Państwowego w Białymstoku. Księga pamiątkowa*, eds. S. Iwaniuk et al., Białystok 2003, p. 63; K. Nobis, *Archiwum Komitetu Wojewódzkiego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej w Kielcach*, 'Archiwista Polski' 1998, 2 (10), p. 33.

² D. Grot, *Ku przeszłości otwartej. Dostępność archiwów państwowych w Polsce w latach 1918–2014*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 54–55.

to the work of archives (e.g. the selection of files and party archiving institutions, the problems of team boundaries and resource development). This is not a coincidence, but a result of the level of importance set for this task in comparison to others. Some of the normative acts relating to making archival materials available lay down the basis for this task and are of a general nature, while others cover more detailed or even minor technical details connected to the use of archives³.

As set out in a 1972 document defining the tasks and structure of the PZPR archives, the archival resources were to serve the needs of the party, the state and the citizens, as well as the development of science, culture and national economy⁴. The order in which these tasks are presented seems to clearly indicate the main purpose of this resource, which was primarily to serve the party. Activities aimed at satisfying the needs of scientific communities were undoubtedly intentionally placed in the background. This issue was addressed in a similar fashion in normative regulations published in the several following years. According to the Instruction on Accepting, Processing and Making Files Available in the AKW of 1976, archives from their resources were to be made available for the needs of party bodies and apparatus, offices and institutions, as well as for scientific and research purposes and popularisation of the history of the Polish workers' movement⁵. A similar description appears in the guidelines on the operation of the archives of the voivodeship committees of the PZPR (Polish: *Komitet Wojewódzki PZPR*, KW PZPR), which were compiled 10 years later⁶. On the other hand, the decision of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the PZPR (Polish: *Komitet Centralny PZPR*, KC PZPR) on the party archives of August 1984 to make the documentation of the PZPR, the Polish Workers' Party (Polish: *Polska Partia Robotnicza*, PPR), the Polish Socialist Party (Polish: *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna*, PPS) and all other parties and workers' organisations available should serve scientific and research needs, popularisation, as well as ideological,

³ These include making microfilms as well as personal and memorial materials available. See the Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie [hereinafter: APL], KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, sygn. 4292; *Archiwa komitetów wojewódzkich PZPR. Zbiór przepisów*, Warszawa 1969, pp. 77, 82.

⁴ *Ibidem*, ref. no. 4212, Zadania i struktura archiwów PZPR (projekt), [luty 1972], sheet 67.

⁵ Archiwum Akt Nowych [hereinafter: AAN], KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXIII-292, Instrukcja w sprawie przyjmowania, opracowania i udostępniania akt w archiwach KW PZPR – załącznik do Wytycznych CA KC PZPR w sprawie działalności archiwów KW PZPR, Warszawa 1976, p. 56.

⁶ *Ibidem*, Wytyczne CA KC PZPR w sprawie działalności archiwów KW PZPR, Warszawa 1986, p. 69.

educational and organizational work⁷. A clear shift in the vectors can be seen here. In contrast, regulations constituting an appendix to the 1986 guidelines mentioned above listed scientific and research objectives in the first place among the prerequisites for making 'archival materials, memoirs, photographs and other materials' available by the AKW of the PZPR, and then specified popularisation, dissemination and ideological-political and organisational work of the party⁸. One could formulate a hypothesis on the basis of the provisions of the two latter standards that the exposition of scientific objectives before – and not, as previously, after – the party's internal needs in the 1980s reflects a certain evolution of the hierarchy of objectives, which were satisfied by making the archives of the PZPR available to the public. On the other hand, there is a noticeable inconsistency in the provisions of other standards and in the general approach to this issue (see the guidelines of 1986), suggesting that until the very end of the party's existence, its leadership had not given up its hesitations regarding the main role of the aforementioned archives, i.e. the statement that their main task would be to support scientific and research activities. The manifestations of the reluctance to take such an unambiguous stance can be seen in other, further quoted, sources of information illustrating the problem of making party archives available.

As mentioned above, some of the standards described this function in more detail, taking into account the principles and mode of its implementation. The issue of using the resources of the Records Department of the voivodeship committees of the PZPR was included in a dedicated instruction, which most probably dates back to 1949⁹. Section 6 of the instruction states that employees of the departments of voivodeship committees, *powiat* committees (Polish: *Komitet Powiatowy*, KP) etc. were entitled to access the archives on the basis of written permissions of the respective head. The instruction also provided such an opportunity to scientific workers, representatives of the central [sic] party press, etc., on the basis of a written referral from the Department of Party History (Polish: *Wydział Historii Partii*, WHP) at the PZPR Central Committee. Users were obliged to provide the purpose of borrowing in advance (e.g. scientific work). The use of the files was to take place on the spot, i.e. in the Records Department itself or, op-

⁷ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXIII-1, Uchwała BP [KC PZPR] w sprawach archiwów partii, sierpień 1984, no pagination.

⁸ *Ibidem*, ref. no. XXIII-292, Przykładowy regulamin dla korzystających ze zbiorów archiwum KW PZPR – załącznik nr 2 do Wytycznych CA KC PZPR w sprawie działalności archiwów KW PZPR, Warszawa 1986, p. 73.

⁹ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4284, Instrukcja o składnicach akt przy KW PZPR, no date, sheets 1–23.

tionally, within the building of the voivodeship committee. The search for files in the warehouse room was the sole responsibility of the warehouse personnel. One distinctive aspect was that both individual files and entire volumes were made accessible, depending on whether the former were loosely or permanently attached to other files. It was forbidden to remove individual documents from the borrowed files or to make copies without the permission of the competent party authorities. It was forbidden to borrow damaged files (as well as means of registration and confidential and restricted files). However, this reservation was limited only to taking them outside the department premises – they could be used on the spot. The instruction did not provide for the possibility that the head of a Records Department might refuse to make files available due to their physical condition. Files were released together with an access card, in which the borrower had to confirm the fact of receiving the file with their handwritten signature and specify the purpose of using it. The head of the Records Department was obliged to check the file before and after it was made available in order to verify its completeness and state of preservation. The user was responsible for the condition of the borrowed files. The instructions also contain a description of the procedure to be followed in the event of damage to the accessed files or failure to return them after a certain period of time.

The transformation of the Records Departments into the AKWs coincided with a comprehensive regulation of the way in which the resources were made available. It was described in draft regulations for using the voivodeship committees' resources developed most probably at the end of 1961 in the Institute of Party History (Polish: *Zakład Historii Partii, ZHP*) at the PZPR Central Committee¹⁰. The final version of the regulations, which did not differ from the draft as far as the basic assumption are concerned, entered into force on 1 January 1962¹¹. The granting of access to the archives was subject to the consent of the propaganda secretary of the voivodeship committee, issued on the basis of a written referral from the university or institution employing the user. It sanctioned the procedure of granting permission for the use of archives by propaganda secretaries or heads of the propaganda department of the voivodeship committee (this issue is discussed further in the article). The referral was to include the subject of the paper, the purpose of the use of the archives, the time

¹⁰ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXII-461, Regulamin dla korzystających z materiałów AKW PZPR, no date (1961?), no pagination.

¹¹ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4090, Regulamin dla korzystających z materiałów AKW PZPR w ..., no date, pp. 74–76.

frame of the intended research and the specification of the material to be made available. The secretary's consent was also required for a planned publication of archival sources. Only archival material that was ordered and documented, regardless of whether it was an original or a copy and of its type, was made available. Materials in bad condition or having special value were to be made available only exceptionally and after meeting additional conditions indicated by the manager of the AKW. The resources were to be made available only in the archives designated for this purpose – taking the files outside the KW headquarters was forbidden. Lending forms were used for ordered materials. It was expected that users would fill out specifications contained in the files and be offered microfilms or photocopies if the archive had them at their disposal. Other conditions included the prohibition of making unauthorised facsimiles using carbon paper or other prints. The AKW head was obliged to check the condition of the lent resources, both before and after they were used by the user. The provisions of the regulations were to apply to all users of the archive without exception. It is worth mentioning that both in the final version and in the mentioned draft regulations the necessity of applying a careful procedure when making archives available to users other than KW employees was clearly emphasised¹². The application of the provisions of the regulations in the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin was unequivocally confirmed by its head¹³.

The provisions of the regulations for users of the AKWs were modelled on the contents of the regulations for the ZHP archive (AZHP) at the KC, which entered into force on 1 October 1958¹⁴. However, it was slightly more extensive and contained a few provisions that did not appear in the regulations intended for the AKWs. These included a reservation concerning access to archival holdings created before 22 July 1944. Moreover, it should be stressed that the regulations granted the authorisation to use the AZHP's resources to its head. There was also a distinction between the conditions under which documents could be made available to persons living in Warsaw and elsewhere – the latter could take them from the AZHP to their place

¹² This is indicated by point XIV, which is worded identically in both texts. It states that in the case of persons from outside the KWs, archival materials may be prepared to be made available by prior agreement of the interested party with the head of a given AKW. It is worth noting the use of the term 'prepared', which suggests an earlier selection within the files to be made available.

