

Official Polish history in the era of the communist regime, due to its theoretical framework of Marxism and the particular narrative about the past (certain topics and events of national and international past included and highlighted or excluded) provided an important element to the symbolic legitimacy of the then political system. It was no exception among other historiographies of the communist block and it is not any exception when any totalitarian or authoritarian regime is considered. At the same time, the official historical narrative had become the ground of major, though the silent conflict between Polish society and the state power during the communist regime. A particular change in the production of history had started together with the Solidarity movement and became sharply vivid shortly after the marshal law of 1981.

History debate, including many varieties of historical reflection, had been essential to the grand systemic transformation that was also the transformation of the symbolic layer of the state and Polish society in the 1990s. The historiography that had been produced in the academic centers at that time, that is a few major Polish universities, has been researched minutely in recent decades. Once the influential names and works might be listed and the scholarly schools can be named and defined, the question arises about the scale of intellectual influences. The impact of high profile historical scholarship while measured by academic response was important for the development of scholarship and must not be undermined. The role of historians engaged at that time in opposition and counterculture have to be appreciated.

What is interesting from the general Polish history perspective, however, is the impact of these intellectuals on historical thinking, popular history, and local history (including local historians, the intelligentsia). The latter is the subject of the project investigation.

The project's aim is twofold: it strives to determine the pace of transfer of ideas between the academic (intellectual) and institutional centers and the periphery at the end of the communist system and during the political breakthrough in Poland in 1989. By focusing on local history in its setting, it aims not only at researching the reception of ideas but also seeks to identify and analyze possible fields and modes of negotiations, mediations, dialogues in the local networks and beyond, local voices articulation and communication to the centers. Finally, it aims at defining the role of local historians in the transformation in Poland and assessing to what extent their role was determined by the structures or it was due to individual/group agency.

The project, by taking the "local" as the topic and the field of research, take it as the prism to shed the light on a general phenomenon, that is communication of ideas and local agency.