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KOLIN PUBLISHERS: THE HISTORY OF 'OUR PUBLISHING HOUSE IN BLOOMSBURY'[1]

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ABSTRACT

This article reconstructs, for the first time, the history of M. I. Kolin Publishers, the leading publishing house of Polish belles-lettres, political writings, and the periodical *Wiadomości Polskie* for the Second Great Polish Emigration in the UK. Situated in London Bloomsbury, yet with publishing networks developed across the UK, Kolin succeeded as exile publishers in producing, navigating, and distributing books in Polish, along with some photobooks and English translations, in extreme circumstances of World War II. Despite the challenging loss of Kolin's publishing archive, previously unexamined Companies Court's documents recently found in the National Archives (UK) and surviving publishing correspondence located in Polish and UK archives have provided an important opportunity to advance the understanding of Kolin's role and activities. This study presents Kolin's founders and directors

1 This research was funded by the National Science Centre, Poland, SONATA-19, no. 2023/51/D/HS2/02041. Special thanks to archivists and librarians of Polish and UK institutions for providing access to their collections: the British Library, the National Archives of the UK, the National Library of Poland; Małgorzata Pogorzelska and Kacper Cybulski, the POSK Polish Library; and Izabela Traczykowska, the Archives of Polish Emigration, NCU Library. Every effort has been made to contact copyright holders; the author would be grateful for any information which might help to trace those whose identities/addresses are not known.

– Ignacy Lindenfeld, Maks Kon (previously mistakenly identified as Maurycy Kohn), Reginald J. Murton, and Aleksander Heiman-Jarecki – along with their contributions to the press, on the basis of new archival sources and the correspondence of Mieczysław Grydzewski, a *de facto* editor-in-chief of *Wiadomości Polskie*. Extensive research in print and digital collections of the British Library, the National Library of Poland, and the resources of the Polish Digital Libraries Federation, has generated new insights into Kolin's publishing outcomes and profile. The present research also contributes to a deeper understanding of Kolin's 1944 bankruptcy to show that it was caused by both political and financial factors. This article demonstrates that Kolin Publishers used varied and resilient strategies of cultural transfer, including a cooperation with nearly twenty UK printing companies, a chain of Polish bookshops across the UK, an affiliation with impactful UK press Faber & Faber, and attempts at transatlantic cooperation, such as the distribution of Kolin books in Canada by Macmillan.

KEYWORDS: Kolin Publishers, Bloomsbury, cultural mediators, exile publishers, Faber & Faber, Macmillan, publishing networks, Polish books in the UK, Polish bookshops abroad, Wiadomości Polskie, World War II

Introduction

During the Second World War, the Nazi policy of systematic destruction of the Polish book had forced many publishers and booksellers to join resistance fighters on the frontline in occupied Poland.[2] And yet, in March 1941, the historian and journalist Mieczysław Grydzewski, an *éminence grise* of Polish interwar literary world as the editor-in-chief of influential *Wiadomości Literackie*, sent

2 See among others, *Cultural Losses of Poland. Index of Polish cultural losses during the German occupation*, 1939–1944, ed. K. Estreicher, London 1944; *The Nazi Kultur in Poland*, London 1945, pp. 76–89, 128–46; B. Bieńkowska et al., *Straty bibliotek w czasie II wojny światowej w granicach Polski z 1945 roku. Wstępny raport o stanie wiedzy*, cz. 1–2, ed. A. Mężyński, Warszawa 1994; J. Kordel, 'The Decimation of Polish Libraries in the Second World War', *Polish Libraries*, 2022, vol. 10, pp. 6–25.

from the UK some surprisingly hopeful news about Polish books in London to his friends and leading modernist poets Jan Lechoń and Julian Tuwim, who then escaped via Portugal to Brazil, and later were to settle in the US. Though wounded and bruised by a recent Blitz bombing that had destroyed his boarding house, Grydzewski rapturously sketched the golden age of Polish émigré reading culture in the UK in this transatlantic epistolary conversation:

> Unexpectedly, there is a large readership. I cannot recall a time when I worked in such a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. Indeed, there are tens of thousands of Poles here, and books are sold in much higher print runs than in Poland. Each new book release sells immediately about 1,000 copies, followed by another thousand.
>
> It was a boon that Lindenfeld had here a well-organized publishing workshop ('Minerva') – there was no need to start from the scratch. [...] Kolin has two own stores: one in London, the other in Scotland (managed by Czarski).[3]

In the same letter to Lechoń, Grydzewski emphasized that the current address of M. I. Kolin Publishers (and Minerva Publishing) at 36 Great Russell Street was an ideal venue for a cultural enterprise: 'Our publishing house is located in Bloomsbury, an intellectual centre of London. There are plenty of publishers, bookshops, and antiquarian stores here'.[4] Undoubtedly, Kolin's activities had added a vital though understudied chapter to the rich and varied history of literary Bloomsbury, renowned for collectives of progressive intellectuals, such as the Bloomsbury Group (with the name famously inspired by that unique location)[5] and the leading UK publishing houses from Faber & Faber to George Allen & Unwin to the Hogarth Press.[6] In the 1930s and 1940s, this London district had

3 M. Grydzewski, *Listy do Tuwima i Lechonia (1940–1943)*, ed. and intro. J. Stradecki Warszawa 1986, pp. 33–34. All translations are by the author, unless otherwise specified.

4 Ibidem, pp. 35–36.

5 D. Ryan, 'The Bloomsbury Friction', in: *A History of the Bloomsbury Group*, ed. D. Ryan, Cambridge 2025, p. 3.

6 See among others, T. Faber, *Faber & Faber: The Untold Story*, London 2021; B. Ryder, 'The George Allen & Unwin Collection, Reading University Library', *Publishing*

offered a haven to Jews, Poles, and other migrants during the mass exodus of people fleeing Nazi, Fascist, and Soviet persecutions – including the founders and workers of the 'publishing house' Kolin and its 'publishing workshop' Minerva.

In 1940, Minerva Publishing functioned as a cornerstone for M. I. Kolin Publishers, which emerged as the leading publishing house of Polish belles-lettres and influential periodical *Wiadomości Polskie, Polityczne i Literackie* (*The Polish News*)[7] for the Second Great Polish Emigration in the UK. Situated in London, yet with their publishing networks developed across the UK, Kolin succeeded as exile publishers in producing and distributing books in Polish despite the Blitz bombings and shortage of paper. Indeed, one cannot imagine Polish émigré culture in the UK in the 1940s without Polish wartime poetry, classics, political writings, and photobooks provided by Kolin. And yet, to date no publication has focused solely on the history of this publishing house. The reason behind this surprising silence is twofold – on the one hand, an apparent lack of reliable factual sources since Kolin's archive is considered lost, and, on the other hand, some discrepancies and gaps in the existing narratives about this publishing house that would be addressed in the following parts of the article.

The aim of this article is to reconstruct the history of M. I. Kolin Publishers on the basis of previously unexamined court documents, recently found in the National Archives, along with the extensive research of surviving publishing correspondence, dispersed among Polish and UK repositories. First, it presents the current state of research on Kolin and then discusses its activities and publishing outcomes to challenge some widely held assumptions and provide new significant insights. The article focuses on cultural mediators whose biographies are closely intertwined with the endeavours of Kolin, specifically on publishers and directors:

History, 2000, no. 47, pp. 67–78; J. H. Willis, *Leonard and Virginia Woolf as Publishers: The Hogarth Press, 1917–41*. Charlottesville 1992, passim.

7 For ease of reading, English equivalents of some émigré periodical titles (if included in the original masthead) are provided in parentheses on the first use.

Ignacy Lindenfeld, Maks Kon, Reginald J. Murton, and Aleksander Heiman-Jarecki. It presents little known contributions of Murton and Heiman-Jarecki to the development of this publishing house and unveils the role of the industrialist and philanthropist Maks Kon – previously either mistakenly identified as Maurycy Kohn or unacknowledged – in the founding of Kolin and re-launching of Grydzewski's impactful weekly as *Wiadomości Polskie* in Paris and London.

Using a transdisciplinary approach, this article combines book history, critical archival studies, and periodical studies to adopt alternative yet frequently complementary perspectives on the activities of M. I. Kolin Publishers as a cultural mediator who enhanced the cultural transfer of Polish books despite linguistic, cultural, and political barriers.[8] By conducting extensive research in print collections of the British Library and the National Library of Poland, as well as employing data mining techniques in digital resources of the British Newspaper Archive, Polona Digital Library, and the Polish Digital Libraries Federation (with a focus on the unique *Wiadomości* collection of the Kujawsko-Pomorska Digital Library), it was possible to survey and analyze Kolin's publishing outcomes, strategies of cultural transfer and publishing profile. This article also offers a panorama of Kolin's wide publishing networks, from the chain of Polish Bookshops across the UK to some attempts at transatlantic cooperation to limited partnership with Faber & Faber and nearly twenty UK printing companies. Finally, it demonstrates that though printers acted officially as the 'agents of destruction' for Kolin Publishers, the company's strained finances and its directors' stance against the UK and Polish governments' policy towards the USSR played the decisive role behind the scenes.

8 See among others: *Intermediate Horizons: Book History and Digital Humanities*, ed. M. Vareschi, H. Wacha, Madison 2022; M. Caswell, *Urgent Archives: Enacting Liberatory Memory Work*, New York 2021; S. Latham, R. Scholes, 'The Rise of Periodical Studies', *PMLA : Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 2006, no. 2, pp. 517–531; *Rethinking Cultural Transfer and Transmission: Reflections and New Perspectives*, ed. P. Broomans, P., S. van Voorst, K. Smits, Groningen 2012.

The Current State of Research

In the early 1940s, some heartwarming stories about robust activities of M. I. Kolin Publishers in London had reached the Warsaw underground movement. In his monograph on the history of the Polish book during the Second World War, Stanisław Pazyra argued that it was the 1942 publication of Arkady Fiedler's bestselling book *Dywizjon 303 (Squadron 303. The story of the Polish Fighter Squadron with the RAF)*[9] that not only transformed the heroic actions of Polish pilots in the Battle of Britian into a legend but also boosted Kolin's popularity in wartime Warsaw.[10] As Pazyra recalled, Kolin's owner was supposedly '"an amiable and jovial Englishman", Mr Colin, believed to be a great friend of Poles, since nobody expected that the company was managed by émigrés from Poland – Cohn and Lilienfeld' [sic].[11] Inherently limited in its scope by political circumstances of the Polish People's Republic, Pazyra's book was severely criticized in expatriate circles for its omissions and errors in the chapters on émigré culture,[12] including the fact that the owners of Kolin were – as Maria Danilewicz-Zielińska emphasized in her review, 'Kohn and Lindenfeld (and not Lilienfeld)'.[13] And yet, Pazyra's book had provoked an important discussion on the state of knowledge about the achievements of exile publish-

9 In the same year 1942, the English edition contributed to the book's considerable success – it was published by the London press Peter Davies, named after its owner who (along with his siblings) inspired J. M. Barrie's play *Peter Pan; or, the Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up* (1904). For ease of reading, the titles of existent English translations are provided in parentheses on the first use.

10 S. Pazyra, *Z dziejów książki polskiej w czasie drugiej wojny światowej*, Warszawa 1970, pp. 345–346. The National Library of Poland holds several Polish wartime publications of *Dywizjon 303* (including copies marked as reprints of Kolin's 1942 edition) in its special collections – they were published in occupied Poland by clandestine companies Oficyna Polska (1943), Wydawnictwo Ruchu Miecz i Pług (1943), Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Załoga (ca. 1943) and Podziemny Dom Wydawniczy M.K. i S-ka (1944).

11 The surnames of Kolin directors Kon and Lindenfeld were misspelled in Pazyra's book as 'Cohn and Lilienfeld', not necessarily resulting from printing errors. Pazyra could have attempted to avoid censorship, since he correctly identified Lindenfeld as the literary manager of J. Przeworski. Ibidem, pp. 346–47.

12 See among others, Jan Kowalik, 'Dzieje słowa polskiego za granicą', *Kultura*, 1971, no. 280–281, pp. 206–209.

13 M. Danilewicz[-Zielińska], 'Jest czym się niepokoić', *Kultura*, 1971, no. 280–281, p. 211.

ers during the Second World War and its aftermath. Both Pazyra's anecdote about an imaginary Mr Colin and Danilewicz-Zielińska's (partial) correction of the publishers' mistaken identities illustrate the many myths and misconceptions that arose around Kolin and its sister company Minerva, whose paths were closely interwoven until the year 1944.