¹³ APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 296, Informacja o pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie, wrzesień 1968, sheet 26.

¹⁴ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXII-372, Regulamin dla korzystających z materiałów archiwum ZHP przy KC PZPR, no pagination.

of permanent residence through local archives and libraries authorised to do so. Loose materials could be made available each time in a quantity not exceeding 0.1 linear metre, subject to strict control during release and return. The procedure for releasing and accepting returned archival resources was also different due to the more extensive structure and more numerous personnel of the AZHP (it involved former employees of the AZHP Archival Resources Division and the person on duty in the reading room). The regulations also included several time frames for the execution of file orders.

In 1976, a new version of the regulations was introduced for the users of the resources of the AKWs¹⁵. The points concerning the procedure for granting access, types of resources made available, conditions and restrictions regarding their use (including making copies available instead of originals, provided that an AKW had them at its disposal, and the ban on making independent copies), to a large extent replicated the provisions of the earlier version of the regulations, and the differences were insignificant¹⁶. The new thing was that the conditions of making personal files available were regulated. They could be used for the needs of PZPR bodies and staff – only materials concerning the deceased were to be made available for scientific and research purposes. This version of the regulations also included the procedure of using resources from other archives transferred to an AKW¹⁷. Incidentally, the issue of bringing files from another archive to an AKW and using them in its reading room was regulated on the basis of previous regulations in this area introduced in 1966¹⁸.

In 1986, a new version of the sample user regulations was introduced along with a new version of the guidelines on the activity of archives of the voivodeship committees of the PZPR¹⁹. Most of the solutions contained therein resembled the provisions known from its previous version. The few

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, ref. no. XXIII-292, Przykładowy regulamin dla korzystających ze zbiorów archiwum KW PZPR – załącznik nr 6 do instrukcji w sprawie przyjmowanie, opracowania i udostępniania akt w archiwach KW PZPR stanowiącej załącznik do Wytocznych CA KC PZPR w sprawie działalności archiwów KW PZPR, Warszawa 1976, pp. 71–73.

¹⁶ One such difference was the point providing for the voivodeship committee secretary to grant access to the archives to party activists and pensioners on the basis of a submitted application. *Ibidem*, p. 71.

¹⁷ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXIII-292, Przykładowy regulamin dla korzystających ze zbiorów archiwum KW PZPR – załącznik nr 6 do instrukcji w sprawie przyjmowanie, opracowania i udostępniania akt w archiwach KW PZPR stanowiącej załącznik do Wytocznych CA KC PZPR w sprawie działalności archiwów KW PZPR, Warszawa 1976, p. 74.

¹⁸ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4086, Sporządzanie i wypożyczanie akt z obcych zbiorów archiwalnych [instrukcja], 1966, sheets 3–4.

¹⁹ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXIII-292, Przykładowy regulamin dla korzystających ze zbiorów archiwum KW PZPR – załącznik nr 2 do Wytocznych CA KC PZPR w sprawie działalności archiwów KW PZPR, Warszawa 1986, pp. 73–77.

new modifications included granting the right to give permission for access to AKW resources to the head of the facility. KW secretaries responsible for the ideological/propaganda department kept their rights, but it was clearly stated that the procedure was to be conducted on the request of the heads of the AKWs. These provisions extended the control powers of the latter officer in relation to the archives entrusted to his custody.

The written regulations regarding the method of making the resources of the PZPR archives available included in addition to the standards in the strict sense, correspondence on this topic. As it concerned individual issues, we will examine only a few examples. In June 1961, the deputy head of the ZHP asked all KW propaganda secretaries to assign appropriate rooms for reading rooms to the users of AKWs' resources²⁰. The fact that such a letter was sent seems to indicate that such premises were not available at that time in most facilities. In February 1964, the same officer, having analysed information from the last AKW inspections, pointed to the inappropriate practice of providing readers with access to confidential archives²¹. He reminded the heads of the facilities that the provision of contemporary party materials has a political aspect in addition to the scientific one: 'This forces us to exercise a great deal of caution in providing access to contemporary party archives.' Therefore, archivists were obliged to always check the documents 'in terms of their content and usefulness for a given topic' before they made them available. A resolute condition was set out: 'Under no circumstances should entire sets of materials be made available, but only selected documents, depending on the subject of the work and the user.' Making confidential and personal material was strictly forbidden. It was also added that the consent to access documents granted by a KW propaganda secretary does not exempt the AKW heads from carrying out a thorough analysis of the documents that were to be made available.

MAKING RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN LIGHT OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF AKW HEADS

The issue of making resources available in the AKWs of the PZPR was also discussed and agreed upon during some central meetings organised for the employees of the historical/archival sector of the voivodeship apparatus

²⁰ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4214, Pismo zastępcy dyrektora ZHP KC do sekretarza propagandy KW PZPR w Lublinie z 26 VI 1961, sheet 123.

²¹ *Ibidem*, ref. no. 4213, Pismo zastępcy dyrektora ZHP do kierowników AKW PZPR z 15 II 1964, sheet 2.

of the PZPR. We might say that the content of the recorded minutes reflects the approach of party archivists to the performance of the task much more precisely than the established standards. At the first meeting of history clerks of the voivodeship committees of the PZPR at the headquarters of the WHP at the PZPR Central Committee in Warsaw in March 1949, its head, Tadeusz Daniszewski, strongly stressed the need to increase party vigilance and observe professional secrecy when he spoke about the nature of the work of a history clerk²². This could be interpreted as a call for special care in the use of historical documents and for protecting them from outsiders who were not trusted by the party. At the same time, efforts were made not to neglect the possibility of using these documents for propaganda purposes. At the briefing of voivodeship instructors of party history in July 1950, in the discussion on archival works, it was stressed that the operation of the reading room 'is heading in the direction of making the materials of the workers' movement available to various institutions, such as radio, film and others'²³. During the briefing of heads of the KW Records Departments in November 1954, the attendants were made aware of the fact that they should proceed very cautiously with regard to making the resource available. Persons from outside the KWs could obtain access to the documents only after presenting a letter of referral signed by a KW secretary, and even then could not access all materials. Employees of the Records Departments were instructed to read the documents carefully before they made them available to the interested party, and also to communicate with the WHP before they made them available to the interested party. It was highlighted that the access to the Records Departments (in particular storage rooms) was restricted to their employees only²⁴. At a similar briefing in November 1955 it was stressed that under no circumstances should disordered material still packed in parcels be made available²⁵. The issue of making archival resources available was discussed yet again at a meeting held at the end of November 1960. The heads of the KW Records Departments restated that the rules of using files by readers, i.e. which of them and to whom the files could be made accessible, had not yet been defined²⁶. In response, AZHP Head An-

²² AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. 237/XXI-30, Protokół z odprawy instruktorów Historii Partii KW PZPR w dn. 7 XII 1949, sheet 51.

²³ *Ibidem*, Protokół z odprawy instruktorów historii partii z województw oraz pracowników politycznych WHP KC w dn. 14 VII 1950, sheet 94.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, Protokół z odprawy kierowników Składnic Akt KW i Komitetów Miejskich PZPR w dn. 3-4 XI 1954, sheet 188.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, Protokół z odprawy kierowników Składnic Akt KW w dn. 3-4 XI 1955, sheet 219.

²⁶ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4287, Informacja o naradzie kierowników Składnic Akt KW PZPR w dn. 29-30 XI 1960, sheet 23.

drzej Janowski explained that the rules adopted in state archives should be applied in this matter (i.e. presentation of a referral from a university or institution and releasing only prepared files), but with increased caution. As he pointed out, it was to be kept in mind that: 'we are the archives of the party'²⁷. At a meeting in May 1961, the heads of the KW Records Departments were made aware of the need to arrange a decent reading room or at least a comfortable desk for the users. It was stated that 'it should be a matter of honour for each department head'²⁸. Much more extensive rules regarding access to files and methods of work in the archival reading room were established during a meeting of the AKW heads in November 1961. Maria Meglicka, a speaker representing the AZHP, drew the attention of the audience to the need for special vigilance, attention and care in making PPR and PPS files available due to their historical and political 'freshness'. Referring to the provisions of the regulations for the users of the resources of the AKWs of the PZPR, which were receiving final touches, she indicated that the archives could be made available only on the basis of referrals from home institutions or universities presented by potential users. They were to be approved in writing each time by the propaganda secretary of a given KW. Only in special cases, for example when dealing with an application for a party pension, could they give consent for personal access to the archives to applicants without a referral, but only on the basis of submitted applications. The AKW heads were obliged to provide information, consultation and advice to the interested parties. Before granting access to the files, they had to skim through the content and check the number of documents in the file (no paging requirement was mentioned). If there was a need to copy or photograph files, the heads were obliged to make arrangements and obtain a written consent from the propaganda secretary of the KW. If the user intended to publish an entire document from the AKW resources, they had to obtain a separate permission from the secretary of the KW. It was also necessary to make sure that authors indicated the location of the sources, i.e. the AKW resources, in their works. M. Meglicka mentioned the need to set a permanent workstation for readers and to prepare a separate cabinet (preferably an armoured one) for the temporary storage of files made available in a given period, as well as to agree on a fixed time (preferably morning hours) for handling matters related to the access to files with a KW propaganda secretary. She also recalled that strict observance of the regulations

²⁷ *Ibidem*, sheet 25.

