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**Bloomsburians in Warsaw:  
Modernist publishing networks and the Bloomsbury Group in interwar Poland**

**THE DESCRIPTION FOR GENERAL PUBLIC**

If British travellers – well read in contemporary literature and interested in fine arts – visited Warsaw in early 1939, they would have been surprised by a considerable popularity of the Bloomsbury Group in Poland— one of the most recognizable artistic and intellectual circles in the history of the British Isles. In many bookshops, they would have found Lytton Strachey’s biographical books bound in cloth and lavishly illustrated, along with single novels by E. M. Forster and David Garnett – all successfully launched by the Publishing Society Rój. And if they had gone to J. Przeworski’s Bookstore and Publishing House at Sienkiewicz Street, they might have received a leaflet promoting the Polish translation of Vita Sackville-West’s *Pepita*. Walking further, those visitors would have reached Królewska Street – if they had been intrigued by building with a neon sign in the shape of a centaur, they would have discovered that it marked the office of the prestigious weekly “Wiadomości Literackie” (Literary News), which had published several articles on Bloomsburians and their associates and soon would have shared with their readers a detailed report about an inspiring lecture on Virginia Woolf, delivered by the feminist writer Wanda Melcer in the Polish Academy of Literature. And since in the same building the Institute for Art Propaganda hosted an exhibition of British Art, those travellers might have admired the works of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant.

This imaginary walk through the capital city of Poland poses a challenging research question: How did Bloomsburians’ literary and artistic works “travel” to Poland? Drawing on new modernist studies, book history, and periodical research, this project aims to examine the profound role of modernist networks in these “travels,” or rather the cultural the transfer and reception of British modernism, and specifically the Bloomsbury Group, in interwar Poland. Extending (in one of their many directions) from the British Isles to Russia, those global networks comprised publishing houses, newspapers and magazines, as well as diverse cultural mediators – publishers, translators, literary agents, journalists, critics, reviewers, scholars, and booksellers. Those mediators were developing different strategies to introduce new experimental works at the local and transnational literary marketplace.

Since the beginning of the 21st century researchers have been exploring the transnational and transatlantic status of the Bloomsbury Group. And yet the Bloomsbury Group’s ties with Central Europe – and specifically with Poland – have still remained a *terra incognita* of this vibrant area of study. This project combines research in archives in Poland (e.g. the National Library, the Archives of Polish Emigration) and the UK (e.g. the archives held by the University of Reading, University of Sussex, and University of Cambridge), as well as in Polish and British digital repositories to illuminate a key, neglected aspect of modernism: the British-Polish cultural exchanges within Central European, and specifically Polish, dimensions of modernist networks. While largely focusing on the reception of British modernism in Poland, the project also attempts to fill in the gaps about the activities of Polish modernist publishing houses, whose publishing archives were lost in the Second World War and cultural mediators, who tried to diffuse Polish avant-garde aesthetics in the UK.

By bringing new regional contexts, this project advances scholarship on global dimensions of modernist publishing houses and interwar press. Among the main expected outcomes are several conference papers and articles published in high-quality journals as well as a book submitted to a leading academic publisher. The monograph *Bloomsburians in Warsaw: Modernist Publishing Networks and the Bloomsbury Group in Interwar Poland* (a working title) will offer the first book-length study of modernist publishing networks in Poland, with focus on the transfer and reception of Bloomsburians, along with some Polish experimental works in the UK. The results of this project will help to transform the current image of modernist print culture(s) and cultural mobility between London and Warsaw. Finally, the workshops and talks addressed to the general public, along with the project interactive website with selected digitalized materials, will help to disseminate the research results.