In the late 1930s, Minerva Publishing, a London branch of J. Przeworski Publishing House, became active as a cultural mediator disseminating Polish literature in English translation among diverse audience(s) in the UK. The company roots could be traced back to J. Przeworski Publishing House, a Warsaw press, which circulated modernist and avant-garde literature and aesthetics, works of progressive intellectuals, and bestsellers by women writers in Central Europe. In 1938, facing rising fascism, the Polish Jewish Przeworski family decided to open a branch of their company in the UK – Minerva Publishing.[14] Following Janina Zabielska's informative 1965 study, academic sources have unanimously highlighted that Minerva was established in London by Ignacy Lindenfeld and 'familiarize[d] English people with Polish culture and literature' until 1943. Minerva's publications ranged from translations of Polish writers into English (Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, and Stefan Żeromski, among others) to new English titles by émigré authors (Józef H. Retinger and Henryk Gotlib) and Jan Stanisławski's *Dictionary*.[15] More recently, Joanna Rzepa has reported a significant finding about a co-operation between Minerva, Kolin and Faber & Faber – the UK publisher, renowned for its role in promoting modernist literature, who 'became their official distributor and included their books in a special section of their own catalogues'.[16]

14 J. Okopień, *Poczet wydawców książki polskiej*, vol. 5, contrib. J. Czarkowska, Warszawa 2015, pp. 214–220; P. Pająk, 'The Life Behind the Books: Reconstructing the Przeworskis' Biographies', *Autobiografia Literatura Kultura Media*, 2024, no. 22, pp. 85–98.

15 J. Zabielska, 'Instytucje i firmy wydawnicze – oficyny drukarskie', in: *Literatura polska na obczyźnie 1940–1960*, ed. T. Terlecki, Londyn 1965, v. II, pp. 564–565.

16 J. Rzepa, 'Publishing "Paper Bullets": Politics, Propaganda and Polish-English Translation in Wartime London', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 2019, no. 2–3, p. 224.

Current research in UK and Polish archives has revealed that Minerva Publishing was established in August 1938 as a company limited by shares (hence Minerva Publishing Co. Ltd.) with a nominal capital of £3,000.[17] The press, managed by two directors Ignacy Lindenfeld and Reginald J. Murton until the year 1948, had become a successful cultural mediator of Central European modernism(s) and avant-garde in the UK. Minerva entered the UK literary market with a modernist picturebook *Locomotive* (n.d., ca. 1939), in which Tuwim's experimental poetry corresponded with daring visual design created by the duo Lewitt-Him, Jan Lewitt and George Him, who had started their careers in Warsaw but reached their full potential after migrating to the UK in the late 1930s. During the Second World War, Minerva's English translations and photobooks had met with critical acclaim both in UK periodicals and in Polish émigré papers. The prestigious literary magazine – *The Times Literary Supplement* – reviewed several publications from Minerva's portfolio, including Jan Parandowski's *The Olympic Discus,* Zbigniew Grabowski's *After Hitler*, and Ksawery Pruszyński's *Polish Invasion*.[18] Minerva's focus on both literary and visual modes of creation resulted in new dimensions of British Polish Jewish publishing networks, developed not only by publishers but also by writers, illustrators, translators, designers, and editors whose contributions to the press were invaluable. For instance, the translator and journalist John H. P. Marks, not only translated Jean Malaquais's novel *The Men From Java* for Minerva but also was 'Minerva's English literary adviser', introduced to the company by the painter and illustrator Feliks Topolski.[19] As visible in this brief characterization, the cultural significance and impact of Minerva Publishing – that definitely exceeded Grydzewski's term 'publish-

17 *Minerva Publishing Co. Ltd: Dismissed petition. Case number 102 of 1944,* call no. J 13/17752, the National Archives, UK, (hereafter TNA).

18 Based on the author's research in the *Times Literary Supplement* collection of the British Library.

19 J. Stone, 'Introduction', in: Feliks Topolski, *Paris Lost: A Sketchbook of the Thirties*, London 1973, p. 9.

ing workshop' – goes beyond the scope of this article and would be a subject of further publications. Yet for Kolin, Minerva indeed acted as a 'publishing workshop', or rather as a cornerstone that provided exile publishers with an office in the literary Bloomsbury district and some vital connections within British Polish Jewish publishing networks, including the partnership with Faber & Faber, which sold and distributed Kolin books.

Research into the role of M. I. Kolin Publishers in the Polish émigré culture in the UK has a long and complex history. As early as in 1942, Tadeusz Sawicki included Kolin's publishing outcomes in his wartime series of bibliographies and listed Kolin among publishing houses with the largest number of publications 'in Polish or about Poland in English'.[20] Despite an extensive volume of studies that mention the London publishing house, the current state of knowledge about Kolin still can be compactly captured on the basis of aforementioned Zabielska's study which recurs in various publications. To date, it has commonly been assumed that M. I. Kolin was established by Ignacy Lindenfeld and Maurycy Kohn in London in 1940. Its outcomes comprised ca. 100 titles mostly published in Polish, including substantial number of Polish canonical authors (Adam Mickiewicz, Bolesław Prus, Stanisław Wyspiański, Stefan Żeromski), works by contemporary writers who lived in exile (Stanisław Baliński, Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska, Antoni Słonimski), books on Polish history and textbooks for learning English, as well as few publications in English. The publishing house supposedly ceased to exist in ca. 1943 and in November 1944 was taken over by Orbis.[21]

20 T. Sawicki, 'Wykaz firm wydawniczych', *Rocznik Bibliograficzny Druków w Języku Polskim oraz w Językach Obcych o Polsce Wydanych poza Terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, 1942, vol. 1, p. 58.

21 See among others, J. Zabielska, 'Instytucje…', op. cit., p. 565; Z. Lichniak, *Zanim powstanie panorama: (wobec literatury polskiej na emigracji)*, Warszawa 1983, pp. 185–186; R. Zakrzewski, 'Pół wieku polskiej akcji wydawniczej w Wielkiej Brytanii', in: *Materiały do dziejów polskiego uchodźstwa niepodległościowego 1939–1945*, vol. 8, Uzupełnienia do tomów: 1, 2, 5, 6, ed. Z. Błażyński, Londyn 1996, pp. 147–148; J. Święch, *Literatura polska w latach II wojny światowej*, Warszawa 1997, p. 300; J. Rzepa, 'Publishing "Paper Bullets"…', op. cit., p. 224; 'M.I. Kolin', in:

To date, little has been known about M. I. Kolin Publishers beyond this main chronological and publishing framework. Academic literature tends to focus on Kolin's selected authors and editors while there are few publications that analyze Kolin's activities and strategies as a publishing house. Since Kolin published some stellar works of modernist and avant-garde poets in exile, particularly writers associated with the Skamander Group, such contributions have been discussed and interpreted in the scholarship on Kolin's authors – including Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska and Antoni Słonimski.[22] Another figure that has eclipsed Kolin Publishers is Grydzewski, who initially assumed a modest role of a reader for Kolin books, but then, as Mirosław A. Supruniuk and others have shown, had evolved into an impactful editor and literary adviser to Kolin. Grydzewski developed and co-edited (with Zygmunt Nowakowski) a series of classics 'Książnica Narodowa' (National Bibliotheca), prepared two anthologies of Polish literature and edited other works.[23]

Indeed, M. I. Kolin Publishers had become 'our publishing house ... in Bloomsbury'[24] for Grydzewski and his periodical *Wiadomości Polskie, Polityczne i Literackie*. The delight with which Grydzewski described Kolin's premises (shared with Minerva) on Great Russell

M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja Mieczysława Grydzewskiego i Kazimierza i Haliny Wierzyńskich*. Naukowa Edycja Cyfrowa, ed. B. Dorosz, B. Szleszyński, 2022, https://tei.nplp.pl/entities/1679 [Accessed November 21, 2025].

22 See among others, M. Pruska-Carroll, 'Poetry of Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska: Femininity and Feminism', *The Polish Review*, 1981, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 35–50; D. Lisak-Gębala, 'Polish Wartime Poems as a Part of Radiophonic Propaganda During World War II', in: *Controlling Sounds: Music, Sound Technologies, War and Power in the Era of Fascisms*, ed. C. Koller, S. Just, D. A. Tomas, Leiden 2025, pp. 29–50.

23 See among others, M. A. Supruniuk, 'Pracowita nieobecność. (Prace redakcyjne Mieczysława Grydzewskiego w latach 1944–1947. Próby reaktywowania "Wiadomości")', in: *'Wiadomości' i okolice. Szkice i wspomnienia*, ed. M. A. Supruniuk, Toruń 1995, pp. 39–40; M. A. Supruniuk, 'Mieczysław Grydzewski – uparty czytelnik książek historycznych', *Archiwum Emigracji: Studia, szkice, dokumenty*, 2023, no 31, pp. 20–21; R. Moczkodan, 'Jedna z prac redakcyjnych Mieczysława Grydzewskiego', *Teksty Drugie: Teoria literatury, krytyka, interpretacja*, 2002, no. 76, pp. 81–82, 87–88.

24 M. Grydzewski, *Listy do Tuwima i Lechonia*..., op. cit., p. 35.

Street stemmed from the fact that it also served as an editorial office of his periodical, relaunched as *Wiadomości Polskie* first in Paris, and then in London in July 1940. Its misleadingly simple title, translated in the masthead as *The Polish News*, evoked two Polish papers with socio-cultural and political significance, and identical titles: first, *Wiadomości Polskie* issued in Paris for the Great Emigration in the 19th century and second, the weekly of the Supreme National Committee (SNC) during the First World War. The later was edited by the historian and politician Stanisław Kot, who hold several ministerial posts in the Polish government-in-exile during the Second World War – Grydzewski's émigré weekly was receiving a governmental subsidy in the first years. Since the writer and journalist Zygmunt Nowakowski knew Kot and the Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski from their common work at SNC,[25] he was considered more suitable for a smooth cooperation with the Polish government and became officially the head of editorial staff in *Wiadomości Polskie, Polityczne i Literackie*. The periodical was in fact led by 'the trio Nowakowski-Grydzewski-Borman': Nowakowski acted as its representative and author of editorials, Grydzewski was a *de facto* editor-in chief, and Antoni Borman took on 'financial tasks, along with advertising and distribution'[26] while working on the photographic archives of Poland at the Polish Ministry of Information.[27] And it was Kolin Publishers that financed, published and distributed the periodical from its beginnings until its politically-motivated closure in 1944.

Due to these interwoven relations between Kolin and *Wiadomości Polskie*, Grydzewski might have impacted Kolin's portfolio in various inconspicuous ways: from galvanizing his talented friends

25 R. Habielski, 'Emigracja i polityka: "Wiadomości Polskie" wobec dylematów wychodźstwa 1940-1944', *Kwartalnik Historii Prasy Polskiej*, 1986, vol. 25, no. 3, p. 58.

26 M. A. Supruniuk, 'Mieczysław Grydzewski – herbu Zerwikaptur. Najpokorniejszy sługa literatury', in: M. Grydzewski, *Silva Rerum*, ed. and intro. J. B. Wójcik and M. A. Supruniuk, Warszawa, 2014, p. 68, 74.

27 K. Muszkowski, 'Wspomnienie przyjaźni i współpracy. W trzydziestą rocznicę śmierci: Antoni Borman (1897–1968)', *Archiwum Emigracji: Studia, szkice, dokumenty*, 1998, no. 1, p. 214.

into writing for Kolin (his enthusiastic letter to Lechoń serves as an illustration) to steering readers' expectations with his innovative readership surveys in *Wiadomości Polskie*, in which he both instilled a sense of community and gain some insights into émigré readership profiles (a recurring main question of these surveys was: 'Which Polish books we wish to see published at the present moment?' and selected answers were printed in the weekly).[28] The complex relationship between Kolin and Grydzewski makes the editor's correspondence a source of important insights into the history of Kolin and Minerva – and has been used here as a supplementary source in the analysis of the Companies Court's documents, along with surviving letters of Kolin Publishers.

Founders and Directors

The documents produced for a winding-up procedure of M. I. Kolin Publishers held in the Companies Court's collection in the National Archives (UK) provide an account of the company history, its founders and directors. The legal procedure against Kolin Publishers was initiated by a petition filed by Scrutton Engraving in April 1944 due to the debt of £116 – it led to the compulsory liquidation of the publishing house.[29] Paradoxically, the financial disaster that contributed to Kolin's closure had also resulted in an abundance of more than a hundred of different records. Though these documents do not take into account Kolin's cultural merits, due to their solely legal and financial scope, they allow (along with other sources) to reconstruct the history of Kolin Publishers in lieu of its lost publishing archive.

The Scrutton Engraving's petition includes a concise description of Kolin Publishers. The publishing house was established on March 8, 1940, as a company limited by shares, with a nominal capital of £1,000 in shares of £1 each, and the issued capital of £497. The petition also provides 229/231 High Holborn in London as the

28 See among others, 'Które książki...?', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1940, vol. 1, no. 27, p. 5.