²⁸ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4287, Ogólne informacje o wynikach i organizacji pracy terenowych Składcnic Akt – załącznik do informacji o naradzie kierowników Składcnic Akt KW PZPR w dn. 11–12 V 1961, sheet 40.

to control the relations between the readers and the AKW staff was necessary. Compliance with this requirement was supposed to be 'a great help during this difficult stage of work'²⁹. The issue of making resources available, with which the AKW heads came into contact more and more often in addition to [sic] their main job, was mentioned once again during this meeting. This situation was especially influenced by the upcoming celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the creation of the PPR. It was pointed out that the significant increase in interest in the files on the part of historians and party activists resulted in file handling consuming a 'great margin of time'. Again, hopes were expressed that the introduction of AZHP's regulations on making files available would be very helpful for the AKW staff. Other problems associated with access to the file were also raised. Concerns were expressed in relation to the fact that department heads often did not have sufficient knowledge about the purposes for which party apparatus employees, including heads of Party History Offices (Polish: *Referat Historii Partii*, RHP) of the KWs, used the materials made available to them. Other alarming symptoms included cases of loss of borrowed files, which took place in the AKW in Lublin³⁰. There was also a case where an RHP head returned the borrowed files in such a condition that they had to be put in order again³¹. The above statements are significant because they reflect the mistrust of the heads of the Records Departments even in relation to officers of the PZPR apparatus, who were suspected (not without reason) of not being able to properly handle documents made available to them. In the further part of the meeting, it was underlined that making the files available to former party activists writing their memoirs and accounts on behalf of the RHP, as well as the realisation of student applications interested in writing their master's theses on sources from the AKWs had led to a situation where: '[...] the scope of work has increased significantly and our comrades do not believe it is possible to meticulously count documents before they are made available and after they are returned by the reader'³². The aforementioned A. Janowski pointed out that making contemporary archival materials available is an extremely responsible matter. He reminded the audience that they were not simply archivists – they were party archivists and this fact determined and

²⁹ *Ibidem*, Informacja o naradzie kierowników AKW PZPR z 9–10 XI 1961, sheet 10.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, sheet 12.

³¹ The reorganisation was carried out at the expense of the time originally allocated to inventory activities. See APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za II kwartał 1958 r., sheet 12.

³² APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4287, Informacja o naradzie kierowników AKW PZPR z 9–10 XI 1961, sheet 13.

conditioned their far-reaching caution³³. He stressed that, apart from the employees of the PZPR apparatus, the main users of the AKW resources should be doctoral students, while master's students should be treated more cautiously. He referred to the need to make documents available to former activists writing memoirs or accounts, as archives should be interested in obtaining these materials later. What he meant was that this could be a way of expanding the resources. He added that also film studios could access materials on the spot, preferably photocopies, not originals. However, at the same time he admitted that due to the harmful effect of photocopying on the condition of the resources, care in making photocopies was recommended. Under no circumstances were they allowed to be lent out. In his answer to the detailed questions asked in the meantime, A. Janowski described making the archives available to members of 'sister organisations' and nonpartisan organisations as permissible, but only with the consent of a propaganda secretary³⁴. The issue of sharing archival materials was raised once again during the meeting of the AKW heads in December 1964, in connection with the matter related to securing prohibited archival materials³⁵. This name was used for documents and printed materials which, for political reasons, were not made available in accordance with general rules³⁶. In the course of the discussion on this problem it was stated (not for the first time) that making contemporary archival materials available is, above all, an extremely responsible matter, especially for party archivists. It was noted that even in the AZHP, despite many years of experience in document sharing, there were many difficult dilemmas involved. It was found that they were comparable in the case of the AKWs. The following conclusion was produced in relation to the above prohibited materials: 'It seems that it will not be considered anti-science activity on our part if, in the course of putting the files in order, prohibited materials are transferred to separate folders or briefcases. Inventory cards must be drawn up in duplicate: one, without the sheets specifying the prohibited materials, made available to the public and another, complete, for archive purposes. We have to know the scientific and political activities of the archives users. Of course, we will treat university professors in a different way than master's candidates – and journalists in a still different way'. The meeting of the AKW heads in June 1966 was marked only by a short reference to this subject, which emphasised the fact

³³ *Ibidem*, sheet 14.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, sheet 15.

³⁵ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4076, Informacja z narady kierowników AKW w dn. 3–4 XII 1964, sheet 87–88.

³⁶ For prohibited materials and their handling in the Archive of WHP/ ZHP/ ZHP/ CA PZPR see W. Horst, *Kancelarie i archiwa*, pp. 244–247.

that the AKW heads were solely responsible for making the files available³⁷. An interesting and significant opinion, also concerning the issue of making archival resources available, was delivered during a similar meeting in November 1966 by AZHP Head A. Janowski. Speaking mainly in the discussion on the methods of organising and removing duplicate files, he uttered the following memorable words: 'In a sense, although we try to avoid it at any cost, we are servants of science; it is us who are obliged to prepare the material for scientific research for scientists or researchers'³⁸. It is worth noting that the PZPR archives have both confirmed the role of the archives of science and stressed the objections that accompanied this statement. The question of the scope of making the documents available arose during the meeting of the AKW heads in November 1973³⁹. Józef Jakubowski, head of the File Department of the Polish People's Republic and the KW archives in the Central Archive of the PZPR Central Committee (Polish: *Centralne Archiwum KC, CA KC*) stated that unprepared files could not be made available for research purposes, his main argument being that researchers were obliged to provide reference numbers. However, such documents could be made available for the purpose of other types of works, especially those commissioned or inspired by the voivodeship leadership of the PZPR. He pointed out that a decision on the scope and form of access to the PZPR files was always made by the KW secretary on the basis of the opinion of the AKW head. At the meeting in November 1974, it was repeated once again that access to the files took place only with the consent of the KW secretary to whom the AKW was subordinate⁴⁰. Apparently, this procedure wasn't always followed. The issue of making the resources available was not discussed at the meetings of the AKW heads later on.

MAKING FILES AVAILABLE IN THE AKW PZPR IN LUBLIN

This section describes the procedure of making the resource available in the Records Department and then in the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin. During the first few years of the PZPR's existence, the former barely functioned, and no archivist was employed. The Records Department

³⁷ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4076, Informacja z narady kierowników AKW w dn. 7–8 VI 1966, sheet 126.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, Informacja z narady kierowników AKW w dn. 17–18 XI 1966, sheet 133.

³⁹ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4286, Informacja o naradzie kierowników AKW PZPR z 22–23 XI 1973, sheet 92.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, Informacja z narady kierowników AKW w dn. 26–27 XI 1974, sheet 96.

was supervised by the party history instructor⁴¹. Their main task was to examine and popularise the history of the party and the traditions of the workers'/revolutionary movement in principle until 1944. Anna Pelc held this position in the KW PZPR in Lublin in the years 1949–1950. Her main responsibility consisted in collecting the source base necessary for the realisation of the above task, i.e. memories, documents produced by the structures and activists of the SDKPiL (Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania), KPP (Communist Party of Poland), KPZU (Communist Party of Western Ukraine), PPR, photographs etc. The tasks related to the Department were carried out in a limited scope. It is known that she served unspecified clients, at the same time complaining to the WHP that their influx interferes with her other duties⁴². Some of them were sent by the WHP itself⁴³. She did not really want to perform the duties of an archivist and noted that 'an archivist has not been selected so far and this work is not being carried out'⁴⁴. However, the reason of a kind of stagnation in the functioning of the KW Records Department in Lublin, including in the context of making the resources available, was more fundamental. According to the then applicable concept of party resource deployment, the holdings were to be stored entirely in the WHP archive at the KC PZPR. It was also there that fundamental research on the 'revolutionary movement' was to be carried out⁴⁵. Only copies of selected documents were to remain in particular voivodeships, and all the originals, including the PPR and PPS files, were to be sent to Warsaw eventually⁴⁶. These copies left in the individual voivodeship committees were to be used by the officers of the historical division, i.e. party history clerks such as Anna Pelc and the members of the Voivodeship Party History Commissions (Polish: *Wojewódzka Komisja Historii Partii*, WKHP), in a limited scope (in comparison with the 'headquarters'). For this reason,

⁴¹ T. Czarnota, *Kierownictwo pionu archiwalno-historycznego w Komitecie Wojewódzkim PZPR w Lublinie w latach 1948–1956*, in: *Elity komunistyczne w Polsce*, eds. M. Szumiło, M. Żukowski, Warszawa–Lublin 2015, p. 425.

