

JOLANTA KEPA-MĘTRAK

Corporate Newsletters – Birth, Development... and What Next? A Case Study

KEY WORDS

corporate newsletters, Poland, Kielce, the 20th century

ABSTRACT

For 40 years, since the early 1950s to the end of 1980s, corporate newsletters were an important element of the Polish media system. All major manufacturing facilities had their own periodicals, issued by editorial bodies which consisted mostly of amateur journalists. In this article, the author analyses in detail only one such title – “Głos Załogi” [Voice of the Crew] issued by the Kieleckie Zakłady Wyrobów Metalowych (Kielce Plant of Metal Products). She refers, however, to the situation of the entire country, to the standard rules and recommendations, giving other examples of corporate periodicals and their history before and after 1990. Attempting to answer the title question, the author concludes that a relic of the past often turns out to be a model for the present.

Under the protectorate of the PUWP

Corporate newsletters were being established in Poland since the early 1950s in great numbers. Their task was, among other things, to promote production achievements, display successes, persuade that the actions undertaken were just, and encourage to increase working efficiency. They did it all with great commitment and, supposedly, like efficiency.

The analysis of individual newsletters shows that weeklies predominated in the first decade. Monthlies were seen less often, quarterlies even more so. Comparing frequencies and volumes, it is hard to miss their relationship: the higher the frequency, the greater the circulation. Monthlies did not exceed 2,000 copies, nor did quarterlies, while the weeklies could reach 7,000 copies. The volume, to the contrary, grew as the frequency decreased.

In the following decade, the newsletters were supplemented, and oftentimes supported, by corporate broadcasting centres. The CC PUWP Department for Propaganda and Agitation (Pol. *Wydział Propagandy i Agitacji KC PZPR*) reported that in 1964 newsletters were being issued in more than 100 of the country's largest factories, and almost every plant had a

broadcasting centre¹. Monthlies were the prevalent form of newsletters then. Engineers and technicians working in production on one hand, and social workers and activists on the other were expected to fulfil the roles of editors and contributors, respectively. According to the CC data, the editorial offices should receive significant help from Voivodeship Committees (Pol. *Komitet Wojewódzki*), the editors should be invited to the party conferences, and sometimes to the VC plenary sessions. The CC PUWP itself organised conferences for the editors of newsletters and broadcasting centres. The tasks set out by the party were discussed there, achievements of some editors were presented, and the opportunities of influencing the workers were stressed². Some shortages, especially considering the technical equipment of the broadcasting centres, were discussed as well.

The analysis of the activities of individual corporate editorial boards did not always lead to satisfactory conclusions. A note of the CC PUWP Department of Propaganda from 1964 said directly that it was essential to strive to “overcome the impetuosity in editing newsletters and broadcasts”³. The editors were obliged to inform the crews on the economic situation of the plants and develop the labour emulation by showing how the labour heroes (Pol. *przodownik pracy*) and innovators worked. It was also stressed not to duplicate the everyday newspapers but to engage in polemics, in justified cases, having first asked the PUWP Factory Committee (Pol. *Komitet Zakładowy PZPR*) for approval. According to the CC, “the proper planning of the editorial work of newsletters and broadcasting centres [...] requires systematic help of the FC and WCC [Workers Council Conference (Pol. *Konferencja Samorządu Robotniczego – KSR*)]”. The help providing “factual and constructive” criticism was considered “strictly necessary”⁴. Newsletters and broadcasting centres were to be press organs of the Workers Council Conference, which had the authority to establish editorial staffs, approve the work plans, and evaluate their fulfilment.

In 1965, the Presidium of the Corporate Press Editors’ Club (Pol. *Prezydium Klubu Redaktorów Prasy Zakładowej*) associated with PJA [Polish Journalists’ Association] drafted work regulations for corporate editorial offices⁵. It stipulated that the editorial work should be

¹ AAN [The Central Archives of Modern Records], KC PZPR [CC PUWP], Wydział Propagandy [Department of Propaganda], sign. 237/VIII-878, c. 13.

² It was not only the conveyance of certain content which was important but also the used language. M. Głowiński dubbed it “newspeak”. Cf. M. Głowiński, *Nowomowa po polsku* [Newspeak in Polish], Warszawa 1990; *idem*, *Marcowe gadanie* [March chatter], Warszawa 1991; *idem*, *Peereliada* [The PRL-iad], Warszawa 1993, *idem*, *Mowa w stanie oblężenia* [Speech under siege], Warszawa 1996.

³ AAN, KC PZPR, Wydział Propagandy, sign. 237/VIII-878, c. 13.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ These regulations were printed in May 1966 by the Central Council of Labour Unions [Centralna Rada Związków Zawodowych] as *Zasady organizacji i działalności gazet zakładowych oraz prawa i obowiązki*

directed by an editorial board, composed of representatives of social and political organisations, factory management, and the most active authors and contributors. The members were to be approved by the PUWP Factory Council, from which the editors' activities received "content-related care"⁶. The editorial board was to be led by a chief editor of the newsletter. The editorial boards were also tasked with directing the work of corporate broadcasting centres. Editorial positions were strictly planned. Assuming that newsletters were issued on A3 size paper and had 4 pages, it was determined that bi-weeklies should be edited by 1–2 editors, ten-dailies by 2–3, weeklies by 3–4. In each case, the editorial staff was to have a secretary. An additional post was provided for the broadcasting centre. The salaries of the editors were to follow the levels set in the collective agreement⁷. They were given the opportunity to participate in all conferences and meetings, access to the information about the decisions of the corporate managers and leaders of the social and political organisations. They were to be appointed and removed by the resolution of the WCC, with the approval of PUWP FC and the Voivodeship Committee of Labour Unions (Pol. *Wojewódzka Komisja Związków Zawodowych*). The editors were to have flexible working hours, and the accounts were to be settled based on the quality and regularity of the issued newsletter.

It was the first document regulating the work of corporate editorial boards, which took all its elements into consideration. The status of corporate newsletter journalists was finally established, as were his rights and obligations. The *Zasady organizacji i działalności gazet zakładowych* were followed by the *Regulamin Komisji Kwalifikacyjnej i tryb przyjmowania członków SDP* in March 1969, where, among the "occupational groups according to professional specialties", the third place belonged to the "journalists employed in illustrated weeklies, as well as in professional and corporate press"⁸.

Already in the report on corporate newsletters prepared by the CC PUWP Department for Propaganda and Agitation in 1967, it was clear that, after the initial drawbacks and failed attempts to duplicate voivodeship press, or conversely, taking on a limited role of information

dziennikarza prasy zakładowej [Rules for the organisation and activity of corporate newsletters, rights and obligations of a corporate press journalist]; it was later amended in 1974.