29 *M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.: Judge's Copy Petition*, Case number 101 of 1944, call no. J 13/17749/101, TNA.

address of Kolin's registered office. As visible in the *Memorandum of Association* (quoted by the creditor), Kolin's purposes exceeded the dominant activities of publishing and book trade: the company was not only supposed 'to carry on business as publishers, booksellers', but also as 'printers, lending library proprietors, bookbinders, newsagents, literary agents, press agents, advertising and publicity agents, general printers', which could have been a form of adaptation to exile circumstances through diversification of potential revenue strategies.[30]

Further essential information about Kolin Publishers' founders and financial situation was provided in the document 'Summary of the statement of affairs', submitted by Lindenfeld to the Companies Court on August 16, 1946. The publishing house was a private company initiated by its two future directors 'Kon and Lindenfeld, who had known each other during the Russo-Polish War in 1918–1920, again met shortly after the outbreak of the last war and agreed together to promote a limited company to publish Polish language books and papers. Each subscribed in cash for 247 shares and it appears that any further finance required was to be provided by Kon'.[31] With a nominal capital of £1,000, Kolin's assets were initially much more meagre than those of Minerva (which commenced its activities with £3,000 in 1938) – these financial resources were insufficient for the company with such robust publishing activities. Consequently, Kon lent money into the publishing house and took a debenture to secure these loans.[32] Apart from the company finances and key executives, the document also lists all London locations of Kolin's registered offices,[33] though accentuate that 'the main place

30 Ibidem.

31 *M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.*, call no. 13/17681, op. cit., TNA.

32 The court documents show that by September 1941, 'Kon's loan account was in credit for advances to the extent of £3,151' while by May 1944, the total amounts due under the debenture exceed £4,000. Kon was the only creditor of Kolin, who opposed the liquidation of the company and did not provide any specific amount of debt in a form filed by secured creditors dated 1st May 1944. Ibidem.

33 39 Cheapside (since March 1940), then 229/231 High Holborn (since August 1942), and King William Street House at Arthur Street (since June 1944). Ibidem.

of business' was the 'Commonwealth House, [at] 9 New Oxford Street', where the company's administrative office and bookshop were situated.[34] Kolin's beginnings could be then traced back to the formative experience of the Polish-Soviet War and a common fate of war exiles. Despite its legal limits, directors' cooperation was emphasized by the company's name – it was registered under as 'M. I. Kolin Ltd.', in July 1940 extended to 'M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.', in both versions amalgamating initials and names of its founders and directors, Maks Kon and Ignacy Lindenfeld.

Ignacy Lindenfeld (1901–1969) had made an impressive though uneven and rarely recognized contribution to the Polish publishing industry (Fig. 1). Born in 1901 in Łódź – called ironically the Promised Land (after the novel by the Polish Nobel Laureate,



FIG. 1. Ignacy Lindenfeld.
Archiwum Osobowe Emigracji Polskiej im. B. O. Jeżewskiego, 1970
©Polish Library POSK (UK)

34 Ibidem.

Władysław Reymont) due to its fast growing textile industry, red-brick factories and glaring economic disparities – Lindenfeld chose a different path and completed studies in Leipzig (Germany), then the European capital of print culture, technological advancement and innovative publishing houses such as Tauchnitz, well-known for its affordable pocketbooks, including a series *Collection of British and American Authors.* In 1923, Lindenfeld founded a small press Philobiblon – together with Tuwim and the literary critic Stefan Napierski[35] – and started to publish artistic books. A case in point is *Obłok w spodniach* (*A Cloud in Trousers*), the 1923 poetry volume by the Russian Futurist Vladimir Mayakovsky, translated into Polish by Tuwim – it has meticulously planned typography and a uniquely coloured cover, authored by Jan Tschichold, now best remember for the progressive design of Penguin Books in the 1940s.[36]

Another book produced by Philobiblon was written by the versatile writer and co-founder of Skamander, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz – his collection of poetic fiction *Siedem bogatych miast nieśmiertelnego Kościeja* (1924), with stylized initials opening new sections of the text, might have been the first book published by Lindenfeld.[37] In late 1929, Lindenfeld co-founded Alfa Press,[38] along with the publisher and bookseller Wacław Czarski (who in the interwar years worked on the volumes of Skamander poets for the Publishing Society Ignis) and the playwright and translator Adam Tarn (then known as Herman Załszupin). In challenging economic circumstances of the Great Depression, the company rapidly faced bankruptcy. Most probably, it was the same Alfa Press, which was supposed to publish the entire oeuvre of the writer and translator Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński's in a series *Biblioteka Boya* (Boy's Library),

35 'Do rejestru…', *Obwieszczenia Publiczne: Dodatek do Dziennika Urzędowego Ministerstwa Sprawiedliwości*, 1924, vol. 8, no. 18, p. 8.

36 R. B. Doubleday, *Jan Tschichold. Designer: The Penguin Years*, New Castle and Aldershot 2006, passim.

37 'Śp. Ignacy Lindenfeld', *Wiadomości*, 1969, vol. 24, no. 1228, p. 4.

38 'Do rejestru…', *Obwieszczenia Publiczne: Dodatek do Dziennika Urzędowego Ministerstwa Sprawiedliwości*, 1930, vol. 14, no. 35a, p. 28.

based on subscriptions. After Alfa's failure, Zofia and Tadeusz Żeleńskis undertook the project themselves, supported by Czarski.[39] Some of Alfa's publications, such as Adrienne Thomas's anti-war novel *Die Katrin wird Soldat* (1930, *Katrin Becomes a Soldier*) were included in J. Przeworski's catalogues.

In the early 1930s, Lindenfeld pursue a career in the Polish Literary Agency, where he attempted to obtain the Polish translation rights to works of foreign authors, including Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf.[40] In the second half of the 1930s, Lindenfeld became a literary manager of J. Przeworski press and had undoubtedly contributed to its success – including the establishment of its London branch, Minerva Publishing. In 1940, he became the 'driving force' behind Kolin. In his April 1941 letter to Tuwim, Grydzewski highly praised the industrious director and the results of his work: 'Lindenfeld is doing an excellent job, he publishes decent books and has an ambition to perform outstandingly, which is so hard to find these days. It is even harder because bureaucrats dislike that and invent all sorts of obstacles'.[41] In Grydzewski's published correspondence, Lindenfeld is the principal figure almost synonymous with Kolin Publishers while the other founder Kon resides on the margins.

Consequently, what attracts attention in the court documents is the identity of Kolin's co-founder, director and main investor – previously mistakenly ascribed to Maurycy Kohn – it was the industrialist, banker and philanthropist Maks Kon (1896–1966[42]), from the wealthy and disreputable Polish Jewish industrialist Kon family,

39 B. Winklowa, *Nad Wisłą i nad Sekwaną. Biografia Tadeusza Boya-Żeleńskiego*, Warszawa 1998, pp. 145–149.

40 P. Pająk, 'Absent Presence: Virginia Woolf and British Polish Jewish Publishing Networks', *Modernism/modernity,* 2025, vol. 32, no. 2, p. 317.

41 M. Grydzewski, *Listy do Tuwima i Lechonia…*, op. cit., p. 54.

42 'Kon, Maks. Age: 70', Deaths Registered in October, November, December 1966, GRO Index Ref. no. Chelsea, vol. 5A, p. 631, England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007, General Register Office via Findmypast.co.uk (the National Archives' partner site) [Accessed November 20, 2025].

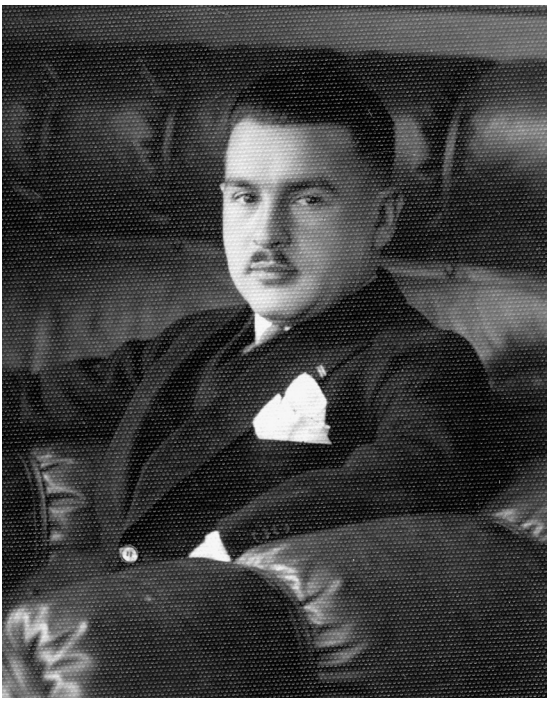


FIG. 2. Maks Kon by J. Szenfeld,
call. no. 3/1/0/8/213, National Digital Archives [Public domain]

who owned Widzew Manufacture in Łódź (Fig. 2).[43] He completed both trade studies in Switzerland and law studies at the Vilnius University, and had also a military training, since he fought in the Polish-Soviet War,[44] and was awarded the Cross of Valour for his actions.[45] While working in the family company, Kon was engaged in various charity and educational organizations, from the Red Cross to Uzdrowisko to 'Nosen Lechem – Dać chleba'.[46] As an

43 The identity of Maks Kon as the founder of Kolin was further confirmed by the comparison of data between Kolin's court documents and Kon's naturalization certificate. *Naturalisation Certificate: Maks Kon*, March 30, 1948, call no. HO 334/207/40905, TNA.

44 'Kon Maks', in: S. Łoza, *Czy wiesz kto to jest?* Warszawa 1938, p. 355.

45 J. Benešić, *Osiem lat w Warszawie: (kronika)*, transl. D. Cirlić-Straszyńska, ed. H. Kirchner, Warszawa 1985, p. 230, 234.

46 'Żydzi! Nie zapominajcie...', *Głos Poranny*, 1938, vol. 10, no. 77, p. 12.

honorary consul of Sweden, he organized local branches of Polish-Swedish and Polish Estonian Societies.[47] Kon also financially supported the series 'Yugoslavian Library' created by the poet and translator Julije Benešić, who left a sympathetic portrait of the industrialist in his memories – as a Gatsby-like charming, generous and melodramatic character.[48] And yet, local sensationalist newspapers repeatedly portrayed Kon amid various scandals.[49] In the late 1930s, he initiated a prolonged legal fight with his father, Oskar Kon, accusing him of mistreatment, defamation, and repeated attempts at unfair exclusion from family business. Though Maks Kon won a significant victory against his father both at the District and Appeal Courts, he did not managed to prevent the Kon patriarch from steering Widzew Manufacture to a fake bankruptcy and bequeathing substantial parts of the company to the Nazis (in exchange for Oskar Kon's safe transfer to Switzerland, and then to South America).[50] Near the outbreak of the Second World War, Kon escaped to the United Kingdom and became a director in the British Overseas Bank, in which the Kons were shareholders.

In exile, Kon supported Grydzewski's *Wiadomości Polskie* both in Paris (since March 1940) and in London (since July 1940). Kon's surviving letter from March 1940 shows that he might have been motivated by some idealistic convictions: 'I hope that our work would have a cultural and moral impact on our compatriots, united with the holy ideal of the motherland's rebirth'.[51] A few years later, in

47 'Kon Maks', in: S. Łoza, *Czy wiesz...*, op. cit., p. 355.

48 J. Benešić, *Osiem lat...*, op. cit., passim, see especially pp. 223, 230–232, 234, 258, 265, 400.

49 P. Waingertner, 'Widzewska dynastia. Wzlot i upadek rodziny Konów', in: *Kronika Miasta Łodzi*, 2009, no. 2, p. 174. Such an image of Maks Kon was later re-used by Bolesław Lesman in *Recepta na miliony. Z dziejów rodu Konów* (published first in 1967) and further exaggerated by the Polish Communist propaganda in the late 1960s.

50 B. Lesman, *Recepta na miliony. Z dziejów rodu Konów*, Łódź 2025, pp. 337–340, 347–348; P. Waingertner, 'Widzewska dynastia...', op. cit., pp. 175–176, 178.

51 M. Kon's letter to an unspecified recipient, March 26, 1940, *Władysław Florczyk Collection,* call. no. 1777/3, POSK (Polski Ośrodek Społeczno-Kulturalny – Polish Social and Cultural Association) Polish Library (hereafter POSK PL)

April 1946, Grydzewski thanked Kon for 'his beautiful gesture that enabled the resurrection of *Wiadomości*', while Kon was 'moved by Grydzewski's recollection'.[52] This unpublished correspondence further confirms Kon's involvement, on behalf of Kolin, in the relaunching of *Wiadomości Polskie*.