⁴² APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 2722, Pismo Wojewódzkiej Komisji Historii Partii [hereinafter: WKHP] do WHP przy KC z 12 VII 1949, sheet 12.

⁴³ For example, in April 1949, he asked her to contact Stanisław Pawłowski and 'collect for him' [sic] materials on the 'Borów murder'. See APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 2722, Pismo z WHP do A. Pelc z 11 IV 1949, sheet 8.

⁴⁴ APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 2722, Pismo A. Pelc do WHP przy KC PZPR z 8 IV 1950, sheet 22.

⁴⁵ W. Horst, *Kancelarie i archiwa*, p. 198.

⁴⁶ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. 237/XXI-30, Stenogram z narady WHP w dn. 15 III 1949, sheet 28; *Ibidem*, ref. no. 247/XXI-28, notatka w sprawie instruktorów historii partii w KW PZPR z 20 II 1950, sheet 14.

the central leadership of the party initially showed hesitation in their approach to the possibility of using documents from the resources of the voivodeship committees of the PZPR by third parties not connected with the party apparatus or activists. This was not only for fear that others (such as the employees of the Institute for the Modern History of Poland at the Presidium of the Council of Ministers) would prove incapable of 'appropriately highlighting the formation of the labour movement in Poland'⁴⁷. Reconstruction of party history was considered to be one of the elements of party work, reserved by nature for its members⁴⁸.

But the then local officers of the history division did not have sufficient qualifications (and, as it turned out, the time) to write historical studies in the true sense of the term⁴⁹. In this respect, nothing had changed in the party apparatus since the times of the PPR⁵⁰. With this in mind, parallel efforts were made to expand the circle of party provenance documents users to include specially selected people who did not come from a narrow circle of officers operating permanently 'along the party's history line'. History clerks at the voivodeship committees of the PZPR were instructed by the WHP to mobilise local historians, writers and teachers to cooperate in examining certain [sic] events, popularising party history in the form of lectures, talks, etc., publishing articles and appropriately prepared memoirs in the press, and preparing biographies of workers' movement activists⁵¹. This was in line with the concept of 'managing' the work of scientists working on the history of PPR, which had been developed earlier at the central level⁵². In order to carry out these activities, it was necessary to make the resources collected in the KW available to them to a certain extent. This is confirmed by the work plan of the WKHP at the KW PZPR in Lublin for the second quarter of 1949, which included a point concerning the selection of local representatives of the above-mentioned professions for cooperation to elaborate on and popularise particular events related to the history of the labour movement. It should be mentioned

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, ref. no. 237/XXI-30, Protokół z odprawy instruktorów historii partii z województw oraz pracowników politycznych WHP KC w dn. 14 VII 1950, sheet 85.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, Protokół z odprawy instruktorów historii partii z województw oraz pracowników politycznych WHP KC w dn. 24 II 1950, sheet 82.

⁴⁹ The issue of how they developed 'revolutionary event calendars' or published contributory 'articles' on individual events, guerrillas or activists in the press has been omitted in this paper.

⁵⁰ W. Horst, *Archiwum Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Partii Robotniczej w latach 1945–1948*, 'Teki Archiwalne' 2001, 6 (28), p. 106.

⁵¹ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. 237/XXI-30, Wskazówki dla referentów terenowych WHP PZPR, [1949], sheet 77.

⁵² W. Horst, *Archiwum Komitetu*, p. 88.

that 'conferences' were to be held out of concern for the expected outline of the history, aimed at instilling the appropriate 'attitude' in the said representatives⁵³. This evidently shows that there was a certain reluctance towards allowing those people to access any documents without preparing them properly beforehand. However, the WHP was not fully convinced of the idea of holding these conferences. Therefore, A. Pelc was advised to maintain contact with representatives of these circles, as well as to list them and collect detailed data on each of them. Ultimately, they were to work on documents and materials supplied to them by the facility⁵⁴. Another precautionary measure was to search for candidates for co-workers among the PZPR members. Teachers and librarians interested in the history of the labour and people's movement able to examine and popularise it were to be selected at a meeting of the Lublin WKHP planned for February 1950. Following the previous plans, it was assumed that the conference would be held in order to 'instil an attitude in them'⁵⁵.

Considering the above, it can be stated that the possible sharing of documents at the disposal of the voivodeship structures of the PZPR was to be closely related to the creation of research and popular works initiated by its history division. The plan was that they would be written by persons carefully pre-selected and prepared by the officers of this division. Therefore, a clear conclusion can be drawn as to the position to be taken with regard to the provision of archival information to people outside the party apparatus and the circle of party activists. This process was to be both controlled and regulated. In this respect, despite some modifications, the situation was to continue until the end of the activity of the PZPR archives.

The implementation of the objective aimed at attracting volunteers to join the work of creating a history of the party in Lublin continued for too long. The work plan of the RHP at the KW PZPR for September 1950 mentioned the initiation [sic] of a campaign to involve 'historians and scientists' interested in modern history in cooperation in researching the history of the labour movement in Poland. A list of detailed candidate profiles was to be drawn up. The RHP work plan for the following month, in turn, provided for a conference for teachers and librarians interested in the labour and people's movement, at which – there was a recurring point – they were to receive an 'attitude' regarding the ways in which

⁵³ APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 2722, Plan pracy WKHP na kwiecień, maj, czerwiec [1949], sheet 6.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, Pismo z WHP do A. Pelc z 22 IV 1949, sheet 9–10.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, Plan pracy WKHP na luty, marzec i kwiecień 1950, sheet 20.

the events in the history of the movement were to be examined and popularised⁵⁶. The results of these attempts were poor. The RHP report for the third quarter of 1950 states that after consultations with the President of the Regional Board of the Association of Polish Academic Youth, the President of the Voivodeship Board of the Association of Polish Youth (Polish: *Związek Młodzieży Polskiej*, ZMP), the POP (Polish: *podstawowa jednostka partyjna*, basic party unit) secretary at Maria Curie Skłodowska University and a representative of the Education Department at the Presidium of the Voivodeship National Council in Lublin, only a few profiles of persons selected to work on the history of the Polish labour and people's movement had been collected. Action in this field was promised to be continued⁵⁷. However, later documents do not confirm this, which indicates that it did stop eventually. The changes, including personnel replacement, taking place over the next few years, in the functioning of the history division of the KW PZPR in Lublin, could have had an impact on this aspect. The RHP heads involved since the mid-1950s were graduates of the historical studies at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, prepared for carrying out independent research based on the collected archival materials⁵⁸. As a result, there was no longer any need to resort to outside help in recording the party's history. However, the research on the revolutionary movement was not the only element of the PZPR's historical policy in which the resources of its archives were gaining importance. The party also wanted to promote the achievements of its ideological predecessors, which were supposed to legitimise its rule widely among the society. This is why, among other things, it was decided, as has already been mentioned, to include representatives of the media in these activities, which involved making documents from party archives available to them. The visitors of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin included the national press (this topic is referred to further in the article). Incidentally, this particular group of users turned out to be relatively the most troublesome from the point of view of the management⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, Plany pracy RHP na wrzesień i październik 1950, sheets 29, 30.

⁵⁷ APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 2708, Sprawozdanie z pracy RHP przy KW PZPR w Lublinie za III kwartał 1950 r., 5 X 1950, sheet 26.

⁵⁸ Zob. T. Czarnota, *Kierownictwo pionu archiwalno-historycznego w Komitecie Wojewódzkim PZPR w Lublinie w latach 1957–1975*, in: „Polska Ludowa” 1944–1989 – *wybrane problemy historii politycznej i społecznej*, eds. D. Litwin-Lewandowska, K. Bałękowski, Lublin 2016, p. 167.

⁵⁹ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4212, Dane o wykorzystaniu zasobu AKW [PZPR] w Lublinie z 30 IX 1971, sheet 30. The study stressed that although press, radio and television representatives used the archival resources the least often of all professional groups, at the same time: ‘working with journalists and editors is not the easiest thing to do’.

No documents illustrating the meanders of making the resources of the Records Department available during the first five years of operation of the KW PZPR in Lublin have survived. Neither the work plans nor the 1950–1951 RHP reports⁶⁰, nor the correspondence of that time contain any reference to this issue. If anyone used the documents gathered there or in the resources of the party history instructor, it was probably KW employees or party activists connected with the WKHP or the Propaganda Department, looking for materials for press releases or for ideological training. The use of the resources of the Records Department can be first seen in the preserved source material from 1954. The needs of the users were twofold. Certain documents of party provenance were for internal party use, for example to get acquainted with retrospective statistical data or to establish the circumstances of actions taken against some party members⁶¹. But it was also the time when the documents from the Records Department began to be used for research and press information purposes. In April that year, they were most probably used by three people recommended by the Propaganda Department of the KW to design a brochure for the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (Polish: *Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego*, PKWN). It is worth noting that the head of this department requested that they be given access to the party files concerning the activities of 'our party' starting from the so-called liberation, i.e. during the passing decade⁶². In the same year, the first secretary of the KW allowed the representative of the *Sztandar Ludu* newspaper to access and reproduce the files. Most probably, some aspirants of the Institute of Social Sciences at the KC, who were writing candidate papers on the agricultural reform and *The Struggle of the PPR for the Hegemony of the Working Class in the National Liberation Movement* (Polish title: *Walki PPR o hegemonię klasy robotniczej w ruchu narodowo-wyzwoleńcym*), also obtained his consent⁶³.