⁶ All of the press was controlled by the party. Corporate newsletters largely depended on factory organisations of the party, thus leading to the issue of the party's "content-related" care over them. The party had its own personnel policy, whose chief aims were to be the party control of the advancement system, specific rules of personnel selection, a system of special awards, recurrent purges, preference payment policy, and a system of training new blood. It seems that the above relates to the corporate press journalists as well. Cf. J. Drygalski, J. Kwaśniewski, *(Nie)realny socjalizm [(Un)real socialism]*, Warszawa 1992, p. 243.

⁷ Chief editor, zł 2950–3500; secretary, zł 2100–3100; department head, zł 1700–2400; AAN, KC PZPR, sign. 237/VIII-879, c. 168–169, 187.

⁸ *Regulamin Komisji Kwalifikacyjnej i tryb przyjmowania członków SDP* [Regulations for the Qualifying Commission and the affiliation procedure of the PJA], Warszawa 1969, p. 4.

bulletins, this kind of press gained a stable position among the workers. Not all errors, however, had been eliminated at once. The CC observed that “presently the chief weakness of many newsletters is the insufficient fulfilment of their ideological and educational tasks”⁹. Corporate press, apart from its informative function, had to be a tool having an ideological effect the workers. The political function was perhaps more important than all the others, i.e., information, integrative, educational, and culture-creating function. The quality of corporate newsletters depended, in the opinion of the political decision makers, on the leadership of the editorial board and the help of the corporate committees of PUWP, which confirms the thesis that these newsletters were political. The editing process involved journalists as well as other employees. The total number of “stabilised and experienced” editors was expected to be about 200. In 1967, most of them could boast of at least 6 years of experience, and 40 were PJA members. All had at least a secondary education, 41% had higher education. 80% belonged to the Party.¹⁰

According to the *Encyklopedia wiedzy o prasie*, there were about 400 corporate press titles in Poland before 1972. Many of them, however, due to a low quality of editing, among other things, soon ceased to exist¹¹. Four years later, the estimated number of corporate newsletters was about 150, with an average circulation of 460,000 copies per issue. The largest part of them (53) was established in the 1950s. The newspaper¹² of the Kieleckie Zakłady Wyrobów Metalowych [Kielce Plant of Metal Products] was one of them.

“Forward KZWM”

The concept of establishing corporate newsletters in the Kieleckie Voivodeship of the time was born in the editors’ office of *Słowo Ludu* [Word of the People]. There was no other way, though, as since the late 1940s it was the only professional newspaper approved by the PUWP Voivodeship Committee, which had complete supervision over all regional and local media. Adam Perłowski, the first chief editor of the *Słowo Ludu*, taking advantage of his experiences, gained in the Soviet Union, among others, decided to transplant the idea of issuing high-circulation papers to the Kielce region¹³. The Soviet *mnogotirazhki* were to become a pattern

⁹ According to the note dated May 5, 1967; AAN, KC PZPR, sign. 237/VIII-879, cc. 168–169, 187.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, c. 169.

¹¹ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o prasie* [Encyclopaedia of knowledge about the press], ed. by J. Maślanka, Wrocław 1976, pp. 191–192.

¹² Speaking properly, the term *gazeta* [newspaper] is reserved for periodical issued at least twice a week. It is, however, customarily used for corporate press, even though the frequency of issues was lower. The usage of the term is justified by, among others, its physical characteristics, such as size, typesetting, and paper type.

¹³ The *mnogotirazhki* are also mentioned in M. Karpowicz, “W sprawie genezy i rozwoju prasy zakładowej” [On the genesis and development of corporate press], *Prasa Polska* 1976, No. 7/8, pp. 31–32. According to its

for newsletters: *Walczy my o Stal* [We Fight for Steel] from the “Ostrowiec” Iron Works in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, *Budujemy Samochody* [We Build Automobiles] from the Fabryka Samochodów Ciężarowych in Starachowice, and *Głos Metalowca* [Voice of the Metalist] (later *Nasze Słowo* [Our Word]) from the Zakłady Metalowe in Skarżysko-Kamienna. It was these factories which initiated issuing newsletters for their own crews in the early 1950s¹⁴. Other factories followed, Kieleckie Zakłady Wyrobów Metalowych (KZWM) among them.

“KZWM — the former Huta Ludwików, is known in the whole country. In 1957, we gave Poland 101,360 washing machines — instead of the planned 80 thousand. Our crew has earned a total profit of roughly zł 68 million. It is a thing to be proud of...” wrote Adam Sobol, the Technical Director and engineer, about the plant and its workers on the first page of *Naprzód KZWM* [Forward KZWM]¹⁵. And concluded, “no one can deny that we are a leading plant”.

This took place in July 1958, when the *Jednodniówka K[omitetu] F[abrycznego] PZPR, Dyrekcji, Rady Robotniczej i Rady Zakładowej Kieleckich Zakładów Wyrobów Metalowych* [The one-day of the PUWP Factory Committee, Management, Workers’ Council and Plant Council of the Kielce Plant of Metal Products] was issued for the first time. It counted 4 pages of A3 size and was circulated in 3000 copies. It looked like most of the informational newspapers of the day. The print was black, or, rather, very deep blue, the headpiece and some of the headlines used red, text prevailed decisively over images, which, due to the printing technique, were of rather low quality. Yet the “pride of Polish engineers and workers, the SHL motorbike” could be recognised in the pictures without effort. The editors made sure that it was properly exhibited in the best place of the whole newspaper, next

author, they were known to many PPR and PPS activists, who were the initiators of issuing corporate press in post-war Poland. Other factors contributing to the development of corporate newsletters included, according to Karpowicz, the pre-war traditions. This, however, does not relate to the most important periodicals of the Kielce region in the 1950s.

¹⁴ According to Alina Słomkowska, the *Walczy my o Stal* from Ostrowiec was counted (together with, among others, the *Na Stalinowskiej Warcie* [On Stalin’s Guard] from Poznań) among the leading corporate press titles of the 1950s; cf. *eadem*, “Z badań nad dziennikarstwem Polski Ludowej” [From the studies on the journalism in People’s Poland], *Rocznik Historii Czasopiśmiennictwa Polskiego* Vol. 15 (1976), No. 3, pp. 319–334. Earlier, only a few months after the newsletter was established, it received much praise from Halina Brodzka. As she wrote in *Prasa Polska* [Polish Press], “*Walczy my o Stal* is not, of course, a periodical which is perfect in all respects. There are manifold errors and shortcomings [...]. In spite of its defects, however, it has attained so much that its achievements should serve as examples for many of our professional newspapers”; H. Brodzka, „Gazeta fabryczna, od której wiele można się nauczyć” [Factory newsletter with a lot to learn from], *Prasa Polska* 1951, No. 4, pp. 14–15.

¹⁵ A. Sobol, “Większe zadania większe obowiązki” [Greater tasks, greater obligations], *Naprzód KZWM* [Forward KZWM] July 1958, p. 1.

to the title, and explained in the subtitle that it “passed gloriously all the most difficult terrain and technical tests and is beyond doubt the best bike made in Poland now”¹⁶.

