

Title of presentation

Residentura of Polish intelligence in Tirana and Sigurimi's counterintelligence

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Biography

Historian, graduate of the Historical Institute of the University of Warsaw, employee of the Department of Archival Research and Sources Editing at the Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw. Author of a monograph entitled *Wywiad cywilny Polski Ludowej w latach 1945–1961* [Civilian Intelligence of the People's Republic of Poland in 1945–1961], published by IPN, Warsaw 2017. Editor of the source publication: *Instrukcje i przepisy wywiadu cywilnego PRL z lat 1953–1990* [Instructions and regulations of civil intelligence of the Polish People's Republic from the years 1953–1990], published by IPN, Warsaw 2020. Co-editor (with Magdalena Dźwigał) of the biographical dictionary publishing series: *Leksykon bezpieki. Kadra kierownicza aparatu bezpieczeństwa 1944–1956* [A lexicon of the security service. Security apparatus management staff 1944–1956], Volume I–IV published by IPN, Warsaw 2020–2023. Co-author of source publications entitled *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach aparatu bezpieczeństwa* [Stanisław Mikołajczyk in the documents of the Security Apparatus] and *Afera „Żelazo” w dokumentach MSW i PZPR* [The “Iron” Affair in documents of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Polish United Workers' Party].

Abstract

The aim of my presentation would be to show how relations between the Polish Security Service (Służba Bezpieczeństwa) and the Albanian Sigurimi developed. Direct contacts between the security organs of both countries were established during a conference in Moscow in 1955. From that time onward, they exchanged information on a limited scale. In May 1960, a multilateral conference of Eastern Bloc security organs took place in Prague, which was most likely the last occasion for mutual discussions. As a result of Albania's growing distance from the Soviet Union, these contacts gradually died out and eventually turned hostile. In the second half of 1966, Department I of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (i.e. Polish foreign intelligence) began establishing its residentura in Tirana, given the codename “Piaski” (Sands). The officers working there operated under diplomatic cover from the Polish Embassy in Albania. The residentura remained active until September 1981, when its operations were suspended. It was reactivated in January 1985 and continued functioning until the dissolution of the former security organs in July 1990. During its activity, Polish officers attempted to determine the whereabouts and details of the activities of the communist dissident Kazimierz Mijal. In addition, they monitored the situation in Albania and the directions of its foreign policy. At the same time, they encountered significant difficulties from the Sigurimi counterintelligence service, which subjected them to intensive surveillance and monitoring.