⁶⁰ From 1951 to 1953, the party history instructor of the KW PZPR in Lublin (at that time Jan Stelmach) performed his duties to a limited extent, and then this position was abolished. Subsequent plans and reports began to be prepared only after the RHP was re-established in mid-1955, when the process of delimitation of tasks between the said unit and the Records Department began, which was completed essentially in 1957.

⁶¹ APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie (II), ref. no. 4078, Pismo Eugeniusza Ciurusia do Archiwum [Składnicy Akt] KW z 5 III 1954, sheet 38; *ibidem*, pismo Włodzimierza Maksymiuka do sekretarza KW z 2 VI 1954, sheet 47.

⁶² *Ibidem*, Pismo z Wydziału Propagandy KW do kierowniczkii Składnicy Akt KW z 16 IV 1954, no pagination. The persons referred to in the letter were Waldemar Kurzejewski, Jerzy Słotwiński and Stanisław Mazur.

⁶³ *Ibidem*, Letter Pismo I sekretarza KW do Archiwum [Składnicy Akt] KW z 28 V 1954, no pagination; *ibidem*, pismo kierownika działu pedagogicznego INS przy KC do sekretarza propagandy KW z 1 X 1954, sheet 31; *ibidem*, pismo dyrektora INS przy KC do I sekretarza KW z 10 XI 1954, sheet 32.

The group of people who had obtained permission to use party files was expanding slowly. In February 1955, the first positive application for access to the archives was granted a student (in this case a history student from Maria Curie-Skłodowska University)⁶⁴. He wrote his master's thesis entitled *Walki Gwardii Ludowej i Armii Ludowej na Lubelszczyźnie z okupantem hitlerowskim (lata 1939–1944)* [*The Struggle of the People's Guard and the People's Army against the Nazi Invaders in the Lublin Region (1939–1944)*]⁶⁵ under the supervision of a candidate of historical sciences Jerzy Danielewicz. As a side note, the student who applied for access to the archives had an additional political advantage in addition to the recommendation of his supervisor/academic at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University – their membership in the ZMP⁶⁶. According to the information from March 1955, the resources of the Records Department of the KW were used by 'comrades' from the Institute of Social Sciences, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, the ZMP and the press. The access permit was then granted by the first secretary of the KW or the head of the Propaganda Department⁶⁷. In September that year, the first secretary of the KW PZPR in Lublin was asked by the WHP to grant access to the files and provide assistance to Izydor Wapniarski, a former member of the KPP and a current member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). The abovementioned man was coming to Lublin to collect materials on 'the revolutionary struggle of workers and peasants of the Lublin region'⁶⁸.

Information on making documents from the resources of the Records Department of the KW PZPR in Lublin available appears in its work plans and reports only since 1957. The point concerning user service was specified in the work plan for the third and fourth quarter of that year (the plan for the second quarter did not provide for this yet)⁶⁹. An identical and equally succinctly composed point was included the report for the period from

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, Podanie S. M., studenta II roku historii w UMCS do kierownika Wydziału Propagandy KW z 12 II 1955, sheet 33. The letter contains an authorisation by the head of the department addressed for the head of the Records Department, containing the permission to provide the applicant with access to the archives.

⁶⁵ Archiwum UMCS w Lublinie, ref. no. 2/7, Praca magisterska S. M. pt. 'Walki Gwardii Ludowej i Armii Ludowej na Lubelszczyźnie z okupantem hitlerowskim (lata 1939–1944)', p. 87; *ibidem*, opinia promotora o pracy magisterskiej S. M. z 7 VI 1955, no pagination.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, karta studenta S. M. Wykaz egzaminów i kolokwiiów, luty 1952 r., no pagination.

⁶⁷ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. 237/XXI-32, Sprawozdanie Krystyny Mirgos z wyjazdu do Składnicy Akt w Lublinie z 25 III 1955, sheet 95.

⁶⁸ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4103, Pismo zastępcy kierownika WHP przy KC PZPR do I sekretarza KW w Lublinie z 26 IX 1955, sheet 2.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 2359, Plany pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za II, III i IV kwartał 1957 r., sheets 150–152.

the second to the third quarter of that year. In the third quarter of 1957, Helena Szawdzin, head of the Records Department, lent Jan Naumiuk, head of RHP at KW, and dr. Zygmunt Mańkowski from Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS) materials from the German occupation, which they needed to write studies concerning this period, which they were currently working on. In addition, a group of users who most likely used files on the spot was also served at the time⁷⁰. This group included three 'comrades' from the ZHP at the KC, at least one journalist from *Sztandar Ludu*, *Nowa Wieś* and the Polish Radio respectively, a member of the Polish-Soviet Friendship Society and an officer from the Militia Voivodeship Headquarters, as well as other users who were not specified in detail⁷¹. The reports for the fourth quarter of 1957 and the first quarter of 1958 only indicate that users of the Records Department were served on an ongoing basis⁷². The report for the second quarter of 1958 completely omitted the issue of user service, while the report for the following quarter of the year mentions ongoing user service and contains the following note: 'Comrades from the KW, who were writing various papers and evaluations, used the resources a lot'⁷³. In the report for the last quarter of 1958, it was written that 'there was an unusually high number of users in connection with the 40th anniversary [of the creation of the Communist Party of Poland – T.C.]'⁷⁴. The same information was given in relation to the first half of 1959. At that time, the visitors were 'comrades' from the KW, the Voivodeship Party Propaganda Centre, and [sic] 'strangers'⁷⁵. A large number of users was also recorded in the second half of that year, 'due to the preparation of [reporting and] electoral conferences'⁷⁶. 'An increased inflow of Records Department users' was observed in May and June 1960. The interest of the party apparatus representatives was connected with the plenary sessions of the KW and the preparation of the celebration of

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie od 1 IV do 31 X 1957, sheet 146.

⁷¹ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXII-463, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za III kwartał 1957 r., no pagination.

⁷² APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za IV kwartał 1957 r. i I kwartał 1958 r., sheets 5, 6.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za II kwartał 1958 r., sheet 12; AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXII-463, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za III kwartał 1958 r., no pagination.

⁷⁴ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za IV kwartał 1958 r., sheet 15.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za I półrocze 1959 r., sheet 14.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za II półrocze 1959 r., sheet 19.

the 22nd of July. The second group of users consisted of students who collected materials for their master's theses⁷⁷. The report for the second half of 1960 mentioned the persistently high number of users in the Records Department of the KW. Quite typically for her, the head of the Records Department did not miss the opportunity to complain that serving users was time-consuming for the staff⁷⁸. The fact that serving archive users could take even the majority of the working time of archivists at current archives was not unusual⁷⁹. The above statement illustrates the approach of the head of the Records Department of the KW PZPR in Lublin to the performance of this task, which in the best case can be described as not very enthusiastic. However, it should be noted here that, because of these or other factors, a number of years later, she clearly changed her approach, admitting that she considered the provision of documents to readers to be a very important part of her work⁸⁰. It is very possible that this was a reflection of a more common trend, which was also visible among other members of the party archivist circles.

Let us take a closer look at the amount of time spent by the staff of the Records Department of the KW PZPR in Lublin on serving its users. The reports from the first half of the 1960s show in considerable detail how much time it actually took – at that time these data were obligatory. In the first half of 1961, 20 days were planned for the preparation of files for readers, and 32 days were actually devoted to the task (H. Szawdzin)⁸¹. In the second half of this year, it was recorded that 43 out of 45 days planned for this activity were completed, and both H. Szawdzin (25 days) and Weronika Tywoniuk (18 days), assistant at the Records Department, participated⁸². In the report for the first half of 1962, a total of 80 days was planned for reader service, of which 60 were done⁸³. In the next half

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za I półrocze 1959 r., sheet 21.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za II półrocze 1960 r., sheet 23.

⁷⁹ E. Perlakowska, *Udostępnianie dokumentacji w archiwum zakładowym i składnicy akt – stan prawny i praktyka*, in: *Archiwa i archiwisci w dobie społeczeństwa informacyjnego. Pamiętnik IV Powszechnego Zjazdu Archiwistów Polskich, Szczecin, 12–13 września 2002 r.*, vol. I, ed. D. Nałęcz, Szczecin 2002, p. 160.

⁸⁰ APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 296, Informacja o pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie, wrzesień 1968 r., sheet 25.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za I półrocze 1961 r., 29 VI 1961, sheet 28.