Though Grydzewski's letters – echoing Kolin's very name and origin story – acknowledge the roles played by the duo Lindenfeld and Kon in the publishing house, Kolin's directorial board from the beginning exceeded that dual partnership. The court documents list five directors (in the order of their appointment): Leonard Harold Sayer, Reginald John Murton, Maks Kon, Ignacy Lindenfeld, and Aleksander Jarecki (Heiman-Jarecki).[53] It seems that Sayer was nominated only to fulfil the procedure defined in the Articles of Association, since he received no fees and resigned shortly after the Kolin's main directorial triad (Lindenfeld, Kon, Murton) constituted in the autumn of 1940. Unexpectedly, the first actual director of Kolin was Murton, a co-director of Minerva, appointed on June 3, 1940. Kon joined him a month later, on August 2, 1940. No earlier than on October 29, 1940, did Lindenfeld become officially a co-director. In spite of the loss of Kolin's archive, some publishers' letters printed on company paper were found in repositories in Poland and the UK, primarily in the Archives of Polish Emigration NCU Library in Toruń and POSK Polish Library in London. Customarily, the letterhead included the names of Kolin's directors in the following order (presumably reflecting their positions in the company): first Lindenfeld, second Kon (both with parenthetically indicated Polish nationality), and then Murton (without any national identification).[54]

52 M. Grydzewski's letter to M. Kon, April 3, 1946; M. Kon's letter to M. Grydzewski, April 8, 1946, *Kon Maks 1946*, call no. AE AE/AW/CXXXVII/7, the Archives of Polish Emigration, NCUL.

53 In the court documents, Aleksander Heiman-Jarecki appears as 'Jarecki'. *M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.*, call no. 13/17681, op. cit., TNA.

54 Kolin's letters were found (among others) in *Murton Reginald J. 1943–1952*, call no. AE/AW/CCXVI/4, the Archives of Polish Emigration, NCUL; *Fragment korespondencji Marii Pawlikowskiej-Jasnorzewskiej, 1937–1946*, call no. 874, the Adam Mic-



FIG. 3. Mieczysław Grydzewski and Reginald J. Murton in London in the post-WWII years
Wiadomości, 1970, no. 22 (1261), p. 6.
Kujawsko-Pomorska Digital Library, ©NCU Library

Despite his directorial positions in both Kolin and Minerva, Reginald John Murton (1892–1965) remains a shadowy figure in book history studies (Fig. 3). In the 1930s, he was a production secretary of London Press Exchange, an expert on photography.[55] Most probably, Murton was engaged in Minerva since its very first publication, the picturebook *Locomotive*. An inscription 'To our dear Reginald Murton in friend[ship] (a drawing of a ship) / LEWITT and HIM / London, the 24th February 1938' was found by Brian Alderson in his rare copy of the Polish edition of *Locomotive*,

kiewicz Museum of Literature in Warsaw, and in Władysław Florczyk's collection, call no. 1777/1, POSK PL.

55 'Customs Charge: German Political Refugee and Camera', *Chelmsford Chronicle*, March 22, 1935, p. 9, British Newspaper Archive (hereafter BNA), https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/ [Accessed November 18, 2025].

published by J. Przeworski in 1938.[56] By September 1939, Murton had already considered himself a 'book publisher' as he declared in the 1939 Register – he also provided then a refuge for exiled Ignacy and Margot Lindenfeld, who were staying in Murton's flat at 7 Belsize Crescent.[57]

According to court documents, the last person appointed as Kolin's director was Aleksander Heiman-Jarecki (1886–1966) who served in that capacity from September 18, 1941 till June 1, 1943, when he resigned (Fig. 4). Born in a wealthy Polish Jewish family with philanthropist traditions, Heiman-Jarecki was educated in Łódź and Manchester to become an impactful industrialist, active in various educational and charity organizations.[58] He was a member of Bibliophile Society and a collector of contemporary paintings, including the works by artists of the École de Paris, Roman Kramsztyk and Eugeniusz Zak.[59] In 1934, Heiman-Jarecki became the president of Polish Textile Industry Association, a year later he funded a library in Łódź as a homage to Józef Piłsudski. In the years 1935–1939, he became a politician and sat as the senator for Łódź, affiliated with the Nonpartisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government, thus supporting increasingly authoritarian Sanation rule.[60]

Heiman-Jarecki's contribution to Kolin is rarely recognized – it seems that only a note, included in the scholarly edition of correspondence between Grydzewski and the Wierzyńskis, informs that

56 Tellingly, in Alderson's article, Murton's name appeared with a question mark, indicating a lack of further information. B. Alderson, 'Valediction: No. 5 Jan and George', *Books for Keeps*, 2022, no. 254, p. 36.

57 'Murton, Reginald J.', 'Lindenfeld, Ignacy' and 'Lindenfeld, Margot', call no. RG101/0247E/006/7, Letter Code: AKED, *1939 Register*, National Registration, General Register Office, TNA via Findmypast.co.uk (the National Archives' partner site) [Accessed November 17, 2025].

58 G. Romanowski, 'Heimanowie-Jareccy: Rodzina łódzkich filantropów', *Kronika Miasta Łodzi*, 2017, no. 79, pp. 113–119.

59 N. Cieślińska-Lobkowicz, 'Śladami nieznanych przedwojennych żydowskich kolekcjonerów i właścicieli dzieł sztuki', *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały*, 2021, no. 17, p. 518.

60 M. Rzadkowolska, 'Heiman-Jarecki Aleksander', *Słownik Pracowników Książki Polskiej*, Suplement III, ed. H. Tadeusiewicz et al., Warszawa 2010, pp. 106–107.



FIG. 4. Aleksander Heiman-Jarecki
Album-skorowidz Senatu i Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz Sejmu Śląskiego: Kadencja 1935-1940, Kraków 1936, p. 213, call no. 816.561 A, National Library of Poland (Polona). [Public domain]

he was a co-director of the company.[61] Possibly, Heiman-Jarecki was appointed to replace Kon. In his letter to Julian and Stefania Tuwim, dated September 14, 1941, Grydzewski enumerated Heiman-Jarecki on a long list of Poles living then in Bloomsbury neighbourhood, adding that 'in the case of Kon's departure to America, he would take over the financial supervision of Kolin'.[62] Both Grydzewski and Kon might have wanted to resettle in the US due to a widening political gap between *Wiadomości Polskie*, Kolin, and the Pol-

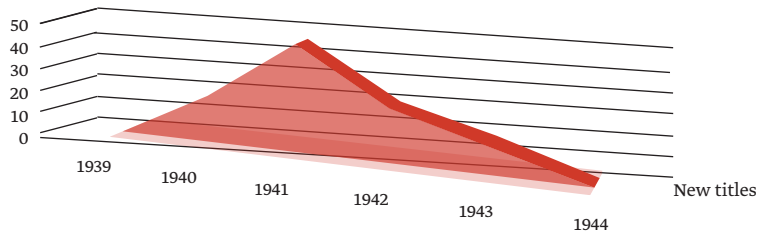
61 'Heiman-Jarecki, Aleksander', in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja...*, op. cit., https://www.tei.nplp.pl/entities/1717 [Accessed November 21, 2025].

62 M. Grydzewski, *Listy do Tuwima i Lechonia...*, op. cit., p. 62.

ish government-in-exile over the policy towards the Soviet Union (which had invaded Poland, following the Third Reich in September 1939 but later joined Allied Forces). This rift had also financial repercussions: the periodical not only lost the governmental subsidy but also a sizeable portion of allocated paper in September 1941,[63] though according to Kon, Kolin had 'received government grants totalling £1829' for *Wiadomości* until April 30, 1942.[64]

Publishing Profile

The same year 1941, marked by the strained relations between *Wiadomości Polskie* and the Polish government-in-exile, was also undoubtedly the most productive time for the company – yet Kolin's whirlwind growth, along with its UK expansion and rising costs of paper had already led to its future financial problems. If one considers Kolin's brief history (1940–1944) and wartime circumstances, its publishing outcomes were meritorious, with a total number of (at least) ninety-seven book and brochure titles presented in the Table 1. What is striking is a rapid increase in Kolin's titles to forty-four in the year 1941 – as visible in the Figure 5. In 1942, the number of Kolin's titles fell back to the level from 1940 (ca. 20 titles) while in 1943, which turned out to be the final year of Kolin's activity, only twelve new publications appeared.



	1930	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
New titles	0	19	44	22	12	0

FIG. 5. Kolin's publishing outcomes – chronologically

63 R. Habielski, 'Emigracja i polityka...', op. cit., p. 84.

64 *M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.*, call no. 13/17681, op. cit., TNA.

TABLE 1. KOLIN'S PUBLISHING OUTCOMES – PER YEAR[65]

Lp	Bibliographic data
	1940
1	Bogusławski, Antoni, *Polna kochanka*, London [1940].
2	Curie, Ève, *Maria Curie*, transl. Hanna Szyller, London [1940].
3	Fiedler, Arkady, *Ryby śpiewają w Ukajali*, London [1940].
4	Grabowski, Zbigniew, *Anglia - wyspa nieznana*, London [1940].
5	Lewitt, Jan, George Him, *Informator dla Polaków w Anglii*, London 1940.
6	*Kolędy*, London 1940.
7	*Kolin's Polish-English and English-Polish Pocket Dictionary*, London 1940.
8	MacCallum, Thomas Watson, *Nauka angielskiego. Szybko, łatwo i przyjemnie. English for Poles. An Easy and Quick Method*, ed. S. Wyszyński, intro. Stanisław Szober, transcription Tytus Benni, London [1940].
9	Maurois, André, *Dzieje Anglii*, transl. Wacław Rogowicz, London 1940.
10	Mickiewicz, Adam, *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego*, ed. Stanisław Pigoń, London [1940].
11	Mickiewicz, Adam, *Pan Tadeusz*, London [1940].
12	Nowakowski, Zygmunt, *Przyląd ek Dobrej Nadziei*, London [1940].
13	*Poland's Martyrdom. The German Invasion in Photographs and Facts*, intro. Philip John Noël-Baker, design Jan Lewitt, George Him, London 1940.
14	*Polski śpiewnik narodowy z melodiami*, ed. Waleryan Adamski, London [1940].
15	Słonimski, Antoni, *Alarm*, London [1940].
16	*1000 słów po angielsku: Najłatwiejszy samouczek języka angielskiego w 34-ch lekcjach*, ed. Ernst Wallenberg, Max Goryński, London 1940.
17	Wyspiański, Stanisław, *Wesele: Dramat w 3 aktach*, London [1940].
18	Wyspiański, Stanisław, *Warszawianka: Pieśń z roku 1831*, London [1940].
19	Żeromski, Stefan, *Wierna rzeka*, London [1940].

65 The bibliography lists the first editions of Kolin's titles (books and pamphlets/brochures) in alphabetical order per year, based on annual/monthly publication dates included in print copies, as well as on Kolin's advertisements and press reviews for not dated publications (particularly frequent in 1940, when fourteen out of twenty Kolin's books were printed without publication dates). This bibliographical research does not incorporate reprints and new editions, since such data could falsify the results at this stage of research into Kolin's endeavours. While popularity of some Kolin's titles is widely known (Słonimski's *Alarm* enjoyed a vogue, resulting in at least six Kolin editions in the years 1940–1941, along with a 1943 edition, translated into Czech by Frantisek Langer, illustrated by Feliks Topolski, and published by Kruh přátel československé knihy v Anglii), the information about other re-issued books is scarce; Kolin Publishers did not include the information about print runs. The bibliography is not exhaustive since it excludes *Wiadomości Polskie*, calendars, and some brochures/pamphlets which were printed without the indication of publishers yet were attributed to M. I. Kolin in Sawicki's bibliographies.

