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Popular abstract

Diffused experts' networks. The fate and achievements of Sovietologists from Poland in exile during the Cold War

During World War II many Polish intellectuals were forced to leave Poland. Among them there were outstanding experts in pre-war Soviet Studies, like Witold Sukiennicki, or Stanisław Swianiewicz. After the war they were not able to come back to Poland, and tried to accommodate themselves to the new conditions. Cooperated with Polish government in exile, Polish social circles, and tried to find their place in Western academia. But there emerged also a new generation of scholars, educated in the West, who became the part of Western Sovietology, like Leopold Łabędź, Adam Ulam, Richard Pipes and many others. And there were other types of careers in this field like this of Marian Kamil Dziewanowski – educated before the war, as well as at Harvard University, and like Seweryn Bialer, who escaped from Poland in the 50s as a mature person, and after education in American academia belonged to the group of the chief American specialists in Soviet Studies. During my studies of Polish Cold War exile I realized that a comprehensive overview of such this multigenerational phenomenon doesn't exist. There are some scattered pictures of individuals, but a more profound approach offering a compendium is needed.

The second inspiration is the fact, that at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin important works on émigré historiography and Russian Studies in the West were published – especially written by professor Mirosław Filipowicz, who was even able to invite Richard Pipes to visit Lublin. Being a professor of the university, after vast reconnaissance made as a Fulbright Scholar, and visiting scholar at Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University, I confirmed myself in belief that global picture of the milieu of Sovietologists in exile, who were active in the West during the Cold War, and before 1939 were citizens of Poland, is needed. The World War II disrupted careers of the whole cohort, and they disappeared from the radar of Polish historiography.

The main aim of this project is a reconstruction, detailed description, and analysis of this extraordinary group. Early phase of Soviet studies produced by former Polish citizens abroad appears in the literature only incidentally. Meanwhile a history of Polish-born Sovietologists in exile contributes to the history of the global knowledge. Cold War migration processes and emergence of postwar Western Sovietology frame this study. The project asks also question about intellectual potential lost by Poland, and tries to place Polish Sovietology in a broader international and transnational context of the Cold War.

Following the research of Marek Kornat, Andrzej Nowak, and Mirosław Filipowicz, Sławomir Łukasiewicz proposes project broader in scope, and innovative in methodology. Starting from extensive inquiries, through interviews with the witnesses of history, and taking into account world literature (like e.g. by David Engerman) he plan to prepare a compendium comprising both basic facts about intellectual biographies, and bibliographies, as well as sociological picture of the whole cohort. The research will deal with several dozen of experts dispersed around the world like Wiktor Sukiennicki, Stanisław Swianiewicz, Zbigniew Brzeziński, Richard Pipes, Adam Ulam, Marian Kamil Dziewanowski, Leopold Łabędź, Józef Maria Bocheński, Ryszard Wraga (Jerzy Niezbrzycki), Włodzimierz Bączkowski, Seweryn Bialer, Adam Bromke, and many others. Postwar Western Sovietology needed not only their experiences, but also language skills and expertise. From the other side practicing such research was not possible in the countries dominated by the Soviet Union. We still don't have a full list of experts in Soviet Studies, Polish citizens in exile, we don't have in our disposal bibliographies of their work important for studies on Russia and Soviet Union, as well as there is only a few examples of their biographies.

To achieve such goals the research will start with inquiries in archives located in Poland, USA, Canada, France, United Kingdom and Switzerland. Then after selection and preliminary analysis of gathered materials, the first preliminary picture of the group will be proposed. In consultation with sociologist some conclusions in regard to ideas' mobility, experts' networks, migration patterns will be proposed as well. Thanks to this the readers will receive a whole bunch of biographical and bibliographical data on the Sovietologists' milieus, access to their publications, and assessment of their potential. The project presumes also an innovative and interdisciplinary approach, from intellectual history, through Cold War studies, sociology of ideas, and migration studies to Social Network Analysis. All this would allow to indicate the most important centers, ties between Sovietologists, and their fundamental achievements, putting all this in the context of international Cold War Soviet Studies. The effects will be published as journal articles, and announced during conferences and seminar. A book will be prepared as well. The map of such experts and ideas seems to be a unique effect of the project. Thanks to this the project would cover this important part of Polish, Central European, and world 20th century intellectual heritage.