⁸² *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za II półrocze 1961 r., 14 I 1962, sheet 26.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za II półrocze 1962 r., 29 VI 1962, sheet 30.

of 1962, on the other hand, only half of the time was scheduled for the same task, i.e. 40 days but as many as 49 days were completed⁸⁴. This was probably due to the fact that the AKW staff were burdened with other tasks related to the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the PPR. In the first half of 1963, the head of the Records Department planned 60 days for reader service and achieved this objective. But archive clerk Helena Mazur completed only 3 days of the planned 30 days, which probably meant that for more than 3 months the position was vacant⁸⁵. The time for the preparation of the materials in the second half of 1963 was planned as follows: 60 and 30 days for the head of the AKW and the archive technician respectively. The former completed 64 days, the latter – 17 days⁸⁶. In the first half of 1964, the head of the AKW dedicated 30 days for preparing materials and making them available to readers in her and her subordinate's schedules. They managed to do 40 days and 32 days respectively⁸⁷. The fact that the limit of days dedicated to reader service was significantly exceeded could result (similarly as the shorter time planned for this work for the head of the AKW as compared to the previous year) from the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the 'people's' Poland. At that time, the AKW was carrying out a number of other related tasks. The number of visitors to the reading room (103 persons) was registered on that occasion. This information was not included in the report for the next six months of 1964. The number of days to be spent on operating the reading room was not stated either, but it was declared that the third and fourth quarters of the year were allocated for this purpose⁸⁸. Subsequent reports no longer contained information on planned and actual time spent on reader service. The 1965 report merely states that the preparation of documents for researchers and readers and their availability in the reading room was performed on an ongoing basis throughout the year, while the 1966 report mentions only the day-to-day operation of the reading room⁸⁹.

A few words of explanation should be devoted to the term 'preparing materials for readers'. It consisted of a series of different activities,

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, sheet 32.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za I półrocze 1963 r., 4 IX 1963, sheets 42, 43.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za II półrocze 1963 r., 13 I 1964, sheet 41.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za I półrocze 1964 r., 8 VII 1964, sheet 49.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za II półrocze 1964 r., 4 I 1965, sheet 45.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za 1965 r., 10 I 1966, sheet 56; *ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za 1966 r., 7 I 1967, sheet 64.

including removing files from the shelves and moving them from the storage room to the reading room and counting the sheets in the files (when they were returned, the number of the sheets was verified). File pagination was not used until 1973; the change in this respect was only brought about by clear recommendations of inspectors from the CA KC PZPR⁹⁰. On the other hand, as suggested by a reference in the report for the first half of 1961, a very important element which required extra diligence in the preparation of the files was their 'selection', that is to say, the pre-selection of files to be made accessible and the exclusion of those which should not be made available⁹¹. In her reports for 1970 and 1972, the head of the AKW explicitly mentioned the exclusion of restricted documents as one of her preparatory activities⁹².

The dynamics of the use of the AKW reading room can be seen on the basis of the data on the frequency of visits. In 1962 and 1963 it was visited 292 times by 62 users⁹³. Statistically, this would mean 146 visits per year. In 1967 (no data available from previous years) the AKW was visited 145 times by 25 users⁹⁴. Again, no data are available for the following few years, as only the total number of users was mentioned. They were recorded again only in 1973, and since then they were documented regularly until 1988. Data from this period is illustrated in the table below.

The above data is difficult to interpret, apart from the fact that the higher or lower number of users was not a clear indicator of how often the reading room of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin was visited. The relatively highest rates of visits were recorded in some years could have been due to the celebration (or preparations for the celebration during the previous year⁹⁵) of important anniversaries related to the establishment of the PPR, the PZPR or the outbreak of the Russian October Revolution.

⁹⁰ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXIII-294, Protokół wizytacji AKW PZPR w Lublinie w dn. 27–28 VI 1973, no pagination.

⁹¹ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118, Sprawozdanie z pracy Składnicy Akt KW PZPR w Lublinie za I półrocze 1961 r., 29 VI 1961, sheet 28.

⁹² *Ibidem*, Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za 1970 r. 20 I 1971, sheet 100; *ibidem*, ref. no. 4116: Sprawozdanie z pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie za 1972 r., 11 I 1973, sheet 15.

⁹³ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118, Analiza korzystających z AKW PZPR w Lublinie w latach 1962–1963, sheets 34–35.

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, Analiza korzystających z AKW PZPR w Lublinie w latach 1962–1963, sheet 34; *ibidem*, wykaz osób korzystających z zasobu AKW PZPR w Lublinie za 1967 r., 10 I 1968, sheets 72–74.

⁹⁵ As in the case of 1981, which preceded the 'centenary of the labour movement' in 1982, the celebrations of which were to involve the archives of the PZPR. See J. Durko, *Archiwa Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej*, 'Archiwa Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej. Biuletyn' 1981, 1, p. 9.

Table 1. The frequency of visits to the reading room of the AKW PZPR in Lublin in the period 1973–1988 (own study based on AKW reports)

Year	Number of visits	Number of readers
1973	345	24
1974	125	31
1975	153	59
1976	151	43
1977	128	53
1978	238	64
1979	174	37
1980	178	38
1981	226	37
1982	137	22
1983	102	25
1984	147	36
1985	132	48
1986	148	22
1987	292	25
1988	268	32
Total	2944	596

The work plan of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin for 1989 included a section on reading room service (i.e. preparation of materials for readers, checking the available materials and including them in the groups, as well as keeping records of readers)⁹⁶. From the beginning of 1989, however, the facility focused on taking over and securing the files of the gradually dissolving party, both from the KW departments and the structures of the whole voivodeship⁹⁷. In this situation, making the resources available had to be relegated to the background. The author has not found any documents containing information about the archives being made available in the last year of the existence of the PZPR.

⁹⁶ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXIII-322, Plan pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie na 1989 r., no pagination.

⁹⁷ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4100, Notatka informacyjna AKW PZPR w Lublinie z 24 XI 1989, sheet 24.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE USERS OF THE HOLDINGS
OF THE AKW PZPR IN LUBLIN

How many visitors actually used the holdings of the AKW and which social backgrounds did they represent? Some of the information related to this issue is contained in Table 1. Detailed data on this matter were documented, at first irregularly, from the 1960s onwards. The first analysis of the users of the archival holdings in the 1962–1963 period was carried out at the AKW in Lublin, most probably at the request of the Central Committee, in late 1963 and early 1964⁹⁸. It contained a list of user groups divided according to the criteria of occupation and party (organisational) membership. Out of the total number of 62 users, 12 research workers (19.3%), 11 employees of the political apparatus (17.7%), 21 activists (34%) and 18 students (29%) were identified. If we were to classify together researchers and students, on the one hand, and employees and activists of social and political organisations, on the other, the disproportions between them seem to be small, although the latter did predominate. Taking into account party membership of the users, the relevant data were as follows: PZPR members formed a 44-person group (71% of the total), one reader was a member of the United People's Party (Polish: *Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe*, ZSL) (1.6%), seven belonged to youth organisations (11%), and 10 users were non-partisan (16%). Unfortunately, data relating to the party affiliation of the AKW users were provided only occasionally. Another such list covers the period from 1957 to 1967. Among the users of the AKW holdings there were 113 members of the PZPR (75%), 6 members of the ZSL (4%), 10 members of the Socialist Youth Union (Polish: *Związek Młodzieży Socjalistycznej*, ZMS) and the Rural Youth Union (Polish: *Związek Młodzieży Wiejskiej*, ZMW) (almost 7%), 1 was a member of the Alliance of Democrats (Polish: *Stronnictwo Demokratyczne*, SD) (0.6%), and 20 were non-partisan (13%)⁹⁹. When compared, the data from both lists allow us to see a clear domination of users with a PZPR member (or candidate) ID, accounting for over 70% of all users of documents from the Lublin-based AKW. On the other hand, the number of non-partisan users, who do not constitute even 1/5 of the total, is hardly impressive, although, on the other hand, their share was by no means marginal. The reasons for this situation were probably complex; it does not seem that they should be attributed

⁹⁸ *Ibidem.*, ref. no. 4118, Analiza korzystających z AKW PZPR w Lublinie w latach 1962–1963, sheets 34–35.

⁹⁹ APL, KW PZPR w Lublinie, ref. no. 296, Informacja o pracy AKW PZPR w Lublinie, wrzesień 1968 r., sheet 26.

only to the party archives and the Propaganda Department of the KW that supervises them.

Detailed information on the professional structure of the users of AKW resources in a given year, excluding those applying for certification of membership in youth parties and organisations and performing tasks for the Voivodeship Party Control Commission and individual departments of the Voivodeship Committee, was first communicated in the second half of the 1960s. The table below provides an overview of this structure in the period from 1967 to 1988¹⁰⁰. It shows which professional groups used the holdings of the AKW most often. The last category, i.e. others, includes representatives of the professions who used archival materials relatively the least frequently. It comprised teachers, clerks, librarians, military men, militiamen, directors, publishers, employees of factories or enterprises, activists of social organisations and former activists/pensioners, and, incidentally, two students of unspecified schools.