	1941
20	Baliński, Stanisław, *Wielka podróż*, London 1941.
21	Bielski, Lucjan (pseud.) [Knoll, Roman], *Głos z kraju czyli uwagi Polaka o ustroju przyszłej Europy*, fwd. Dominik Węgierski (pseud.) [Estreicher, Karol], London 1941.
22	*Bitwa nad Wyspami Brytyjskimi: Sprawozdanie Ministerstwa Lotnictwa z historycznych dni od 8 sierpnia – 30 września 1940 r.*, London [1941].
23	*Dziennik oficera sztabu*, transl. Włodzimierz Ludwig, London 1941.
24	Laskowski, Otton, *Jan III Sobieski*, London [1941].
25	Leitgeber, Bolesław, *Londyn. Oblicze i maska*, London [1941].
26	Lenartowicz, Teofil, *Bitwa racławicka*. London 1941.
27	Lewitt, Jan, George Him, *Polish Panorama*, intro. Hugh Walpole, London 1941.
28	Liddell Hart, Basil Henry, *Obrona dynamiczna*, transl. Włodzimierz Ludwig, London 1941.
29	Mackiewicz, Stanisław (Cat), *Historia Polski od 11 listopada 1918 r. do 17 września 1939 r.*, London [1941].
30	Mackiewicz, Stanisław, *Październik 1941: Fakty i dokumenty*, contrib. Stanisław Baliński ('O Ziemi Nowogródzkiej'), London 1941.
31	Mackiewicz, Stanisław, *Listopad 1941: Fakty i dokumenty*, London [1941].
32	Mackiewicz, Stanisław, *Grudzień 1941: Fakty i dokumenty*, London [1941].
33	*Manifest do ludów świata (luty 1941)*, London: M. I. Kolin, [1941].
34	Martin, Hugh, *Winston Churchill: studium geniuszu*, transl. Zbigniew Grabowski, London 1941.
35	Matuszewski, Ignacy, *What Poland Wants*, transl. Ronald Viner, London 1941.
36	Mickiewicz, Adam, *Grażyna: Powieść litewska*, London 1941.
37	Mikorska, Maria, *Spring Held No Hope. The Facts of the German Occupation of Poland*, London 1941.
38	Norwid-Neugebauer, Mieczysław, *Kampania wrześniowa 1939 w Polsce*, London 1941.
39	Nowakowski, Zygmunt, *Rubikon*, London [1941].
40	*Obrona Warszawy, Wrzesień 1939*, London [1941].
41	Pawlikowska[-Jasnorzewska], Maria, *Róża i lasy płonące*, London [1941].
42	Piłsudski, Józef, *Rok 1920*, London 1941.
43	Płużański, Stanisław, *Szkolnictwo techniczne Wielkiej Brytanii*, London 1941.
44	*Poland: Twenty-four Photographs of Poland*, London [1940?].
45	Polska Akademia Umiejętności, *Pisownia polska. Przepisy – słowniczek*, London 1941.
46	Poznański, Czesław, *Federacja... Ale jaka?* London 1941.
47	Prus, Bolesław, *Omyłka*, London 1941.
48	Prus, Bolesław, *Placówka*, London [1941].
49	Pruszyński, Ksawery, *Droga wiodła przez Narvik*, London 1941.
50	Pruszyński Ksawery, *Księga ponurych niedopowiedzeń. 1000 mil od prawdy*, London 1941.
51	Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, *Prezydent Roosevelt przemawia*, transl. Krystyna Szerer, London 1941.
52	Sienkiewicz, Henryk, *Ogniem i mieczem: powieść*, vols. 1–4, London [1941].
53	Sienkiewicz, Henryk, *Potop: powieść*, vols. 1–6, London [1941].
54	Sienkiewicz, Henryk, *Ta trzecia*, London 1941.

55	Sikorski, Władysław, *Nad Wisłą i Wkrą: Studium z polsko-rosyjskiej wojny 1920 roku*, London 1941.
56	*Memories of Poland. A Collection of its Best-loved Melodies with English and the Original Polish Text*, ed. and compiled Zigismond [Zygmunt] Stojowski, transl. Olga Paul, London [1941].
57	Szerer Mieczysław, *Naród w parlamencie. Prawo i obyczaje polityczne Anglii*, London 1941.
58	*Constitution of the Republic of Poland* (Official Journal of Laws, No. 30, 24th April 1935). *Ustawa Konstytucyjna z dnia 23 kwietnia 1935 r.* (Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Nr. 30, z dn. 24 kwietnia 1935 r.), London 1941.
59	Vansittart Robert, *Czarny rejestr. Niemcy dawniej a dziś*, transl. Ryszard Brynicki, London 1941
60	*Wiersze o Warszawie*, [ed. Mieczysław Grydzewski], London 1941.
61	Wierzyński, Kazimierz, *Ziemia-Wilczyca*, London 1941.
62	Wojskowy Instytut Geograficzny, *Zasadnicze wiadomości z topografii*, Edinburgh 1941.
63	Żeromski, Stefan, *O żołnierzu tułaczu*, London 1941.
	1942
64	Baliński, Stanisław, *Rzecz sumienia*, London 1942.
65	Benni, Tytus, *Ortofonia angielska: podręcznik wzorowej wymowy oraz słownik fonetyczny*, London 1942.
66	Czermański, Zdzisław et al., *Kraj lat dziecinnych*, [ed. Mieczysław Grydzewski, Ksawery Pruszyński], London 1942.
67	Fiedler, Arkady, *Dywizjon 303*, illus. Artur Horowicz, London 1942.
68	Fiedler, Arkady, *Kanada pachnąca żywicą*, London 1942.
69	Gazeł, Stefan Franciszek, *Z morza i portów*, London 1942.
70	Górecki, Roman, *Z moich wspomnień o Józefie Piłsudskim: (w siódmą rocznicę zgonu)*, London 1942.
71	Górka, Olgierd, *Outline of Polish History: Past and Present*, London 1942.
72	Lechoń, Jan, *Lutnia po Bekwarku*, London 1942.
73	Lechoń, Jan, *O literaturze polskiej*, London [1942].
74	Łagniewski, Lucjan (pseud.) [Langrod, Witold Łucjan], *Wrzesień w Polsce*, London 1942.
75	Mackiewicz, Stanisław (Cat), *O jedenastej – powiada aktor – sztuka jest skończona: Polityka Józefa Becka*, London 1942.
76	Mackiewicz, Stanisław (Cat), *Styczeń 1942: fakty i dokumenty*, London [1942].
77	Mackiewicz, Stanisław (Cat), *Cała prawda*, London [1942].
78	Mackiewicz, Stanisław (Cat), *Lwów i Wilno*, London [1942].
79	Norwid-Neugebauer, Mieczysław, *The Defence of Poland (September 1939)*, transl. Peter Jordan (pseud.) [Aleksander Tadeusz Lutosławski], London 1942.
80	Półkozic, H., *Polak a przyszła Polska*, London 1942.
81	Słonimski, Antoni (poems), Topolski, Feliks (illus.), *Popiół i wiatr*, London 1942.
82	Sokolow, Florian, *Kawalkada angielska: Sylwetki i szkice*, London 1942.
83	Strzetelski, Stanisław, *Goering poluje na rysie*, London 1942.
84	Bohusz-Szyszko, Zygmunt, *Wrześniowym szlakiem*, London 1942.
85	Tennenbaum, Henryk, *Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia w gospodarstwie światowym*, London 1942.
	1943
86	Baliński, Stanisław, *Tamten brzeg nocy*, London [1943].

87 Broniewski, Władysław, *Bagnet na broń: Poezje 1939-1943*, London 1943.

88 Grabowski, Zbigniew, *Europe Expects England*, London 1943.

89 Hemar, Marian, *Adolf Wielki: pamflet i dygresje*, London 1943.

90 Hemar, Marian, *Marchewka: pamiętnik satyryczny*, London 1943.

91 Mickiewicz, Adam, *Konrad Wallenrod*, London 1943.

92 *Polish Troops in Norway: A Photographic Record of the Campaign at Narvik*, photographs collected R. M. Neuman, design Jan Lewitt, George Him, London 1943.

93 Piłsudski, Józef, *Pisma wybrane*, London 1943.

94 Pragier, Adam, *H. G. Wells o świecie i o Polsce*, intro. Camille Huysmans, London 1943.

95 *Proroctwa i przepowiednie dotyczące wojny obecnej*, London 1943.

96 Wojciechowski, Konstanty, *Dzieje literatury polskiej*, ed. Juliusz Balicki, intro. Ignacy Chrzanowski, London 1943.

97 *Żołnierz polski w Norwegii: Reportaż fotograficzny z bojów pod Narvikiem*, phot. collection R. M. Neuman, layout Jan Lewitt, George Him, London 1943.

Culturally, one of Kolin's most impactful publications has remained the periodical *Wiadomości Polskie, Polityczne i Literackie* printed from 1940 to early 1944 – with a telling subtitle 'Political and Literary', emphasizing its Janus-face profile. Correspondingly, an analysis of Kolin's publications in terms of genres (Fig. 6) has revealed that literature (31%) and politics (31%) evenly dominated Kolin's publishing portfolio. Modern literary works (20%), created during the long modernist period (1890s–1940s) prevailed over classics (11%) written by canonical writers such as Adam Mickiewicz, Bolesław Prus, or Henryk Sienkiewicz – chiefly due to thirteen volumes of contemporary poetry by (among others) Jan Lechoń, Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska, Antoni Słonimski, and Kazimierz Wierzyński. Political publications, ranging from in-depth analyses of the Second World War and global relations to military reports on warfare and strategies to essayistic and satirical pamphlets, comprise more than 30% of all published books and booklets. Most probably, Kolin publishers angled their portfolio towards a large community of Polish soldiers and governmental clerks based then in the UK.

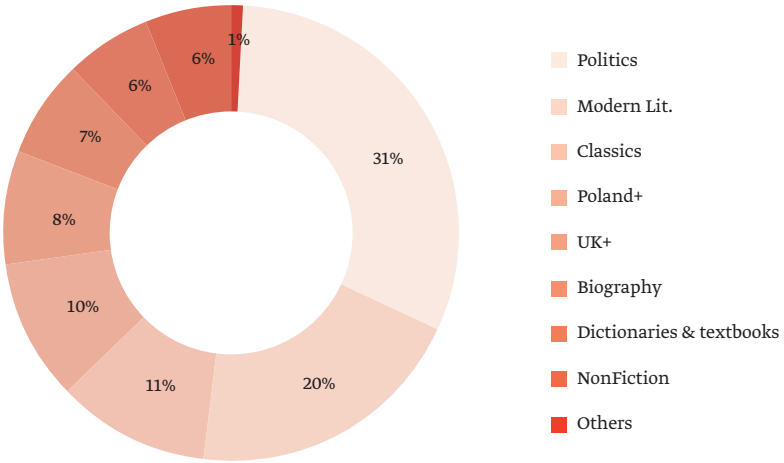


FIG. 6. Kolin's publishing outcomes - by genre

Among Kolin's books, publications that focused on familiarizing readers with both Polish and UK history and culture were well-represented (10% and 8% respectively). Kolin also produced biographies of Maria Skłodowska-Curie, the King John III Sobieski, and Winston Churchill, along with several recent wartime testimonies. Interestingly, the auto/biographical experience was emphasized in paratextual elements of some political and military publications, as in the descriptive title of *Dziennik oficera sztabu: oficera łącznikowego wywiadu lotniczego, przydzielonego do północnej ekspozytury sztabu naczelnego dowództwa Brytyjskich Sił Powietrznych we Francji w 1940 roku*. (*The Diary of a Staff Officer, Air Intelligence Liaison Officer, at Advanced Headquarters North B.A.F.F.*). Kolin boosted its finances by publishing dictionaries and textbooks,[66] including *Kolin's Polish-English and English-Polish Pocket Dictionary*, authored by F. B. Czarnomski.[67]

66 M. Grydzewski's letter to K. Wierzyński, September 29, 1940, in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja...*, op. cit., https://tei.nplp.pl/documents/279 [Accessed November 22, 2025].

67 M. Podhajecka, *A History of Polish-English / English-Polish Bilingual Lexicography (1788–1947)*, Opole 2016, pp. 254, 574.

Some of Kolin's English publications were lavishly illustrated, expensive, and affordable for a few – possibly based on propaganda funds for the Polish government-in-exile. Several Kolin's publications included unique selections of Polish interwar photographs – a case in point was Lewitt-Him's *Polish Panorama* – perhaps Kolin Publishers gained access to the archive of more than 30,000 photographs of Poland, due to Borman's work at the Polish Ministry of Information.[68] For *Polish Panorama*, the press accompanied the visual appeal of pre-war images of Polish landmarks and landscapes with a paratextual strategy of cultural transfer. This book was introduced by the bestselling writer and chairman of the Book Society, Hugh Walpole, who was devasted by the joined Nazi and Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939,[69] and praised the book in the highest terms:

> This book speaks to the whole world; it is a symbol of all the things for which the free world is fighting – God, love of man for man, domesticity, work on the soil of one's land, love of the Arts, freedom of speech and thought, comradeship of nations.
>
> It is a book for everybody – a book of friendship.[70]

Indeed, also in materials terms, *Polish Panorama* was among the most accessible of Kolin's photobooks with the cover price of 8 shillings and 6 pence. Contrastingly, among the most costly Kolin's publications was the photobook *Polish Troops in Norway: A Photographic Record of the Campaign at Narvik*, which was sold for 25 shillings[71] – it was published by Kolin for the Polish Ministry of Information in 1943, showing that despite some considerable tension over *Wiadomości Polskie*, the cooperation between the publishers and the Polish government still existed.

68 K. Muszkowski, 'Wspomnienie przyjaźni…', op. cit., p. 214.

69 For a multifaced discussion of Walpole's pivotal role in book culture, support for emerging writers and publishers, and his response to September 1939 in Poland see Nicola Wilson, *Recommended! The Influencers Who Changed How We Read*, Newbury 2025, passim, especially pp. 5–6, 11–14, 124–125.

70 H. Walpole, 'Introduction', in: J. Lewitt, G. Him, *Polish Panorama*, London 1941, p. 6.

71 'Księgarnie Polskie…', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1943, vol. 4, no. 50, p. 2.