The 1958 *Naprzód KZWM* one-issue did not announce any regular issues. The concept of establishing the title was not explained, there was no editorial to explain for whom and for what reason the newsletter was issued. Directly under the headpiece, there was an article printed, which bore the tell-tale title “Sprawiedliwe i realne normy pracy podstawowym warunkiem w walce o wykonanie planu produkcyjnego” [Just and real work norms as the basic condition in the struggle for the fulfilment of the production plan]; and below, under the already mentioned picture of the SHL motorbike, there was an appeal entitled “Sprawa honoru załogi” [The question of crew’s honour], in which the PUWP Factory Committee expressed its belief that “all KZWM employees, both party and non-party, unionists and Socialist Youth Union (Pol. *Związek Młodzieży Socjalistycznej* — ZMS) members, Women’s League (Pol. *Liga Kobiet* — LK) activists and those from the scientific-technical organisation, Polish Society of Mechanical Engineers and Technicians (Pol. *Stowarzyszenie Inżynierów i Techników Mechaników Polskich* — SIMP) shall endeavour to carry out the resolutions of the Worker’s Council Conference in the time provided. It is not only about the economic and production results but also about the improvement of the living condition of all employees”. The appeal ended with a reference to the illustrious past of the factory: “In this struggle, we also defend the honour and integrity of the heroic, and renowned for its revolutionary traditions, working class of the Kieleckie Zakłady Wyrobów Metalowych, the famous Huta Ludwików”¹⁷.

This message, as well as other texts on the front page, clearly define the assumptions of the editorial board. Its composition was not supplied because it can be guessed that the team which would engage in editing the periodical had not been established yet. As it can be inferred from the subtitle, the initiative was shared by the plant party organisation, management, and plant council. The newsletter was printed by the RSW “Prasa” printer in Kielce. Inside, the topics related to work norms, efficiency, emulation, and occupational safety and health. There was also information concerning building plots and allotment gardens for the employees, going on vacations to a sanatorium, various forms of financial relief and individual loans, the club-room library offer, including the only TV set in the Keeled voivodeship, which was available in this very club-room, and WFM motorbikes for

¹⁶ [Untitled], *ibidem*.

¹⁷ PUWP Factory Committee [Komitet Fabryczny PZPR], “Sprawa honoru załogi” [The question of the crew’s honour], *Naprzód KZWM*, one-day, Kielce, July 1958, p. 1.

employees, received in exchange for washing machines... All these small news were put in the last column, entitled “O tym warto wiedzieć” [It is worth knowing], lavishly illustrated with as many as six pictures.

The majority of texts in the newsletter were signed with the names of their authors. The list of authors included the Director-in-Chief of KZWM Wacław Michniewski, Technical Director Adam Sobol, Franciszek Dziubiński, the engineer for occupational safety and health, and engineers Stefan Pakosz, Bogumił Pelczarski, and Jadwiga Pajek. There were also texts signed by the PUWP Factory Committee and the SIMP plant circle. All pictures were taken by Marian Żelazko. One of the mentioned authors, Bogumił Pelczarski, was later to become the editor of the next, and periodical, newsletter of the KZWM.

The July issue of the *Naprzód KZWM* one-day must have aroused the interest of readers, and the idea must have gained acceptance of the decision makers, since the same year, but only in December, another issue came out. This time, however, it was entitled *Głos Załogi* [The Voice of the Crew]. Why such change, what caused it, these questions could not be answered based on available materials. It is all the stranger that there was another newsletter of the same title, issued by the Zakłady Chemiczne in Pionki near Radom. The only justification which comes to mind is the tendency, popular at the time, to give to periodicals titles which were meant to certify that they reflect the life of a particular plant, and the needs and aspirations of the employees.

The principle, which was rarely disregarded, was to relate in the title of the periodical to the production profile of the plant. Instead of “building” and “fighting”, which characterised the early 1950s, it was the “voice” (Pol. *Głos*) of the employees which became expressed. The new established titles were therefore *Głos Grafika* [Voice of the Graphic Designer], *Głos Kolportera* [Voice of the Colporteur], *Głos Instalatora* [Voice of the Plumber], *Głos Spółdzielczości Wiejskiej* [Voice of the Rural Cooperative], etc. It could also be the employees’ “word” (Pol. *słowo*), “life” (Pol. *życie*), or “echo”, e.g., *Nasze Słowo* [Our Word] (earlier *Głos Metalowca* [Voice of the Metalist]), *Słowo Armatur* [Word of the Fixtures], *Słowo Budowlanych* [Word of the Building Workers], *Życie Transportowca* [Life of the Transport Worker], *Echo Budowy* [Echo of the Construction], and *Echo Skórzanych* [Echo of the Leatherworkers]¹⁸. The *Głos Załogi* [Voice of the Crew] sounded utterly neutral, not to say drab and nondescript. It gained its proper meaning only with the subtitle, becoming the *Głos Załogi Kieleckich Zakładów Wyrobów Metalowych* [Voice of the Crew of KZWM].

¹⁸ J. Kępa, “Twórcy prasy zakładowej Kielecczyzny (1945–1989)” [Creators of the corporate press of the Kielce region (1945–1989)], *Kieleckie Studia Bibliologiczne* Vol. 4 (1998), pp. 151–167.

The headpiece of *Głos* contained only the date, “December 1958”, without any further information concerning the frequency of issues or the issuing institution. Instead, the distinctive SHL trade mark was placed next to it. On the other hand, it could be related rather to the picture subtitled “A new model of SHL motorbike!” and treated as a part of this title. The same mark, however, in the next, regular issue of *Głos Załogi*, was incorporated into the headpiece.

The characteristics (editing conditions) of the periodical did not change significantly. The volume was just increased to 6 pages, and the last page was dedicated to various interesting facts (“Zasłyszane... Podśluchane...” [Heard... Overheard...], “Czy wiecie, że...” [Do you know that...], “Uśmiechnij się” [Smile], “Kącik fotoamatora” [Amateur photographer’s corner]). Even “Listy do redakcji” [Letters to the editors] had a column there. It was interesting, since the newsletter was issued in that form for the first time and the editorial team was just beginning to form. What then were these letters about? Of course, they praised the plant and the devices it produced. One thanked for “being enabled to purchase a SHL-150 motorbike”, another expressed his delight because of having bought a washing machine, saying at the same time that “there are improvements to be made, namely the cover should be closed with a latch, and the AC and ground connection fitted with a plug”. There was a complaint as well but, as it turned out, the sender of the letter was satisfied of the outcome. “Several days after making the complaint,” he wrote, “a technician from Your Plant reported to me [...] and, having replaced the motor, started the washing machine. More, he gave us additional instructions how to use it deal with small defects. [...] If all the Plants in the whole country followed in Your steps, the users would have no reason to complain and write press articles about bungling”¹⁹.

