



Seminar

TOMASZ ZARYCKI

Johan Peter Falck Fellow, SCAS.
Professor of Sociology, University of Warsaw

*Polish Post-war Linguistics between East and West:
From the Legacy of the late Russian Empire, to
Marxism, Structuralism, and Post-structuralism
in the Context of a Semi-peripheral Autonomy*

Tuesday, 20 October 2020, 2:15 p.m.

Due to the precautions imposed by the current Corona pandemic,
the Thunberg Hall will be closed to the public until further notice.

You are therefore invited to join the seminar via Zoom instead:
<https://uu-se.zoom.us/j/69162726845>

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ABOUT TOMASZ ZARYCKI

Tomasz Zarycki has a degree in social geography from the University of Warsaw. He holds a PhD in sociology from University of Silesia, Katowice, and a “habilitation” degree from the Institute for Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Currently he is Professor of Sociology at the Robert Zajonc Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw. His main fields of interest include the sociology of politics, culture, knowledge and memory as well as the social and political geography of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, with particular emphasis on Poland and Russia. He works mainly within the paradigm of critical sociology, relational sociology in particular, and is inspired by the works of Pierre Bourdieu. His research focuses on the issues of elites, political cleavages in Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, discourse theory, as well as the critical and historical sociology of science.

Zarycki's latest book in English is *Ideologies of Eastness in Central and Eastern Europe* (Routledge, 2014). His other books include: *Gra peryferyjna: Polska politologia w globalnym polu nauk społecznych* (A Peripheral Game: Polish Political Sciences in the Global Field of Social Sciences, co-authored with Tomasz Warczok, 2016, in Polish), and *Totem inteligencji: Arystokracja, szlachta i ziemiaństwo w polskiej przestrzeni społecznej* (An Intelligentsia's Totem: Aristocracy, Nobility and Landowners in the Polish Social Space, co-authored with Rafała Smoczyński, 2017, in Polish). He has held visiting positions at several institutions, including Lund University, University of California Los Angeles, University College London, NIAS Wassenaar, University of Strasbourg and EHESS.

During his stay at SCAS, he will work on the history of Polish social sciences from the perspective of global, relational sociology, with a special focus on the field of Polish linguistics and literary studies.

ABSTRACT

In my talk, I will present a comprehensive and tentative overview of the evolution of Polish linguistics (as well as selected developments of the Polish literary studies) after 1945. It will rely on field-based analysis inspired by Pierre Bourdieu and attempt to contribute to the development of the studies on the international circulation of ideas inspired by the same school. I will thus adopt a transnational perspective on the given field of social sciences trying to contextualize intellectual developments in Poland both in relation to international trends in linguistics, but also in relation to the political field's evolution as well as to other disciplines of social sciences. By referring to dependence theories, Poland will be seen as a peripheral country, more specifically as an interface-periphery, that is a space under overlapping influences of two parallel centers: the Soviet and the Western ones.

The primary focus of the talk will be on the post-war era, which is mostly the communist period. However, I will also point to much earlier legacies of the Polish linguistics that influenced its post-war development, including these from the pre-1914 times, particularly from the Russian Empire. I will demonstrate how despite the restrictions of the communist regime, Polish linguistics and literary studies were able to retain a degree of autonomy, which was changing, but overall remained on levels much higher than in most countries of the communist block. I will briefly discuss how in the context of that autonomy some of the key theoretical paradigms have been receiving, interpreted, and developed in Poland. In particular, Marxism, Structuralism, and Post-structuralism. Even if enjoying more freedom, in particular in the intellectual dimension, Polish linguistics was, however, not able to develop its own school with global recognition comparable to one enjoyed by the so-called Tartu-Moscow school or the Prague School of linguistics. In my presentation, I will attempt to offer some explanations of this lack of effectiveness.