If one takes into consideration Kolin's authors, a gender bias becomes striking. Among Kolin's publishing outcomes listed in Table 1, only three out of ninety-seven publications had women as main authors: the writer Ève Curie's biography of her brilliant mother, the Nobel Prize winner Maria Skłodowska-Curie to the journalist Maria Mikorska's non-fiction book about German occupation to the poet Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska's volume *Róża i lasy płonące* (her subsequent volume *Bagienne niezapominajki* was lost by Kolin Publishers when the company was forced into liquidation).[72] Additionally, a few works of women writers appeared in Kolin's collective volumes and brochures – for instance, Maria Konopnicka's poem closed the anthology *Wiersze o Warszawie* while three memoirs, written respectively by Kazimiera Iłłakowiczówna, Maria Kuncewiczowa, and Irena Tuwim, were included in the volume *Kraj lat dziecinnych*. While among Kolin's ten (acknowledged) translators were seven men and three women, the profession was less lucrative than writing and Kolin did not develop a strong translation profile.

In contrast with Minerva, which published only in English, majority of Kolin's publications were printed in Polish – ten English titles constituted up to 10% of Kolin's publications, along with several bilingual textbooks and an English-Polish dictionary. Consequently, the sales and distribution channels of Faber & Faber might have been less profitable for Kolin's distinctly Polish profile than they were for Minerva's English publications (both written in English and translated from Polish). While Minerva's English publications undoubtedly benefited from the partnership with Faber & Faber, who help these books reach a wider audience than that of Polish migrants with an advanced command of English, Kolin publishers established alterative channels of sales and distribution for their predominantly Polish books (Fig. 7) and reach Polish exiles dispersed across the UK, including large groups of Polish army forces scattered (among others) along the UK coasts in preparation for a predicted Nazi invasion.

72 T. Januszewski, 'Nota edytorska', in: M. Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska, *Danaidy. Utwory ostatnie*, ed. T. Januszewski, Warszawa 2003, p. 67.



FIG. 7. Kolin books in the National Library.
Photographs – Polona, no. 4 (*Polish Panorama*) by the author

Polish Bookshops in England and Scotland

The Kolin Publishers used a potentially effective strategy – they developed their own network of company bookshops. Each store was named simply 'Księgarnia Polska' (a Polish Bookshop) and presumably displayed a large M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.'s sign – as visible in a some photographs of Kolin bookshops. Initially, Kolin's chain offered simply 'Polish books and periodicals, along with English publications about Poland,'[73] predominantly Kolin and Minerva books along with *Wiadomości Polskie*. Within just a year –

73 'Dnia 8 listopada...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1940, vol. 1, no. 35, p. 1.

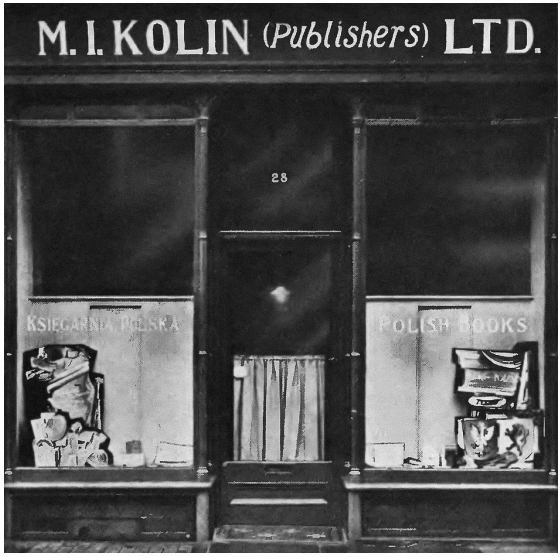


FIG. 8. Kolin bookshop in Perth. 'Księgarnia Polska w Szkocji', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1940, no. 37, p. 5. Kujawsko-Pomorska Digital Library. [Public domain]

from November 1940 until November 1941 – Kolin had had opened four bookshops in the UK, situated in London, Perth and Dundee (in Scotland), and Blackpool (in North West England).

Not surprisingly, the first Kolin bookshop was located in London. Its premises (along with an administrative office) were opened at 20 Bloomsbury Street on November 8, 1940 while the editorial office of Kolin (shared with Minerva and *Wiadomości Polskie*) remained at 36 Great Russell Street. Only a week later, on November 15, another Kolin bookshop was opened at 28 King Edward Street in Perth, where Polish forces were to defend the eastern coastline. A photograph printed in *Wiadomości Polskie* depicted the general officer and historian Marian Kukiel, showing *Locomotive* to a group of UK soldiers. Another photograph showed Kolin bookshop windows advertising 'Księgarnia Polska' (Eng. Polish Bookshop) and 'Polish Books' (Fig. 8).[74]

74 'Dn. 15 listopada...', 'Księgarnia Polska w Szkocji', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1940, no. 37, pp. 2, 5.

Apart from directors and editors, the information about Kolin's other employees is scarce – in September 1940, Grydzewski mentioned Anna Maria Szerer and Melania Gołaszewska, the latter became a bibliographer and a member of the Iranian Studies Society.[75] And yet, in March 1941, Grydzewski enumerated the employees of Kolin's Scottish store – who might have been present at the bookshop opening – in his letter to Lechoń. The bookshop manager was the publisher Wacław Czarski, who used to be Lindenfeld's partner in Alfa Press. There were also three or four female workers: 'both daughters of [Mieczysław] Szerer', an impactful lawyer and Kolin's author: aforementioned Anna Maria and Krystyna Monika Szerer,[76] along with 'Mrs [Helena] Michałowa Łubieńska, and Mrs [Maria] Bielska (née Baworowska)'.[77] He added that 'Mrs Gołaszewska, the daughter of the lawyer [Tadeusz] Tomaszewski, a current chairman of the Supreme Audit Office,' worked in the London bookshop.[78] While Grydzewski's reports allow to partially reconstructs Kolin's employee directory, it seems that Kolin's company hierarchy reflects the same gender bias visible in its publishing profile: women were employed in precarious jobs as bookshop attendants and translators.

Wartime and exile conditions not only reinforced gendered stereotypes, but also provided constant physical threat – in London, Kolin's directors and workers were affected by the Blitz. In his letter to Julian and Stefania Tuwim, dated September 14, 1941,

75 M. Grydzewski's letter to K. Wierzyński, September 29, 1940, in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja*..., op. cit., https://tei.nplp.pl/documents/279 [Accessed November 22, 2025]; S. Yarmahdavi, H. Saeidinia, 'Polish Women Immigrants in Iran since World War II: Social and Cultural Activities in the Host Land', *Konteksty Kultury*, 2025, vol. 22, no. 1, p. 88.

76 In the interwar years, Krystyna Szerer was the translator of Aldous Huxley's works (among others) for the Publishing Society Rój – in exile, she translated the key speeches of the President Roosevelt published by Kolin in 1941. Janusz Stradecki argued that only Anna Maria Szerer worked then in Kolin bookshop while Krystyna Monika Szerer joined the RAF. M. Grydzewski, *Listy do Tuwima i Lechonia*..., op. cit., p. 44n.26.

77 Ibidem, pp. 34, 44n.27–28.

78 Ibidem, pp. 34, 44n.29.

Grydzewski chronicled: 'our editorial office and store were injured in spring'[79] – Kolin's premises were bombed by the Nazis. And yet, in May 1941 – parallel to the end of the Blitz – the Kolin's London bookshop was moved to new address at 9 New Oxford Street[80]: the impressive Commonwealth House, designed in 1939 by the architect Henry Philip Cart De LaFontaine with a circular tower and Art Deco motifs, 'its smart modernism [was] expressed by mechanical horizontal bands of windows'.[81] The bookshop was transformed into a Polonica emporium, which apart from books sold 'Polish gramophone records, [...] postcards and festive greetings cards, Polish magazines and newspapers, buttons and eagle badges in various size, brooches' – these products were available in all four Kolin bookshops by December 1941.[82] On July 28, 1941, the editorial office of Kolin (along with Minerva and *Wiadomości Polskie*) moved to 229/231 High Holborn, the street that approximately constitutes a southern boundary of the Bloomsbury district. Despite all difficulties, two new Kolin bookshops were also opened in 1941 – first in July, at 24a Cowgate in Dundee (Scotland),[83] where Polish soldiers stationed, and then in November, at 40 Lytham Road in Blackpool,[84] on the Irish Sea coast and near a base of the Polish Air Force, including the famous No. 303 Squadron RAF that inspired Fiedler's bestseller.

Kolin bookshops became not only community centres for Polish exiles but also might have been 'ambassadors of Polish books and "cause"' and 'the centres of culture and information', which according to Andrzej Kłossowski was a frequent pattern frequent among Polish bookshops abroad.[85] A convincing illustration of

79 Ibidem, p. 60.

80 'Księgarnia polska...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1941, vol. 2, no. 18, p. 3.

81 B. Cherry, N. Pevsner, *London*, vol. 4 *North*, New Haven and London 2002, p. 306.

82 'Księgarnie polskie...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1941, vol. 2, no. 49, p. 1.

83 'M. I. Kolin...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1941, vol. 2, no. 27, p. 5.

84 'M. I. Kolin...', Wiadomości *Polskie*, 1941, vol. 2, no. 45, p. 1.

85 A. Kłossowski, 'Księgarnie Polskie na obczyźnie po II Wojnie Światowej 1945–1985', *Studia Polonijne*, 1986, no. 10, p. 150.

such roles played by Kolin bookstores in émigré culture is a note that appeared in August 1941 in the main periodical of Polish exiles in Hungary during the Second World War, *Wieści Polskie*, subsided by the Polish government-in-exile[86] – an anonymous author spared no praise to Kolin Publishers:

> Numerous readers are thirsty for the Polish printed word. Therefore, one reads attentively all announcements of Kolin bookshop, which conducts a publishing activity that is excellent in all respects [...]. Thus, we will always remember Kolin's bookshop windows – even if the store occasionally changes its premises – as a proof that we managed to nurture our cultural values in the darkest times.[87]

Of course, not all readers 'venerated' Kolin bookshops or characteristic advertisements in thick black frames – for instance, the playwright Wiktor Budzyński mocked them as 'Kolin's book obituaries'.[88]

Notwithstanding Kolin Publishers' aesthetics, these promotional pages reveal that Kolin's ambitious activities in 1941 included not only a development of bookshops chain, but also some attempts at the development of transatlantic publishing networks. In August, Kolin Publishers (and Minerva Publishing) announced in *Wiadomości Polskie* that 'they have entrusted the sales of their publications across Canada' to the branch of Macmillan Company, located in Toronto. More importantly, in October, Grydzewski informed the poet Kazimierz Wierzyński, that 'Kolin company has already had a branch in New York'[89] while an advertisement placed at the front page of *Wiadomości Polskie* notified readers that a new

86 K. Woźniakowski, 'Budapeszteńskie "Wieści Polskie" (1939–1944): Główny periodyk polskiego wojennego uchodźstwa na Węgrzech' (part 1), *Rocznik Historii Prasy Polskiej*, 2014, vol. XVII, no. 33, pp. 48–49.

87 'Kolin', *Wieści Polskie: Półtygodnik uchodźctwa polskiego*, 1941, vol. 3, no. 85, p. 4.

88 W. Budzyński (text), J. Faczyński (illustrations), 'Szopka Bez-Blackoutowa', *Polska Walcząca: Żołnierz Polski na Obczyźnie*, 1941, vol. 3, no. 51/52, p. 12.

89 M. Grydzewski's letter to K. Wierzyński, October 9, 1940, in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja...*, op. cit., https://tei.nplp.pl/documents/318 [Accessed November 12, 2025].

branch of Kolin was opened at 58th Street in Manhattan.[90] This announcement was repeated in mid-November,[91] but it seems that no further information about the US branch of Kolin Publishers was released.

At the beginning of 1942, all four Kolin bookshops were operating, since Tadeusz Sawicki's *Bibliographical Yearbook* was closed with Kolin's advertisement of its chain stores in London, Perth, Dundee, and in Blackpool.[92] By May 1942, however, the publishers informed that Kolin's 'bookshops in Perth and Dundee were transferred to Edinburgh', to a store situated at 31a Castle Street.[93] Next, in September 1942, Kolin bookstore in Blackpool disappeared from publishers' advertising. Following that date, only two of Kolin bookshops were operating, both located in the metropolises in London and Edinburgh (the latter managed by Czarski) – they appeared in Kolin's advertisement in *Wiadomości Polskie* until its last issue, in February 1944.[94] The last located mention of Kolin bookshops was included in Caldra House's promotional note printed in the weekly *Polska Walcząca* (*Fighting Poland*) in July 1944.[95]

Not surprisingly, both the closure of some bookstores and the decrease of Kolin's publications in 1942 and further in 1943 reflected the company's worsening financial situation. Kolin's sales increased from £17,566 by 30th April 1941 to a fixed amount of ca. £ 26,000 annually until 30th April 1944. However, only the first period of Kolin's activities (March 1940 – April 1941) resulted in a miniature surplus of £7 while three subsequent years brough rising deficiency: £6,024 (by April 1942); £7,790 (by April 1943); and £8,144 (by

90 'M. I. Kolin...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1941, no. 43, p. 1.