The information in the imprint, found in the same column, was quite scarce: “VOICE OF THE CREW – Edited by the Committee – KZWM – Kielce, do Huty Ludwików Str. Printed [by] RSW “Prasa”, Kielce ord[er No.] 1820 3,500 copies A3 W-3”²⁰. The content of the whole “zero” issue of *Głos Załogi* was clearly very similar to the *Naprzód KZWM* one-day. Director Michniewski accounted the production of motorbikes and washing machines (“Na nasze pralki i motocykle czeka cała Polska” [The whole Poland awaits our washing machines and motorbikes]) and, at the same time, while appealing for the increase of production, listed the already made and planned investments in the Plant in the near future.,

¹⁹ “Listy do redakcji”, *Głos Załogi* 1958 (December), [No. 0], p. 6.

²⁰ As in the Polish original, ‘„GŁOS ZAŁOGI” – Redaguje Kolegium – KZWM – Kielce, ul. do Huty Ludwików. Tłoczono RSW „Prasa”, Kielce zam. 1820 3500 egz. A3 W-3’; *ibidem*.

Chief Constructor Wiesław Jankowski, an engineer, presented the work of the Construction Office. Chief Accountant S. Batorski informed that the Plant Fund had been split. Much room was dedicated to the Third Congress of PUWP and the assignments for the party groups in the plant. The “Problemy budownictwa mieszkaniowego” [Issues of house-building] were touched on, and support for the “1000 Szkół na Tysiąclecie” [1000 Schools for the Millennium] action was expressed.

From a one-day to a monthly

Regular issues of the *Głos Załogi* of the KZWM did not appear before the spring next year. The first issue came out in March 1959. In the leader, the editors shared their joy with the readers that, “after their best efforts”, they were given permission to issue the periodical permanently. At the same time, they appealed for contributions: “It is the ambition of the Editorial Team to provide you, dear readers, with information and interesting facts, to interest you with the production and plant management issues. However, without your contribution to the editing of the newsletter, without your letters, without any contact with you, we will not be able to fulfil our task. Therefore, we keenly appeal to you. Come to us, write to us, criticise us, criticise all that is wrong in the plant. The newsletter you hold in your hands is the newsletter of us all. Let us all see it so”²¹.

The editing of the *Głos Załogi* was performed by the committee composed of Bogumił Pelczarski, Jan Ciośniński, Ryszard Kućma, Remigiusz Półtorak, and Zbigniew Sygut. The periodical was issued regularly each month. Up to its 9th issue (November 1959) it counted 4 pages (6 since December 1959) and was circulated in 2,000 copies. Beginning with the new year, the circulation was increased to 3,500 copies (the same as the zero issue). The periodicity allowed the introduction of thematic cycles, regular columns, and print serialised memoirs.

The editors stressed, from the very beginning, the necessity of dealing in the newsletter with the issues important for the crew. There was a demand for the regulation of social issues. These included construction of a holiday resort and a plant culture centre, and establishment of a housing cooperative. The workers were to “Forge the Resolutions of the Third Congress into action” (Pol. *Wkuwać w czyn Uchwały III Zjazdu*)²², the management had to deliberate on the “Work organisation” (Pol. *Organizacja pracy*)²³ and think “About further

²¹ “Od redakcji” [From the editors], *Głos Załogi* 1959, No. 1, p. 1.

²² Ibidem.

²³ *Głos Załogi* 1959, No. 4, pp. 1, 4.

development of KZWM” (Pol. *O dalszym rozwoju KZWM*)²⁴, all were expected to celebrate, as the “Successes exceeded all expectations” (Pol. *Sukcesy przeszły wszelkie oczekiwania*)²⁵, and the Worker’s Council was to “adopt motions in order to achieve the increase of work efficiency in individual segments”²⁶. Interviews (e.g. “Co nowego tow. Dyrektorze?” [What news, Comrade Director?] or “Co nowego tow. Sekretarzu?” [What is new, Comrade Secretary?]), feature articles, and satire against negative things happening in the plant were published systematically. “Letters to the editors” became a constant feature and, beginning with the second issue, the last column was given to “Sports” and “Puzzles” (Pol. *Sport* and *Rozrywki umysłowe*), such as rebuses and crosswords.

“Questionnaires” (Pol. *Ankiety*) were printed in the newsletter with varied frequency. They related to manifold issues, from production, through transport, deliveries, to payments (e.g., how much should an employee earn who has to maintain a wife and two children), and recreation (whether there should be a cinema in the plant’s club-room). The employees were also given an opportunity to speak openly about what they expected from the Workers’ Council and what were the most important issues in the plant, which had to be resolved immediately. The questionnaires served, therefore, to learn the needs and expectations of the crew. There is a reason to believe they were constructed by the Editorial Committee, though the knowledge gained this way had to serve, first and foremost, the organs of the Workers’ Council²⁷.

Workers as Journalists

In the 7th issue, the editors addressed all readers with an appeal to “contribute to editing the newsletter, to make the *Głos Załogi* a journal, which would sort of belong to the whole crew”. Yet to write about everything that can be heard in the departments, both the achievements and the failures, permanent contributors were necessary. “Alas,” they remarked, “even though we have contributors in many departments, they show hardly any activity”. To motivate them, the editors invited “all who wanted to write, draw, make up puzzles, take pictures, etc., to a triggering session”, counting on their involvement²⁸. According to the general assumptions about the corporate press, it should have been edited by the workers themselves, the amateur journalists recruited from among the crew, mainly the so-called correspondents. As early as in

²⁴ *Głos Załogi* 1959, No. 8, p. 1.

²⁵ *Głos Załogi* 1959, No. 9, p. 3.

²⁶ “Właściwa rytmika produkcji pozwoli nam osiągnąć lepsze wyniki produkcyjne” [The appropriate rhythm of production will let us achieve better production results], *Głos Załogi* 1959, No. 10, pp. 1–2.

²⁷ Cf., among others, *Głos Załogi* 1959, No. 5, p. 3.

²⁸ “Uwaga czytelnicy” [Attention readers], *Głos Załogi* 1959, No. 7, p. 1.

1950, Mieczysław Rakowski wrote: “The newsletter is edited by a committee composed solely of workers, which should include representatives of the Party Committee, Plant Council, Union of Polish Youth (Pol. *Związek Młodzieży Polskiej — ZMP*), and other social organisations active at the plant”²⁹. This is why the appeals for contributions to the newsletter were repeated many times. As the extant documents show, the care of co-workers and contributors was a constant task of the editors and the organs overseeing its “medial” activity. This was also the case of the plant’s broadcasting centre³⁰.

The newsletter began its second year of activity already with some experience. It still had some wants on the other, and gaining contributors was one of them. The editors appealed again: “we need your cooperation [...], we will not mind if you criticise us justly [...], we will help you in any matter with which you come to us”. Simultaneously, the “you — readers, us — editors” division was present, however. The latter group was characterised as “people who, before the *Głos Zalogi*, had nothing to do with working for a newspaper in their whole lives, people who had to learn everything from scratch”³¹. It was a very deftly written justification for all shortcomings one could find in the newsletter, as well as an attempt to establish closer ties to the recipients of the message, who could easily, as did the editors, become the authors of the newsletter. And the authors themselves engaged in their work with growing involvement.