The data presented in the table clearly show that the majority of the users belonged to the PZPR staff (POP members and individual committees were also included in this group), who represented almost half (47%) of all the users. These data do not give the full picture of the use of the resources of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin by the PZPR staff¹⁰¹. More than 1/5 of the users (22%) were students of various universities (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, the University of Warsaw, the University of Silesia in Katowice, the Kielce University of Technology, the Political-Military Academy, the Academy of Internal Affairs in Warsaw, Moscow State University, the University of Kiev) and institutions of higher education (e.g. the Higher School of Pedagogy in Katowice, Opole and Rzeszów, the Higher School of Social Sciences in Warsaw). Research workers (from the Polish Academy of Sciences, UMCS, the Medical University of Lublin, the University of Warsaw, the University of Szczecin, the AGH University of Science and Technology in Kraków, the Military History Institute, the Air Force University in Dęblin, the University of the Ministry of the Interior in Szczytno, the Academy of the Interior in Warsaw, the Military Academy of the Ministry of the Interior in Legionowo)

¹⁰⁰ It should be added that the data quoted refer to statistical users. In reality, the same people often came back in consecutive years, either because they continued the previous search or looked for sources for further topics.

¹⁰¹ The AKW kept records of the PZPR staff using its resources, but only of those who reached for administrative files (conferences, plena, executives). However, it did not record the use of the files of the departments or the problem committees of the Voivodeship Committee or the use of the press clippings and materials from the AKW library. APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4212, Dane o wykorzystaniu zasobu AKW [PZPR] w Lublinie z 30 IX 1971, sheet 29.

Table 2. An overview of the professional structure of the users of the resources of the AKW PZPR in Lublin in 1967–1988 (own study based on AKW user lists)

Year	all users	researchers	students	museum worker	journalists	PZPR staff	others
1967	25	9	8	2	-	6	-
1968	36	4	11	1	5	11	4
1969	25	3	5	-	4	3	10
1970	15	1	5	-	-	9	-
1971	20	1	11	-	2	2	4
1972	27	3	9	-	2	9	4
1973	24	6	6	-	3	2	7
1974	31	6	10	2	3	2	8
1975	59	4	6	2	2	38	7
1976	43	4	10	4	-	22	3
1977	53	3	16	3	-	24	7
1978	64	6	5	2	4	35	12
1979	37	5	4	-	1	24	2
1980	38	2	5	-	-	26	5
1981	37	8	8	-	-	20	1
1982	22	4	3	-	-	12	3
1983	25	1	10	-	-	13	1
1984	36	2	11	-	-	21	2
1985	48	5	13	-	-	29	1
1986	22	1	1	-	-	16	4
1987	25	8	2	-	-	13	3
1988	32	4	7	1	-	14	6
Total	744	90	166	17	26	351	94

constituted 12%. The remaining categories, i.e. journalists (approx. 3.5%) and museum workers (2%), constitute a small percentage among those who used archival materials. The rest was made up of various professionals. Naturally, the share of particular groups in the total number of users differed each year. The clearly visible exceptionally large representation of the party apparatus in 1978 was probably connected with the 30th anniversary of the PZPR. The lowest number of users of the resource was recorded 1971 (15 people), but it is also worth pointing out that the number dropped significantly in 1982 (22 persons – a decrease of almost 40% as compared to 1981), which may be related to the imposition of martial law not long before.

The diversity of users went hand in hand with the diversity of their needs related to the use of the holdings of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin. Table

3 below presents an overview of the most common objectives in the period from 1967 to 1988¹⁰². The following list does not include other, much less common intentions behind the use of the resources of the aforementioned AKW, such as preparing chronicles, short papers, documentaries, radio programmes, completing collections for halls of tradition, writing down accounts or memoirs or preparing for school history competitions.

Table 3. An overview of the most frequently observed objectives of using archival materials by the users of the resources of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin in 1967–1988 (own study based on AKW user lists)

Year	Habilita- tion dis- sertation	Doctoral disserta- tion	Master's thesis	Thesis	Monograph	Article	Exhibit	Current party work
1967	-	1	8	1	-	10	2	3
1968	-	-	7	3	2	2	3	12
1969	-	2	3	2	4	1	5	2
1970	-	1	4	1	-	-	-	8
1971	-	1	10	1	1	1	-	2
1972	-	3	8	1	3	3	-	8
1973	-	3	5	1	6	3	-	4
1974	-	2	5	2	2	-	3	2
1975	1	5	6	-	1	1	1	39
1976	1	5	9	1	2	-	3	21
1977	-	5	10	2	2	1	4	23
1978	2	3	4	1	4	2	6	32
1979	-	2	3	2	2	1	-	23
1980	-	4	6	3	1	-	-	22
1981	1	5	8	1	1	-	-	19
1982	-	4	2	1	1	-	-	12
1983	1	-	5	5	-	-	-	14
1984	1	2	2	9	1	-	-	20
1985	1	1	6	8	3	-	-	29
1986	-	2	-	1	2	-	1	11
1987	1	2	1	1	6	1	-	10
1988	-	3	6	1	2	1	1	12
Total	9	56	118	48	46	27	29	318

¹⁰² Similarly as in the case of the previous table, the data concern statistical users. The same people were sometimes included in consecutive lists as users collecting sources for their doctoral dissertations, master's theses etc.

The data in the table show a very clear advantage of the objectives related to the current party work. This leads to the conclusion that the main purpose of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin was primarily to satisfy the internal needs of party structures, headed by the Voivodeship Committee itself.

TOPICS OF STUDIES PREPARED BY THE USERS OF THE HOLDINGS OF THE AKW PZPR IN LUBLIN

The description of how the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin carried out its task of making files available should also specify the topics of studies which were written on the basis of the archival holdings. This issue seems to be much more diverse and complex than the professional structure of the users or the objectives they pursued. Many of the topics were individual and unique. Within this variety, however, it is possible to identify certain repetitive areas, upon which users of the archive touched relatively more frequently, at the same time indicating examples of research topics, which seem to be worth mentioning. Before 1967, only topics which were of interest to the users were analysed in the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin. According to a study written probably at the beginning of 1964, the visitors to the above mentioned facility in the period from 1962 to 1963 searched for sources on the following issues¹⁰³:

- the KPP and the KZMP (8 persons),
- the PPS (1 person),
- the resistance movement (12 persons),
- the people's movement (2 persons),
- the PPR (21 persons),
- the ZWM (5 persons),
- national councils (5 persons),
- trade unions (1 person),
- the PZPR (7 persons).

This rather general list suggests that the most popular topics were those focused on the resistance movement, the activities of the PPR committees (probably since 1944), and the activities of its 'ideological predecessors'. The list was supplemented by information that the accounts and memoirs of activists and members of the resistance movement were of great interest to the readers¹⁰⁴. The AKW of the PZPR in Lublin stopped making such lists

¹⁰³ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118, Analiza korzystających z AKW PZPR w Lublinie w latach 1962–1963, sheet 34.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem*, sheet 35.

for several years after preparing the one mentioned above. A systematic documentation of users' interests in reports was introduced only in 1968, with reference to the previous year, and continued until 1988. The analysis of the relevant lists shows that the subject of the greatest interest was the activity of youth, student and scouting organisations. In the period 1967–1988 it was studied by 59 users. The second place in this respect was taken by the activity of the Citizen's Militia (MO), the Office of Public Security (UB) and the Volunteer Reserve of the Citizens' Militia (ORMO), which in various contexts was of interest to 29 users. The same number of users (22 persons) took up the issue of the creation and consolidation of the communist government and worked on the biographies of famous PPR activists (most often the regional secretary, Michał Wójtowicz). This is confirmed by the information provided in the literature that the history of the PPR and the PPS as well as of the 'people's' Poland were almost the only matter of interest in the AKW¹⁰⁵. The functioning of the conspiratorial structures of the PPR, People's Guard (GL) and the People's Army (AL), which attracted 20 people, as well as the implementation of the agricultural reform and social and economic transformations of rural areas in the 'people's' Poland, which were of interest to 19 people, were also quite popular. More than 10 people also dealt with the problems of the KPP (KPZU, SDKPiL), guerrilla and resistance movement, as well as the activities of the PPR structures from 1944 to 1948. Due to the profile of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin, it seems rather obvious that its resources were used for exploring the above topics. The same is true when we consider that they obtained the full approval of the head of the facility and her superiors. But apart from these and a few other 'ideologically correct' issues (e.g. *The History of the 1st of May Celebrations, The Cultural Revolution in Poland in the People's Republic of Poland 1944–1956, Sztandar Ludu 1945–1948, The Influence of the PZPR, the ZSL and the SD on the Municipal National Council in Krasnystaw, The PZPR in WSK Świdnik*), archival materials stored there were also used to create works which, at least judging by their titles, did not have such a clear ideological tinge or even seem neutral in this respect¹⁰⁶. These would include, for example, monographs on the history concerning individual administrative units (e.g. the history of the Puławy and Włodawa Poviats), urban centres (e.g. the history of Kraśnik Fabryczny, Biłgoraj, Poniatowa, Frampol and Ostrów Lubelski), companies (Lubelska Fabryka Maszyn Rolniczych and its impact

¹⁰⁵ W. Horst, *Kancelarie i archiwa*, p. 242.