91 'M. I. Kolin...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1941, no. 46, p. 2.

92 T. Sawicki, 'Wykaz firm wydawniczych', in: *Rocznik Bibliograficzny Druków w Języku Polskim oraz w Językach Obcych o Polsce Wydanych poza Terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, 1942, vol. 1, back cover.

93 'M. I. Kolin...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1941, no. 18, p. 5.

94 'Nakładem Minerva Publishing...', 'Ukazało się nowe wydanie...', *Wiadomości Polskie*, 1944, vol. 4, no. 7, p. 6. See also Tadeusz Sawicki, 'Wykaz...', op.cit., p. 120.

95 'Mój Sekretarz. My English Secretary', *Polska Walcząca: Żołnierz Polski na Obczyźnie*, 1944, no. 26, p. 8.

April 1944) – the company's liabilities highly exceeded its total assets.[96] In his 1942 letters to the Wierzyńskis, Grydzewski expressed his doubts about Kolin publishers' strategy: 'They have great gusto and ambitions, but still strive to bring that to fruition: they kept a tiny volume of Leszek for three quarters and eventually, I needed to take that on my shoulders'[97] – indeed, Jan (Leszek) Lechoń's book *Lutnia po Bekwarku* was published in the same year. In May, the editor further distanced himself from the publishing house while discussing Wierzyński's new volume of poetry: 'I reckon that Kolin will publish *Róża wiatrów*, and yet, notwithstanding their generosity, they are unpredictable and just improbably unreliable'.[98] It seems that Grydzewski identified at least some inadequacies of Kolin's directors, since this collection of Wierzyński's poems had never been published by the company. Leaving aside some texts with clearly anti-Semitic overtones that focus on (Polish) Jewish identities/origins of people behind Kolin and *Wiadomości*, some troubling remarks suggesting that Kolin's (and Minerva's)[99] authors had been left unpaid for months – or did not receive any compensation – appeared in several satirical works published in émigré newspapers. For instance, in a socio-political satire 'Szopka Bez-Blackoutowa', brimmed with transtextual allusions to Wyspiański's iconic drama *Wesele*, Zygmunt the Brave – a figure based on Nowakowski (officially, the editor-in-chief of *Wiadomości*) – not only announces 'my poor Kolin / has to scrape the bottom of the barrel' after the loss of government subsidy, but also wears

96 *M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.*, call no. 13/17681, op. cit., TNA.

97 M. Grydzewski's letter to H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, April 27, 1942, in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja...*, op. cit., https://tei.nplp.pl/documents/322 [Accessed November 22, 2025].

98 M. Grydzewski's letter to H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, May 11, 1942, in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja...*, op. cit., https://tei.nplp.pl/documents/323 [Accessed November 22, 2025].

99 In Grydzewski's correspondence with Nowakowski and the Slavist William John Rose recurs an alarming case of the translator Kate Żuk-Skarszewska, who did not receive payment from Minerva Publishing: 'Lindenfeld did not pay her a penny for translation'. Z. Nowakowski, 'Zbigniew Nowakowski', in: *Z listów do Mieczysława Grydzewskiego 1946–1966*, ed. R. Habielski, Warszawa 1990, p. 16.

'a mourning toga' in which he 'wraps his pocket' when another character representing one of Kolin and *Wiadomości* author (Zbigniew Grabowski) asks him about his due fees – the editor evasively announces that even the (late) Romantic Adam Mickiewicz (regarded as Poland's national poet) waives royalties from Kolin.[100]

In October 1942, Grydzewski seemed deeply concerned that not only Kolin was in 'a terrible financial position' but also that there was little hope for improvement.[101] Indeed by 1943, Kolin's had lost its financial liquidity – some tensions were reflected in publishing correspondence. For instance, Murton complained in his letter to Grydzewski, dated July 8, 1943: 'Today I have written eight letters about sending cheques "tomorrow". It is so difficult for me to think of new excuses!'.[102] In the same letter, the director mentioned another Kolin's female employee – 'Mrs. Morris will be leaving us soon to go and work for the Belgian Embassy', and telling added '[i]n one way I am glad for her as it will mean she will get more money, but in another way I am sorry for I like her being here'.[103] The final collapse of Kolin was brough by a combination of economic and political factors, the latter connected with its flagship periodical *Wiadomości Polskie*.

Political Pressure and Bankruptcy

Both Grydzewski and Kolin's publishers had received first-hand accounts of Soviets' atrocities not only from the survivors from Soviet prisons and camps,[104] but also from their friends and families. By a strange coincidence of fate, in the same Lubyanka's prison,

100 W. Budzyński (text), J. Faczyński (illustrations), 'Szopka...', op. cit., pp. 12–13.

101 M. Grydzewski's letter to K. Wierzyński, October 19, 1942, in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja...*, op. cit., https://tei.nplp.pl/documents/325, [Accessed November 22, 2025].

102 R. J. Murton's letter to M. Grydzewski, July 8, 1943, *Murton Reginald J. 1943–1952*, call no. AE/AW/CCXVI/4, the Archives of Polish Emigration, NCUL.

103 Ibidem.

104 S. Zahorska, 'O "Wiadomościach Polskich"', in: *Bieg czasu, bieg atramentu: o czasopismach Mieczysława Grydzewskiego i o nim samym. Wspomnienia*, ed. and intro. R. Habielski, Warszawa 2022, p. 195.

NKVD detained the poet Władysław Broniewski, a former secretary of Grydzewski's interwar weekly, and the rabbi and historian Moses Schorr, Maks Kon's father-in-law on his marriage with Felicja (Tsipora) Schorr. While the Soviets freed Broniewski after 13 months, they sent Schorr to a concentration camp in Khorazm Region, Uzbekistan, where the rabbi died in July 1941.[105] In a letter to Tuwim, Grydzewski sent a partly hidden message that informed the poet about Schorr's death: 'About Kon, it was not fascists, who murdered his father-in-law, an honourable man, prof. Moses Schorr'.[106] Grydzewski obscured with emphatic negation the identity of perpetrators to avoid the 'interest' of British postal censorship that previously made him explain to police officers (responsible for intercepting espionage communication) why he insisted 'Send more flowers' in a cable to Tuwim,[107] who was working then on his poetic masterpiece *Kwiaty Polskie* (1949) – excerpts from this work were first published in *Wiadomości Polskie* and *Nowa Polska*.

As the politician and economist Adam Pragier recalled, after the governmental subsidy for *Wiadomości Polskie* was withdrawn, other repercussions followed. *Wiadomości Polskie* was subsequently 'banned from soldiers' centres – and military forces were even prohibited from reading the periodical'.[108] Furthermore, Rafał Habielski has shown that the Polish government's repressive measures might have also affected Kolin. Though Kukiel once proudly presented Polish books at the opening of Kolin bookshop, he became increasingly wary of anti-Soviet *Wiadomości Polskie* and at the same time impactful in the Polish government, as he became the Minis-

105 M. Beizer, I. Bartal, 'The Case of Moses Schorr Rabbi, Scholar, and Social Activist' in: *1968: Forty Years After*, ed. L. W. Głuchowski, A. Polonsky, Oxford and Portland 2009, p. 427, 429, 437, 438; J. Goldberg, 'Mojżesz Schorr – historyk polskich Żydów', in: *Śladami Polin. Studia z dziejów Żydów w Polsce*, vol. I, red. J. Tomaszewski, Warszawa 2002, p. 93.

106 The note in the edition of Grydzewski's letter mistakenly identifies Kon as the paediatrician and Tuwim's friend Józef Kon, (not married to any of Schorr's daughters). M. Grydzewski, *Listy do Tuwima i Lechonia*..., op. cit., pp. 73, 74n6.

107 [M. Grydzewski], 'Silva rerum', *Wiadomości*, 1948, vol. 3, no. 44/45, p. 3.

108 A. Pragier, 'Kilka wspomnień o Grydzewskim', in: *Bieg czasu*..., op. cit., pp. 322–23; R. Habielski, 'Emigracja i polityka...', op. cit., p. 84.

ter of War in 1942. The general officer recommended to withdraw both Kolin's paper allocation and governmental subsides for other publications unless the publishers transformed *Wiadomości Polskie* from 'political and oppositional' to 'literary and social' weekly.[109] Yet another governmental figure hostile to the periodical was the Minister of Information Kot – according to Świderska, the editors of *Wiadomości* believed that he contributed to the downfall of their periodical.[110] Generally, governmental threats and repressions against *Wiadomości Polskie* and Kolin must have had a negative impact on Kolin bookshops located in a close vicinity of large Polish army bases in Perth, Dundee, and Blackpool, resulting in their aforementioned closure. And yet, *Wiadomości Polskie* and Kolin remained increasingly critical of the Soviet Union, along with Polish and UK policy of appeasement of USSR over its demands for Polish lands.

In June 1942, one of Kolin books – Mieczysław Norwid-Neugebauer's work *The Defence of Poland* – was heavily criticized by sensational *Sunday Pictorial* (that paved the way to modern tabloid newspapers). The newspaper condemned 'a stupid book' on its frontpage, arguing that 'it puts forward arguments that at the present time make its publication stupid beyond belief' – the only 'argument' provided was a brief quotation from Norwid-Neugebauer, who warned against a looming threat of 'Bolshevik' totalitarian system: '[b]ehind the Nazi totalism there lurks the menace of Soviet Russia, the vulture of the present war'. An anonymous journalist was astonished that Kolin Publishers refused to remove such 'offensive passages' from the book, which supposedly 'waste[d] Britain's short supplies of paper'[111] – interestingly, evoking a measure that was indeed later used by the UK Ministry of Information against Kolin and *Wiadomości Polskie*.

109 R. Habielski, *Niezłomni, nieprzejednani: Emigracyjne 'Wiadomości' i ich krąg 1940–1981*, Warszawa 1991, pp. 43–45.

110 H. Świderska, 'Censorship and the Polish Opposition Press in London, 1940–1944', *Solanus: International Journal for Russian and East European Bibliographic, Library, and Publishing Studies*, 1993, vol. 7, p. 13.

111 'A Stupid Book', *Sunday Pictorial*, 1941, no. 1423, p. 1. BNA, https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk, [Accessed November 17, 2025].

The fate of Kolin and *Wiadomości Polskie* was doomed, as Świderska demonstrated, since the question of Polish press was raised in a series of secret telegrams between Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin in 1942. Stalin demanded that the Polish newspapers should be restrained – in April 1943, Churchill concurred, reassuring Stalin that 'The Cabinet here is determined to have proper discipline in the Polish Press in Great Britain'.[112] The Foreign Office was then carefully monitoring Polish periodicals and prepared a series of Polish Press Reports – subsequently, *Wiadomości Polskie* was identified as anti-Soviet. To avoid scandal and mass protests of the Polish community, the UK Ministry of Information used *The Control of Paper* (No. 48) Order of 1 March 1943 to supress *Wiadomości* by confiscating the paper allocated to Kolin. In February 1944, the Ministry of Information 'instructed the printers Williams, Lea & Co. of the East End to retain the paper they had in stock for *Wiadomości* and banned further printing, and both the Ministry of Supply and Kolin were told of these measures', which – as the Ministry of Supply rightly emphasized in the following correspondence – were illegal and could have been challenged legally by the publishers.[113]

Two months later, in April 1944, another printing company, Scrutton Engraving initiated the legal action against Kolin Publishers that eventually led to the company's bankruptcy – Williams, Lea & Co. became then one of the main creditors of Kolin Publishers. Both printers belonged to a wider networks of (at least) eighteen printing companies, with whom Kolin cooperated – majority of Kolin's publications were printed by the Riverside Press based in Edinburgh (23 titles) and Cornwall Press in London (also 23 titles), along with aforementioned Williams, Lea & Co. (13 titles) and Percy Lund Humphries & Company, with offices in London and Bradford (10 titles).[114]

112 Prime Minister [Winston Churchill] to Premier [Joseph] Stalin, Foreign Office telegram to Moscow no. 452, April 28, 1943, call no. FO 954/19B/500, TNA.

113 H. Świderska, 'Censorship…', op. cit., p. 15.

114 Other Kolin books were manufactured by Bradford & Dickens, Charles Knight & Company, Drukarnia Polska, E. W. Buli & Co., F. Mildner and Sons, Geo. Barber

Scrutton Engraving filed a petition for compulsory winding-up of Kolin to the judge Gavin Turnbull Simonds[115] of the Companies Court, due to the publishers' debt 'for the price of work done and materials supplied and goods sold and delivered' from November 1943 to February 1944. In May 1944, the petitioner's accountants were allowed to examine Kolin's financial records, then a series of meetings with Kolin's creditors was convened.[116] The investigation revealed Kolin's grave financial situation and, despite the fact that the press owed Scrutton Engraving only £116, the judge Lionel Leonard Cohen[117] issued an order for compulsory liquidation of the publishing house in July 1944.[118]

In the Companies Court's documents, the official receiver F. M. Collins (incidentally, almost a namesake of the mythical owner of Kolin) listed the following reasons for Kolin's bankruptcy: 'the failure of the company is attributable to insufficient working capital and omission on the part of the active director, Ignacy Lindenfeld, to control within reasonable limits the overhead expanses of the business'.[119] Both the limited capital of Kolin and some publishers' inadequacies suggest that not all charges against Kolin's

and Son, Kimble and Bradford, Letchworth Printers, Munro Press, Aberdeen and Perth, Oliver and Boyd., the Sun Engraving Company, Superior Printers, V. B. Kerrison & Company – and, apparently also Scrutton Engravings, which filed the petition against Kolin. Based on the author's research in the British Library and the National Library of Poland.