The new year brought a change in the look of the newsletter. There was a new, stylised headpiece, using the same typeface as on the labels of SHL products, the press materials were more and more often illustrated (beginning from No. 10, 1959). The March issue was dedicated to women. The first column contained a gallery of their pictures, entitled “Kobiety są wszędzie” [Women are everywhere] and followed by wishes, which were quite frivolous: “Carry on, girls, gals, and lasses, big kisses...”³². The same issue received the “April Fool’s Special Extra” (Pol. *Dodatek Nadzwyczajny Prima Aprilis*)³³, two pages of exclusively

²⁹ M. Rakowski, “Prasa fabryczna w Planie Sześcioletnim” [Factory press in the Six-Year Plan], *Prasa Polska* 1950, No. 8/9, pp. 11–12.

³⁰ In the various issues of the *Problemowy plan pracy dla gazety zakładowej... na okres I półrocza [1967]* [Problem-based work plan for the corporate newsletter... for the 1st semester 1967], the following can be read, among others: “1. Conference of contributors and correspondents of the broadcasting centre and corporate newsletter. 2. 10th anniversary of the Corporate Newsletter a/ stress the role of the newsletter in the life of the crew.” The work plan for the 2nd semester of the same year included: “1. Celebrations of 10th anniversary of *Głos Zalogi*. 2. Development of the correspondents’ network. 3. Organising meetings of the GZ and Broadcasting Station editors with the crew of individual departments.” The meetings with the crew and the celebration of the newsletter were also present in the minute lists of tasks for the following months. Source: SHL documentation, from the author’s own archives.

³¹ Redakcja [Editors], “Drugi rok”, *Głos Zalogi* 1960, No. 1, p. 1.

³² “50 lat M.D.K.” [50 years of the International Women’s Day], *Głos Zalogi* 1960, No. 3, p. 1.

³³ *Głos Zalogi* 1960, No. 13 a, dated April 1, 1960.

entertainment content. Since September 1960, the colours so far had begun to change. Red was replaced in subsequent issues by purple, brown, teal, navy, grey, green (once light, once dark), yellow, orange, blue, and burgundy — a different colour in each issue.

Various occasions were marked by special issues. December issues, containing yearly inventories, might also be included here. The inventory at the end of 1960 was particularly thorough, bringing the publication of, among others, *Podsumowanie Akcji SHL na Wysoki Połysk* [High Gloss SHL Action Roundup], *Do jakich organizacji należymy?* [Which organisations do we belong to?], *Znów minął rok... a w tym czasie* [Another year has passed... and in the meantime], *Remanent roku* [Inventory of the year]³⁴. The latter text deserves special attention, even though it has to be taken with a pinch of salt nowadays. The editors made a reckoning with the shortcomings encountered in the plant by publishing critical notes from individual issues along with the reactions which followed them, such as: “4. TV set in the club-room is out of order. — The TV set was donated to one of the schools. There is no TV set in the club-room at all. [...] 10. Inappropriate behaviour at the theatre, admission of children. — A significant improvement has been noted”³⁵.

In March 1962, *Sportowy Głos Załogi* [Sporting Voice of the Crew] was established as an extra to the 3rd issue. Inside, there was an article covering the opening of the football season, and a sheet of tables for the results of matches played in spring, as well as the team tournaments, was included³⁶. The same 3rd issue had one more extra (“April Fool’s”), printed with a reservation: “Only for people with a sense of humour”. It was dated April 1, 1962³⁷ and had 4 pages. Inside, behaviour of employees and vices of the plant were lampooned. Two years later, the headpiece of the “April Fool’s” issue contained the words: “Smile, it will be better tomorrow”. That 2-pages-long issue was printed horizontally.

The jubilee issues deserve special notice. The first such jubilee was celebrated by the newsletter in December 1963. The 50th issue came out and 5 years had passed since the first (zero) issue. As they wrote, “its history was uneven. Sometimes it was better, sometimes worse, sometimes it got snapped up before the newsprint could dry, sometimes it was delayed, sometimes it teased only to quickly lose its cheek, but it has always been needed, always played the role of the chronicle of the plant, never passed over the most important events at the plant, always strived to serve the people and the idea of building the new system”³⁸. The

³⁴ *Głos Załogi* 1960, No. 12.

³⁵ Redakcja, “Remanent roku”, *Głos Załogi* 1960, No. 12, p. 5.

³⁶ *Głos Załogi* 1962, No. 3, extra, p. 1.

³⁷ *Głos Załogi* 1963, No. 3a, p. 1.

³⁸ *Głos Załogi* 1963, No. 10, p. 1.

editors stressed that the greatest advantage of the newsletter was that it spurred to action and never took a passive stance towards the problems and suggestions of the employees, but interfered in the issues of the plant and reacted to all kinds of failures and shortcomings: “Letters of praise made us glad, these of criticism even more so. It was a sad time for us when an issue was followed by silence. We did not know what to think then, whether the newsletter was so good, or so boring, that it did not provoke any one to write or visit the editorial office”³⁹. They admitted that they had been gaining experience with each issue, initiating various kinds of actions, and learning new journalistic forms and technical issues related to the newsletter: “The awareness that we are needed, that the newsletter is needed, motivates us to improve it even further”.

Higher frequency as an opportunity for development

In mid-1960s, among the corporate newsletters of the Kieleckie Voivodeship, the leaders were still the *Budujemy Samochody* from Starachowice and *Walczymy o Stal* from Ostrowiec. They had the highest circulation, 8,500 and 7,000 copies respectively, and were graded the highest by the controllers, which was justified by the contribution of professional journalists in their editing, as well as the help of PUWP Factory Committees⁴⁰. There were plans to yet increase the circulations, which already seem large. This was not always possible, however, due to the quotas of paper reserves. In the case of the *Walczymy o Stal*, which wanted to be circulated in 9,000 copies from 1965 on, even such commendations of the Department of Propaganda of the PUWP Voivodeship Committee in Kielce proved insufficient: “It is the oldest and one of the best edited periodicals of the kind in the country [...], enjoys a great authority not only among the crew of the Steelworks, but also the inhabitants of the whole Ostrowiec”⁴¹. Similarly, the attempts to increase the circulation of the *Budujemy Samochody* newsletter from Starachowice to 10,000 copies also failed.

The efforts of the editorial committee of the *Głos Załogi*, the periodical of the Kieleckie Zakłady Wyrobów Metalowych, were more successful. After six years, according to the employees, the monthly no longer satisfied their needs. Therefore, they applied to the Chief Office for the Control of Press, Publications, and Spectacles (Pol. *Główny Urząd Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk — GUKPPiW*) for permission to issue the newsletter biweekly. Their application gained acceptance of the PUWP Factory Committee and

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 1.