¹⁰⁶ It is not the author's role to judge the content of these works, nor to inquire into the methodological assumptions that their authors had. Still, there is no doubt that a study devoted to these issues would be an interesting reference and a kind of supplement to the matters presented in this article.

on the industry in the Lublin region, the activity of MPK and MPO), research and education institutions (the history of the Faculty of Law of UMCS, the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the Medical University, the Pedagogy High School in Zamość 1944–1969) and social organisations (e.g. the history of the Association of Children’s Friends). Thanks to the archives from the AKW in Lublin, the issues of the history of education in the Lublin region, the national identity of ethnic and national groups in connection with the assimilation of Polish political culture in the years 1944–1957, the functioning of Zamość periodicals and the evolution of the local agrarian structure, and even the history of parliament, were also explored. In 1968 and 1969, students (of the Political-Military Academy and UMCS) collected materials in the AKW PZPR in Lublin to prepare topics such as *The WiN Inspectorate in the Biała Podlaska Poviát* and *The WiN Inspectorate in the Zamość Poviát*¹⁰⁷. Finally, in 1988, a student of the Military Academy of the Ministry of the Interior researched the topic of the 1980 strikes¹⁰⁸. Although reasonable scepticism makes one doubt the research objectivity of the authors of these and some other of the above mentioned studies, the fact remains that the sources were used to analyse those topics with the consent of the propaganda secretary of the Voivodeship Committee.

* * *

Making resources available was only one of the many functions of the archives of the PZPR, combining the roles of historical and current archives (which in the latter case meant a natural orientation towards satisfying the needs of the party), and was generally pushed to the end of the list¹⁰⁹. In fact, the performance of this function depended to a large extent on the progress achieved in other areas (e.g. file examination). It was accepted, however, that this task was of a sensitive nature. For this reason, vigilance, caution and responsibility were recommended. All standards used were edited and oral explanations were given with this in mind. Considering the activities undertaken in this field for over three decades, one can see that

¹⁰⁷ APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4118; Wykaz osób korzystających z zasobu AKW PZPR w Lublinie za 1968 r. z 15 I 1969, sheet 82; *ibidem*, Wykaz osób korzystających z zasobu AKW PZPR w Lublinie za 1969 r., 5 I 1970, sheet 93.

¹⁰⁸ AAN, KC PZPR w Warszawie, ref. no. XXIII-322, Wykaz osób korzystających z AKW PZPR w Lublinie w 1988 r., 23 I 1989, no pagination; APL, KW PZPR (II) w Lublinie, ref. no. 4100, Wykaz osób korzystających z AKW PZPR w Lublinie w 1988 r., 23 I 1989, sheet 19.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. J. Jakubowski, *Naukowa działalność archiwów nie podlegających Naczelnej Dyrekcji Archiwów Państwowych i państwowych archiwów wyodrębnionych*, in: *Pamiętnik I Powszechnego Zjazdu Archiwistów Polskich, Przemysł 27–29 sierpnia 1986 r. Referaty i dyskusja, część I*, Warszawa 1991, p. 152.

initially (the Stalinist period) it was envisaged that only party officers or appropriately selected users with the right approach (writers, teachers, etc.) who were supposed to help write the history of the party were allowed to access the documents collected in the records departments of voivodeship committees. During the less oppressive stage of the People's Republic of Poland, however, procedures were established to ensure proper regulation of the archival holdings that were made available to a wider public and control over those to whom the resources were to be made available. As the figures show, the resources of the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin were used mainly by the employees of the party apparatus and its activists, as well as PZPR members recruited from other professional circles. Other groups were less numerous, but the number of both researchers and students and non-partisan users can hardly be considered marginal. Even the topics studied by the users of the documents stored in the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin, were mostly those, which the party was interested in researching and exhibiting. However, it must also be acknowledged that exploring research topics that were not saturated with Marxist-Lenin ideology was also possible. It cannot be denied that field archives of the PZPR contributed to supporting scientific and research activity by making their resources available¹¹⁰. The performance of this somewhat servant role towards science is proved by the figures relating to activities undertaken in this field, for example by the AKW of the PZPR in Lublin. Still, the figures and other arguments clearly show that the archives were not primarily oriented towards science or researchers. Their main task was on the one hand to satisfy the current needs connected with the functioning of party structures, and on the other hand to serve, in accordance with the declarations, as a link in the ideological battle of the PZPR¹¹¹.

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¹¹⁰ Of course, it cannot be overlooked that some directions of historical research were clearly preferred at that time, while others were definitely discouraged.

¹¹¹ Cf. J. Paszta, *Narada kierowników archiwów KW PZPR*, 'Z pola walki' 1979, 1 (85), p. 317.

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STRESZCZENIE

Podjęcie tematu udostępniania zasobu archiwalnego zgromadzonego przez komunistyczną mono-partię rządzącą w Polsce wynikało z potrzeby uchwycenia jej podejścia do realizacji tego zadania, uważanego współcześnie za jedną z najdonioślejszych funkcji archiwów historycznych. Bezpośrednim powodem zainicjowania badań w tym obszarze był całkowity brak literatury dotyczącej realizacji tej funkcji przez Archiwum Komitetu Wojewódzkiego PZPR w Lublinie i nikły stan badań nad tym samym zagadnieniem w odniesieniu do archiwów PZPR z innych ośrodków oraz w skali ogólnokrajowej.

W toku postępowania badawczego starano się odpowiedzieć na pytania o to, z jakich powodów, w jaki sposób, w jakim zakresie i na czyj użytek realizowano to zadanie w AKW w Lublinie. W badaniach zastosowano metodę dedukcyjną, indukcyjną i statystyczną. Do zanalizowania tytułowego zagadnienia wykorzystano następujące rodzaje

źródła: wewnętrzne normatywy kierownictwa PZPR regulujące sferę udostępniania zasobu w jej archiwach, protokoły z narad kierowników archiwów komitetów wojewódzkich PZPR uwzględniających problemy udostępniania dokumentów i cykliczne sprawozdania sporządzane przez kierowników AKW w Lublinie.

Udostępnianie zasobu w ciągu kilku dekad istnienia AKW w Lublinie ewoluowało od podejścia restrykcyjnego ku względnej liberalizacji. Symptodem liberalizacji było to, że w miarę upływu czasu wśród użytkowników obok licznie dominujących członków partii (pracowników aparatu partyjnego i działaczy) pojawiali się także członkowie innych stronnictw i osoby bezpartyjne. Pod względem liczebności na drugim miejscu byli studenci różnych uczelni, a na trzecim pracownicy naukowcy. W ciągu roku AKW w Lublinie odwiedzało średnio od dwudziestu kilku do sześćdziesięciu kilku użytkowników. Zwiększona częstotliwość, z jaką odbywały się ich wizyty w tym archiwum często wiązała się z przypadającymi na dane lata ważnymi dla partii jubileuszami, do których obchodów się przygotowywano. Z kolei spadek liczby odwiedzin w niektórych przypadkach mógł mieć związek z wybuchającymi w kraju kryzysami społeczno-politycznymi, takimi jak Grudzień '70 i wprowadzenie w Polsce stanu wojennego. Udostępnianie archiwaliów użytkownikom z zewnątrz praktycznie przez cały czas istnienia AKW w Lublinie, to jest od lat pięćdziesiątych do osiemdziesiątych XX w., podlegało reglamentacji. Zgody na dostęp do dokumentów udzielał odpowiedzialny za sektor propagandy sekretarz KW. Służyło to niedopuszczeniu do udzielenia osobom niepowołanym informacji mogących narazić na szwank wizerunek PZPR i jej bieżącą politykę. Wśród tematów badawczych realizowanych przez użytkowników zasobu AKW w Lublinie przeważały takie, które bezpośrednio lub pośrednio afirmowały działalność partii i 'władzy ludowej', np. historia organizacji młodzieżowych, działalność UB, MO i ORMÓ oraz utrwalanie władzy ludowej w Polsce.

Z dokonanych ustaleń płynie ogólna konkluzja, że zasoby archiwów PZPR, w tym AKW w Lublinie, służyły przede wszystkim potrzebom tej partii. Zwłaszcza opracowywaniu propagandowo użytecznej wersji historii jej samej oraz dziejów innych organizacji społeczno-politycznych, instytucji i środowisk, na które w okresie Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej partia wywierała przemożny wpływ.

Słowa kluczowe: archiwa komitetów wojewódzkich PZPR, udostępnianie zasobu archiwalnego, Komitet Wojewódzki PZPR w Lublinie, użytkownicy zasobu archiwalnego

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tomasz Czarnota – doctor of humanities, assistant professor at the Department of Archivistics and Auxiliary Sciences of the Institute of History of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, member of the LIBRA Society of Science and Culture, member of the Expert Committee of Social Archives. E-mail: tomasz.czarnota@poczta.umcs.lublin.pl.