115 Gavin Turnbull Simonds, UK judge and politician, lord chancellor, who served as a Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice in the years 1937–1944. G. R. Rubin, 'Simonds, Gavin Turnbull, Viscount Simonds (1881–1971)', in: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* 2011 https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31687 [Accessed November 15, 2025].

116 *M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.: Judge's Copy Petition...*, call no. J 13/17749/101, op. cit., TNA.

117 Lionel Leonard Cohen, UK judge and barrister, who served as a Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice in the years 1943–1946. R. Wilberforce, 'Cohen, Lionel Leonard, Baron Cohen (1888–1973)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* 2004, https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30950 [Accessed November 16, 2025].

118 *M. I. Kolin (Publishers) Ltd.*, call no. 13/17681, TNA.

119 Ibidem.

were made on political grounds. And yet one cannot stop wonder whether the petition for winding-up procedure might not have been dismissed, if the court was working without political pressure, undoubtedly brought by Churchill's promise to Stalin. Not surprisingly, both Lindenfeld and Kon attributed the collapse of Kolin to the politically-motivated closure of *Wiadomości Polskie* – the court documents include only their summarized indirect statements: 'In February, 1944, according to Kon, further publication of the *Polish Weekly News* was stopped and this resulted in monthly revenues of £ 250 being lost to the company' (p. 3) and 'Lindenfeld attributes the failure and insolvency to the stoppage of publication of the *Polish Weekly News*[120] which resulted in a considerable loss of revenue' (p. 4). The revenue from the sales of *Wiadomości Polskie* might have been a considerable part of Kolin's budget since the periodical's print run had increased from 5,000 to 7,000 copies during the war. Possibly, *Wiadomości Polskie* also brought some other profits, since the weekly printed advertising of other publishing houses (including the prestigious Oxford University Press), hotels (e.g. Hamilton House), restaurants (such as Mirabelle, Bagatelle, and Gospoda Polska), and numerous small companies.

More importantly, when Kolin's directors refused to sell the periodical to the Polish authorities in the summer of 1943, Polish government-in exile turned from Kolin's financial patron into its main creditor. By May 1944, when sixty-two creditors lined-up for the winding-up procedure, Kolin owed its highest debts to the Polish Ministry of Finance (£2242), Williams, Lea & Co (£2049), and – quite unexpectedly, Minerva Publishing (£1810) – the last case might have been an attempt at what Grydzewski's described as 'getting any money out of Kolin', though it demands further investigation.[121] The only creditor who opposed the liquidation of

120 The court documents translate the title *Wiadomości Polskie* as 'The Polish Weekly News', ignoring the English equivalent *The Polish News* provided in the newspaper masthead.

121 M. Grydzewski's letter to K. Wierzyński, April 5, 1944, in: M. Grydzewski, H. Wierzyńska, K. Wierzyński, *Korespondencja*..., op. cit., https://tei.nplp.pl/documents/331 [Accessed November 22, 2025].

the company was Kon, who earlier tried to revive the company finances with loans, resulting in debenture and hence became its creditor. By December 1947, Kolin must have paid some of its debts, since only twenty unsecured creditors were then enumerated in court documents – tellingly, both Polish Ministry of Finance (though with an amount decreased to £851) and Williams, Lea & Co (with a slight increase due to interest rates), along with several Polish organizations (the World League of Poles Abroad) and periodicals remained on the creditors' list.

In his essayistic recollection of the politically motivated closure of *Wiadomości Polskie*, written in 1961 and titled 'Rozum narodowy a rozsądek polityczny' (National wisdom versus political common sense), Grydzewski, bluntly stated: 'the British government sank *Wiadomości*, and along with *Wiadomości*, Kolin sank'. [122] As the editor well knew by then, the downfall of *Wiadomości Polskie* was only temporary – first, the periodical recurred in a series of pamphlets and then, remerged in its final long-lived 'incarnation' (to use Grydzewski's term) as the weekly *Wiadomości*, published in the years 1946–1981.[123] In this venue, Grydzewski had developed his *Silva rerum* cycle, including the quoted essay, in which he fondly remembered the 'owners of Kolin company, who published *Wiadomości*, the bookseller Ignacy Lindenfeld and the industrialist Maks Kon'[124] for their firm opposition against any changes to the editorial staff and the modification of the periodical's profile into a 'purely literary' weekly.[125] Curiously, Grydzewski erased other

122 M. Grydzewski, 'Rozum narodowy a rozsądek polityczny', in: M. Grydzewski's *Silva Rerum*, ed. and intro. M. A. Supruniuk and J. B. Wójcik, Warszawa 2014, p. 596.

123 H. Świderska, 'Censorship…', op. cit., p. 16.

124 In *Wiadomości*, Kon's name was accompanied by a following note: 'We want to emphasize that £500, donated by Maks Kon, allowed to resurrect *Wiadomości* in Paris in March 1940. Only after that did the Polish government in exile bother to grant a modest subsidy, which devalued following the transfer of *Wiadomości* to London and then was withdrawn after *Wiadomości* had protested against the Sikorski-Mayski agreement in July 1941.' [M. Grydzewski], 'Silva rerum: Rozum narodowy a rozsądek polityczny', *Wiadomości Polskie*, vol. 16, no. 31, p. 6.

125 M. Grydzewski, 'Rozum…', op. cit., p. 596.

Kolin directors from his brief acknowledgment – though in the memorial issue of *Wiadomości*, published after the editor-in-chief's death, the periodical printed the photograph of Grydzewski with Murton, described as an 'English friend of the Editor' (Fig. 3).[126] Grydzewski closed his text with a paraphrase from Jean Anouilh's play *L'Hurluberlu*, in which a '"mad" general' claimed that 'the most important thing in a man's life is to be able to look straight into your own eyes while shaving in the morning'[127] – thus pointing to the values of personal authenticity and integrity.

Nine years later and shortly before his death in 1969, Lindenfeld sent a long confessional letter to Grydzewski, in which (among others), he alluded to the editor's 1961 *silva* and the message from Anouilh's play:

> After the 'fall' of Kolin, I did not maintain any relations with Poles – about that I am pleased. The only people I cared about were you, dear Sir, and Z. Nowakowski—I fraternized with Retinger because he was a great companion – he could be funny, etc. –
>
> n. b. [nota bene], I did not accept £5,000 from him, and that was his greatest resentment towards me. I do not regret it, and while shaving, I can always look in the mirror with a clear conscience.
>
> I wonder why I am writing such a peculiar letter to you, dear Sir. You do not need to respond, dear Sir. (Emphasis in original)[128]

Lindenfeld recalled here the politician and writer Józef H. Retinger, along with his offer for Kolin publishers, made in 1943 on behalf of the Polish government-in-exile, who wanted to turn the popular periodical into a government medium.[129] If the amount of £5,000 is correct, it proves that Kolin's bankruptcy could have been avoided if only the UK and Polish authorities had respected individual and political freedoms of Polish émigré press and publishers.

126 'Mieczysław Grydzewski i Reginald Murton', *Wiadomości*, 1970, no. 22 (1261), p. 6.

127 M. Grydzewski, 'Rozum...', op. cit., p. 596.

128 I. Lindenfeld's letter to M. Grydzewski, February 21, 1969, p. 2 verso, p. 3 recto, call. no. AE/AW/CLXXIV/3 *Lindenfeld Ignacy 1957–1969*, the Archives of Polish Emigration, NCUL.

129 R. Habielski, *Niezłomni, nieprzejednani...*, op. cit., p. 53.

Though Kolin ceased to exist as publisher in 1944, its lengthy bankruptcy procedure lasted until August 1947. In December 1944, a series of announcements published in *Polska Walcząca* and *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* (*The Polish Daily and Soldier's Daily*) informed that the 'Polish company Sphinx Publishing [...] obtained the assets of M. I. Kolin (Publishers)' and advertised 'Polish Bookshops' in Edinburgh and London.[130] No sooner than in February 1945, the latter daily printed first advertisements of '[t]he bookselling and publishing company Orbis (London)', whose owners – 'Orbis' Polish Travel Office and Witold Filski – informed about 'a great variety of books in Polish and in English' available in Polish Bookshops in London and Edinburgh, indicating that they formerly belonged to M. I. Kolin. Kolin Publishers was taken over by Orbis (London), developed then by Józef Olechnowicz, Witold Filski and others. In 1945, Orbis published some reprints of Kolin classics, lowering their production costs by cooperation with the same printing companies (the Riverside Press and Percy Lund Humphries & Company) that produced the first editions for Kolin – Teofil Lenartowicz's *Bitwa racławicka*, Adam Mickiewicz's *Grażyna* and *Pan Tadeusz*, along with Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Potop*. The new owner activated and developed the network of Kolin bookshops, since Kłossowski enumerated among Orbis venues the following: the London store – 'the largest Polish bookshop in the UK from its beginnings', chain stores in Edinburgh and Dundee, several bookstalls and some mobile 'bookbuses', reaching Polish exiles across the British Isles.[131] Owing to Orbis, both Kolin books and bookshops received a 'second chance' in Polish exile culture in the UK.

Conclusions

This article offers the first reconstruction of the history M. I. Kolin Publishers, an exile Polish publishing house that played a major cultural role in the early years of the Second Great Polish Emigra-

130 'Polska spółka...', *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza*, vol. 1, no. 307, p. 4.

131 A. Kłossowski, 'Księgarnie Polskie...', op. cit., p. 153.

tion. Based on extensive and diverse archival sources, it combines research in the Companies Court's documents held in the National Archives (UK) with a thorough analysis of publishing and editorial correspondence, dispersed among Polish and UK repositories. Such an approach has led to new significant findings about Kolin, its founders and directors: Lindenfeld's leading role in Kolin's activities, Kon's patronage for Kolin and *Wiadomości Polskie*, Murton's and Heiman-Jarecki's contributions to Kolin. On its margins, the article engages in biographical research, again using previously unexamined archival and press materials to provide more balanced 'portraits' of Kolin's founders than previous accounts, presumably silenced or misshaped by the censorship of the Polish People's Republic – thus, it could be a starting point for their in-depth biographies. Such biographical studies may take into consideration (among others) Polish Jewish identities of many cultural mediators that created Kolin Publishers and Kolin books – they require intersectional approaches that convey on the one hand, acknowledgment of diverse oppressions they faced (from Nazism and Stalinism to anti-Semitism of some fellow exiles in 'Polish London'), and on the other hand, awareness that notwithstanding all these forms of violence, Kolin Publishers emphasized 'Polish' character of their endeavours in the UK by publishing predominantly in Polish, introducing directors as Poles in the company correspondence, publishing the periodical *Wiadomości Polskie* (*The Polish News*), and finally, adopting the very name 'Księgarnie Polskie' (Polish Bookshops) for their chain of bookstores across the UK.

The article includes the first survey of Kolin's publishing outcomes and profile, based predominantly on data provided in the digital resources of the British Library (catalogues and British Newspaper Archive), the National Library of Poland (catalogues and Polona Digital Library), and the Polish Digital Libraries Federation – further enhanced by focused research in print collections. This tentative bibliography of Kolin's publications could serve as a basis for new research on how Kolin's publications were received not only in Polish émigré newspapers but also – particularly, in

the case of Kolin's photobooks and English translations – in the UK press.

Previous nuanced studies of the politically-motivated closure of *Wiadomości Polskie* were used here to contextualize and critically analyze the Companies Court's files on Kolin's bankruptcy to show that it was caused by both political and financial factors – contrary not only to the UK court that had submitted to political pressure and turned a blind eye to the governmental abuse of power towards exile publishers, but also in opposition to some academic publications on émigré culture that highlighted a purely political fall of Kolin, inevitably brought by the Polish government's repressions and the closure of *Wiadomości Polskie* by the UK government. More importantly, the research demonstrates that Kolin Publishers used diverse and resilient strategies of cultural transfer to survive at the demanding UK literary marketplace in extreme wartime circumstances: from the cooperation with local printing companies to the strategic partnership with Faber & Faber to the development of a bookshop chain across the UK to the publishers' attempts at establishing transatlantic connections with Canada and the US. Kolin Publishers' legacy outlived the company's bankruptcy as its books and bookshops were navigated by Orbis (London).

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