⁴⁰ AAN, GUKPPiW, sign. 817.

⁴¹ AAN, KC PZPR, sign. 237/VIII-878, c. 27.

Voivodeship Committee in Kielce. VC Secretary Marian Madaj added his own arguments to these of the editors: “As a monthly, the newsletter has achieved very much in strengthening its bonds with the readers. [...] As a monthly, however, it is unable to work out important political and economic issues thoroughly and competently. Therefore, it seems justified to increase the frequency of issues to twice a month”⁴². The permission was given, albeit with the reservation that only the previously allotted paper quota can be used.

Biweeklies started to predominate among corporate press titles of the whole country in the 1970s. Circa 1975, 60% of all titles were biweeklies. Monthlies which still existed at the time were treated as a temporary form and tended to increase frequency⁴³. *Głos Załogi* became a biweekly in January 1965, with between 4 and 6 pages per issue. Ever longer and more comprehensive articles were written. Sometimes, there was little room left for the title of the newsletter, which was then hard to locate, once on the left side, once on the right, once higher, and once lower. The price of the newsletter was included in the headpiece. It cost zł 0.25 per issue in subscription, and zł 0.50 in retail. New columns were added: “Technika – Postęp – Racjonalizacja” [Technology – Progress – Rationalisation], “Głos Młodej Załogi” [Voice of the Young Crew]. The mentioned above “Questionnaire” was also extended. More detailed and thorough questions were asked, with a lot of room for precise answers.

As soon as a month after, Bogumił Pelczarski, the chief editor, expressed his gratitude in the newsletter towards all who contributed to this that the editors were given new quarters and that a person was permanently assigned to receive mail and take over current administrative tasks. He claimed, at the same time, that thanks to these changes, “it will be possible to further improve the work of the editors”⁴⁴. This was also the purpose of the recently established cooperation with the editors of two Czechoslovak corporate newsletters, “Naše noviny” from Strakonice and “Tatrovák” in Kopřivnice⁴⁵.

In the same issue, the editors of the *Głos Załogi* congratulated the corporate broadcasting centre team on a special kind of jubilee: their 1000th broadcast. The broadcasting centre was regarded as one of the best and most active in the Kielce Voivodeship of the time, and one of the few which broadcast a daily information service, four times each day. The cooperation with the corporate newsletter was beneficial to both parties, mainly in the area of current news, received from correspondents. The wishes were directed first and foremost to

⁴² *Ibidem*, c. 20.

⁴³ *Encyklopedia...*, p. 192.

⁴⁴ B. Pelczarski, “Nowy lokal redakcyjny” [New editorial office], *Głos Załogi* 1965, No. 4, p. 5.

⁴⁵ The editors boasted of it in the article *Vitame vzajemne spoluprace*, at the same time asking for help in translating texts from the Czech periodicals, *Głos Załogi* 1965, No. 4, p. 5.

Jan Maruszak, the director of the broadcasting centre, who, according to his colleagues from the newsletter, “returned the broadcasting centre to a great condition, in both programme and technical aspects”⁴⁶.

The name of Jan Maruszak appeared also in the imprint of the newsletter. From the 6th issue in March 1965 onwards, it included all members of the committee: Jan Ciośniński – the president, Wojciech Jasiński, mgr inż. Eryk Kałandyk, Anna Kotras, inż. Michał Król, Jan Maruszak, mgr inż. Stanisław Mazurek, Bogumił Pelczarski – chief editor, Adam Wenda.

In June 1965, corporate newsletters from neighbouring countries were presented again in the *Głos Zalogi*. This time it was the newsletters from the Soviet Union, described by the chief editor Bogumił Pelczarski after his visit to Moscow and Leningrad. It is not hard to guess that he showed his delight with the press there, the number of titles, issuing frequency, editing organisation, and the situation of editors. It is worth to adduce some of his remarks: “The number of corporate newsletters issued in the USSR amounts to about 10 thousand titles. From these which are issued 6 times a week, to ones such as the ours, issued twice a month. The situation of corporate newsletters in the USSR is incomparably better than in our country. For instance: *Moskovskiy Avtozavodets*, the newsletter of the Zavod imeni Likhachova, the famous ZiL, has 14 (!) permanent posts, [...] 500 correspondents, more than 6 thousand letters to the editors each year, 15 news photographers with permits to take pictures at the plant, etc. [...] The situation of the editors of the newsletters is also much better. They are regular members of the Journalists’ Association and their salaries are relatively high”⁴⁷.

Evolution of form and content

The editors opened the new year 1966 with a new action, “I write to my newsletter” (Pol. *Piszę do swojej gazety*). Bragging of successes, they also mentioned the failures caused by the insufficient number of correspondents. The action announced in the New Year’s issue was meant to increase it. “If a department wants to be written about, it must have its own correspondent as its spokesman,” the editors appealed. It is surprising, how appropriate these words are in the present day situation, when virtually every institution and organisation employs a spokesperson of its own. Many people would find it hard to believe that this post traces its origins to the movement of worker correspondents. And already then it was not a

⁴⁶ “1000-na audycja radiowęzła” [1000th broadcast of the centre], *Głos Zalogi* 1965, No. 4, p. 5.

⁴⁷ B. Pelczarski, “Gazety zakładowe w ZSRR” [Corporate newsletters in the USSR], *Głos Zalogi* 1965, No. 12, pp. 2–3. According to the *Encyklopedia wiedzy o prasie*, in mid-1970s there were about 3,000 corporate press titles in the USSR, and the *Moskovskiy Avtozavodets* mentioned in Pelczarski’s article was one of the oldest.

purely social occupation. “For each correspondence printed in the newsletter, we pay a fee of zł 0.50 per line of text,” declared the organisers of the action, and further ensured: “Do not worry if the sentences are not properly constructed, or if spelling and style errors happen. It is the editors’ job to remove these shortcomings”⁴⁸.

In July 1966, the 100th issue of the newsletter came out (issued together with the 99th due to holidays). It was a very special issue as, apart from the internal jubilee, it celebrated the anniversaries of 1,000 years of Polish state and 22 years of People’s Poland. Its main theme was the achievements of the newsletter, and its evolution both in the form and in content. “Our *Voice of the Crew* has grown strong during this time, its field of activities has expanded, the circulation and frequency have increased, we have gained new correspondents and received new quarters and a second permanent post”⁴⁹. There were thanks directed at the correspondents, who had collaborated with the editors for more than 8 years and contributed to the corporate newsletter, at the management, printers, and colporteurs, wishing them all “that our newsletter, true to its name, be the real voice of the Crew, supplying them with as thorough information as possible, teaching them and offering them good entertainment, and exerting its influence, so that we may live better and better at our plant”.

In the early 1967, there was a change at the post of chief editor. Bogumił Pelczarski, who held the post so far, left the editorial team, replaced by Antoni Pawłowski. Simultaneously, Witold Motyka was appointed to a new position of the vice-chief editor. Neither of them had been a member of the editorial committee before. These personal shifts did not result in any radical reform of the content or form of the newsletter. It was only in July that year when the headpiece changed. From then on, the title was *Głos Załogi*, with the following subtitle: *The Press Organ of the Workers’ Council of the Kieleckie Zakłady Wytwarzania Metalowych* (Pol. *Organ Samorządu Robotniczego Kieleckich Zakładów Wytwarzania Metalowych*). There was a significant change in the way it was written and the lettering. The first part, “Głos”, was enlarged and put in bold face, while the second part, “Załogi”, was placed below the first and stylised as handwriting. Next to the SHL logo (to the right), soon to be changed into a caption which became part of the title, the logo of the Metalists’ Labour Union (Pol. *Związek Zawodowy Metalowców*) appeared (to the left). The price was still

⁴⁸ “Nasza nowa akcja PISZĘ DO SWOJEJ GAZETY” [Our new action “I write to my newsletter”], *Głos Załogi* 1966, No. 1, pp. 1, 2

⁴⁹ J. Ciośniński, “100”, *Głos Załogi* 1966, No. 13/14 (99/100), p. 1.

printed above (it was raised to zł 0.40 in subscription in September 1966), and the date and issue number below⁵⁰. This modification did not seem particularly beneficial.

It is difficult to analyse in detail all issues of the discussed periodical, since it would take too much room. It is worth, therefore, to dedicate some attention only to the most interesting of publications. The article bearing the intriguing title “Abotomoizm” [Itsnotmineism] definitely is one of them⁵¹. The author explains that it was coined from the words “it’s not mine” (Pol. *a bo to moje*), at the same time relating sarcastically to phenomena verging on pathology: “You do not deserve only humble words from me. I bow my head before your efficiency, since you have moved the cogs and gears of a machine which remains a mystery to me, and managed to bring to daylight, nay, to convince honest people that rubbish prevails over reality. For this, honour and glory be unto you”. He does not stop at poignant general remarks but refers directly to the abortive streamlining motions and warns: “Those who profess the adage that ‘we learn on our mistakes’ should be reminded, as was done in ‘Polityka’ [Politics]: Let us not learn on mistakes anymore but at a proper university. It is said to be cheaper and more beneficial to the society”.

The editors of corporate newsletters were also supposed to learn. For this purpose, editors’ conferences were organised. One such conference, in June 1968, to the organisation of which the editors of the *Głos Załogi* contributed, was covered in the journal. The role of corporate periodicals was presented as follows: “Corporate newsletters play a serious role in the political and social life of the crews. They are the advocates of criticism and social control. They motivate to fulfil production assignments, popularise the figures of good workers, help in eliminating the daily shortcomings in the everyday life of plants”⁵². A few years later, an enthusiastic appraisal of the *Głos Załogi* was printed, given at a conference in which participated the representatives of, among others, Central and Voivodeship Labour Union Councils (Pol. *Centralna i Wojewódzka Rada Związków Zawodowych*), PUWP Voivodeship Committee, and the editors of the remaining 11 corporate newsletters of the Kielce region. “It was not only the accuracy and timeliness of the choice of subjects which were emphasised, in spite of the relatively long publishing cycle. What was stressed was the

⁵⁰ Since November 1967 (No. 21/131), the newsletter was, as it had been in its beginnings, free of charge.

⁵¹ W. Motyka, “Abotomoizm”, *Głos Załogi* 1966, No. 10, p. 3. In 1969, the same author, then secretary of the editorial board, received the first prize in a competition held by the Ministry for Machine Industry (Pol. *Ministerstwo Przemysłu Maszynowego*) for publications on production quality. See “Red. W. Motyka laureatem konkursu MPM” [Ed. W. Motyka the laureate of a MMI competition], *Głos Załogi* 1969, No. 22, p. 1.

⁵² “Z narady redaktorów gazet zakładowych” [From the conference of the editors of corporate newsletters], *Głos Załogi* 1968, No. 11, p. 1.

communicativeness of the vocabulary, wide range of journalistic forms, and interesting layout”⁵³.

In 1970s, the *Głos Załogi* was still coming regularly every two weeks. The jubilee of the 200th issue in September 1971 passed almost unnoticed. It coincided with change in the composition of the editorial committee. One issue earlier, the name of Antoni Pawłowski disappeared, along with the function of chief editor⁵⁴. Since then, imprints were seen irregularly and not always contained the names of the editors. The articles in the newsletter were also signed less and less often. From the early 1973, the only information to be found in the imprint was that *Głos Załogi* was edited by the social committee and the editors mgr Jadwiga Labocha and inż. Andrzej Polakowski, who was replaced by Irena Marciniak in the late 1974. There were no significant changes in the form or content. From time to time, the editors boasted of their successes in various competitions, such as the 3rd place award for the “best carried out popularisation and propaganda activity in the area of protection of work” or an honourable mention in “the field of fire protection”⁵⁵. The profiles of the “People of the 25 years” (Pol. *Ludzie 25-lecia*) were replaced by the “People of our plant” (Pol. *Ludzie naszej fabryki*), and then “People of the 30 years” (Pol. *Ludzie XXX-lecia*), “People of the Party” (Pol. *Ludzie partii*), and “Specialists” (Pol. *Specjaliści*).

Time of the decline

The form and content of the periodical evolved in the direction of a general newspaper. It was particularly visible in the late 1970s. The analysis of individual years does not allow to determine precisely who was responsible for it, since the composition of the editorial team was quite dynamic, and the names were not always included in the imprint. In 1977, the imprint was absent for several months, and later contained only the words: “edited by the social committee and the editors”. It is known that Ewa Stalewska was no longer among them, since she died in mid-1977⁵⁶. Instead of the names of the editors, the imprint contained now two dates, when the issue was submitted and signed for print. To careful readers, this could be

⁵³ “Redaktorzy gazet zakładowych gośćmi redakcji *Głosu Załogi* [Editors of corporate newsletters as guests of the editors of *Głos Załogi*], *Głos Załogi* 1974, No. 2, p. 1.

⁵⁴ From that date, changes in the editorial team were quite frequent. In 1971, after the departure of A. Pawłowski, it was the secretary of the editorial board Witold Motyka who was appointed the new chief editor. Jadwiga Labocha, who until then was the acting chief editor of *Iskra* in Kielce, was appointed the secretary; *Dwudziestolecie gazet zakładowych Kielecczyny* [Twenty years of corporate newsletters of the Kielce region], Kielce 1971, pp. 20–23.

⁵⁵ “Trzecie miejsce i wyróżnienie dla *Głosu Załogi SHL* [3rd place and a honourable mention for the *Voice of the Crew of SHL*], *Głos Załogi* 1975, No. 5, p. 1. At that time, the committee was led by Ewa Stalewska and Lech Kowalczyk, joined by Janusz Bugajny later that year.

⁵⁶ *Głos Załogi* 1977, No. 11, p. 1.

an important clue as to the state of timeliness (or, rather, untimeliness) of individual pieces of press material. The newsletter was most likely issued much delayed, since, e.g., the issue dated September 16–30 was only signed for print on September 30, and the October 16–31 issue on November 4. From the latter the readers learned the names of new editors, Irena Bugajska and Jolanta Markiewicz. In mid-1978, they were joined by Irena Misztalska-Targowska.

The late 1970s are also the last stage in the evolution of corporate periodicals. Their growth in numbers, improvement of form, stabilisation of circulation and volume faded away with the passing decade⁵⁷. The changes which came to pass in the early 1980s, which resulted directly from the social and political situation, could also be noticed in *Głos Załogi*. Already in 1980, it was a different newsletter. The breath of freedom must have been felt here as well. The strikes, rise of the *Solidarność* and all the consequences of these events opened new possibilities and, on the other hand, produced new limitations in the system in which the corporate press functioned⁵⁸. The amendment to the Censorship Law in October 1981 sanctioned the freedom of print for publications circulated in no more than 100 copies, internal use bulletins, which created an opportunity for free exchange of thought in small magazines (leaflets) of the new labour union.

Until December 1981, the number of corporate press titles in Poland decreased to 201 (the largest number of them, 28, remained in the Warsaw Branch of PJA, the Kielce Branch had 9). The Martial Law brought about the suspension of all titles, and subsequent liquidation of 77 of them. 107 titles were reactivated after a hiatus, the fate of 17 remained undecided⁵⁹.

In 1986 in the Kielce-Radom region, corporate press was still being issued in 8 plants: *Walczymy o Stal* in the Huta Ostrowiec; *Budujemy Samochody* in the Fabryka Samochodów Ciężarowych “Star” in Starachowice; *Głos Załogi* in the former KZWM (since 1974 renamed as Kieleckie Zakłady Samochodów Specjalizowanych [Kielce Plant of Specialised Cars] “Polmo-SHL”); *Głos Papiernika* [Voice of the Papermaker] in the Zakłady Wyrobów Papierowych [Plant of Paper Products] in Kielce; *Wiadomości Polmozbytu* [Polmozbyt News] in Polmozbyt; *Życie Załogi* in the General Walter’s Metal Works (Łucznik); *Echo Skórzanych* [Echo of the leatherworkers] in the “Radoskór” Shoe Factory; *Nasze Słowo* [Our Word] in the

⁵⁷ PJA corporate press clubs were very prolific in the 1970s. In 1976, more than 400 journalists from 204 titles were associated in 9 clubs; “Z prac Prezydium Zarządu Głównego SDP”, *Prasa Polska* 1976, No. 6, pp. 27–28.

⁵⁸ See, among others, T. Goban-Klas, *Niepokorna orkiestra medialna. Dyrygenci i wykonawcy polityki informacyjnej w Polsce po 1944 roku* [The unruly medial orchestra. Directors and performers of informational policy in Poland after 1944], Warszawa 2004, pp. 223–241; A. Świda, “Prasa zakładowa w okresie przemian” [Corporate press in the time of transformation], *Zeszyty Prasoznawcze* 1982, No. 1/2, pp. 27–40.

⁵⁹ A. Świda, “Raport o prasie zakładowej (2)” [Report on corporate press (2)], *Zeszyty Prasoznawcze* 1983, No. 2, pp. 17–35.

Zakłady Metalowe “Mesko” in Skarżysko-Kamienna. From January 1987, a newsletter was to come out in the Fabryka Łożysk Tocznych “Iskra” in Kielce, called “Iskra” [Spark].

The age of corporate newsletter was coming to an end, however. For most of them, it came during the final decade of the 20th century⁶⁰. The last issue of *Głos Załogi* was the No. 1 in January 1990, No. 564 in continuous numbering. Inside, the editors wrote about financial trouble, justifying this way the change of size. They hoped though to overcome the problems and that the newsletter would continue to come out⁶¹. However, they failed.

In many towns where corporate newsletters had already served as general information papers, private local periodicals were established which based on the former newsletters. For example, this was the case in Starachowice, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, and Skarżysko-Kamienna. The direct continuation of the *Walczymy o Stal* corporate newsletter, which used to be issued in Huta “Ostrowiec”, is the *Gazeta Ostrowiecka* [Ostrowiec Newspaper]. Its present chief editor Wojciech Turczyński guided it through the most difficult period and initiated the change of the title and content, directing it continuously since 1980. A similar transformation befell the *Budujemy Samochody* from Starachowice. It was issued in the beginning as *Aktualności Starachowic* [Starachowice News] but, after the merger with *Nowe Pismo Starachowic* [New Starachowice Journal] in June 1992, was renamed *Gazeta Starachowicka* [Starachowice Newspaper]. It has been coming out constantly as a weekly, its range being the Starachowice Powiat and 3 neighbouring gminas. It is directed by another former editor of a corporate periodical, Wiesława Żyła. In Skarżysko-Kamienna, the newsletter *Nasze Słowo* (formerly *Voice of the Metalworker*), issued since 1952, disappeared from the market in 1991. It was to be transformed into a town periodical, *Gazeta Skarżyska* [Newspaper of Skarżysko] but the initiative failed. The *Gazeta Skarżyska* was finally established in 1994, but after a few years it passed into history⁶².

Gazeta Ostrowiecka and *Gazeta Starachowicka* are proud of their corporate past today. Other factory periodicals must have taught a lot their editors at the time as well. Some of them, who honed their journalist skills in 1970s or 1980s, built from scratch their own publishing houses in the following decade, manage the editions of new local periodicals. The relic of the past thus proves the pattern for the present.

⁶⁰ More on the decline of corporate press in its previous form can be found, among others, in: T. Dziki, *Prasa zakładowa i międzyzakładowa we Włocławku w latach 1945–2002*, in: *Media lokalne i sublokalne na Kujawach wschodnich i ziemi dobrzyńskiej*, ed. by W. Koński, Włocławek 2007, pp. 75–95.

⁶¹ Redakcja, “Drodzy Czytelnicy!” [Dear Readers!], *Głos Załogi* 1990, No. 1, p. 1.

⁶² For more on the transformation of corporate press into local weeklies, see: J. Kępa-Mętrak, *Prasa lokalna – jaka była, jest, będzie? Oczekiwania i... rozczarowania* [Local press: what it was, is, will be like? Expectations and... disappointments], in: *Transformacja polskiego systemu medialnego*, ed. by M. Sokołowski, Toruń 2011, pp. 133–155.

Corporate press did not completely disappear from the media market. It changed its character completely, however. The present-day periodicals are addressed to the employees of the company and its clients, definitely less often to the local community⁶³. They are issued by various entities, therefore it is difficult to point out their common features. They serve informative, integration, and educational functions but, above all, they serve to promote the company, and sometimes mainly its management.

⁶³ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne* [Local media], Vol. 2, Poznań 2008, pp. 54–57.