

## ABSTRACT

“Poles in Portugal during the Second World War from Polish personal documentation literature. Experiences of cultural otherness.”

This work is a study of the fairly extensive cultural distancing, experienced by Polish refugees residing in Portugal during the years of World War II. Questions to be addressed include: How did the Poles perceive the Portuguese (and vice versa) in the early stages of contact and how did that perception change over time? How did António de Oliveira Salazar, the “father of the Portuguese people” and the creator of *Estado Novo* (New State), guide mutual moods of the different social environments?

The research was based on the available Polish personal documentation literature: diaries, memoirs, notebooks. An attempt was made to answer the question of whether the integrity of their message could be fully trusted. This issue was analysed mainly using examples by Stanislaw Schimitzek, a pre-war diplomat and employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, author of books "Na krawędzi Europy. Wspomnienia portugalskie 1939-1946" ("On the edge of Europe. Portuguese memories 1939-1946") and "Drogi i bezdroża minionej epoki" ("Roads and wilderness of a bygone era").

The work also includes records of conversations with members of Stanisław Schimitzek's family (Juliusz Karski and Joanna and Waldemar Firek) and with a direct witness of the events in Portugal at the time, Beata Ostrowska-Harris, daughter of a pre-war Polish diplomat, Count Krystyn Ostrowski.

The analysis methodology adopted is largely based on New Historicism (aka Cultural Poetics or Cultural Materialism), a post-structuralist understanding of literature that treats any literary text as an entity closely aligned with the cultural context in which it appeared. This study also used the concepts of the autobiographical triangle by Małgorzata Czermińska, Philippe Lejeune's autobiographical pact, and the psychological discoveries about the

rationality of human judgments and decisions presented by Daniel Kahneman in his book "Thinking, Fast and Slow". When addressing the direct interactions between the subjects, the thoughts of philosophers of dialogue such as Emmanuel Levinas and Joseph Tischner were used.

Among other concepts, the analyses carried out shows the extent to which Salazar's dictatorship affected Polish-Portuguese relations during World War II. It directed thoughts, programmed behaviors, and increased the cultural distance between people so that the Polish (and European) refugees would still see themselves as others, and the Portuguese people would see them as strangers, who pose a threat and trouble. The strategy of fear management, creating the right narrative and maintaining a permanent sense of danger increased the value of the remedy offered by the fear dealer, Salazar, and cast him as a savior.

As such, refugees could have proven to be a valuable friend, an expert in a field, and the dialogue with them had the chance to enrich had interactions not been affected by numerous, top-down restrictions, such as a ban on foreigners taking up work or ordering them to be in segregated areas outside the capital of the country. In the end, Portugal turned out to be another country of exile for the Polish and for other European refugees.

After the war, fears of repression by the authorities, this time in the Polish People's Republic, influenced the way refugees wrote about past events. Manipulation interfered not only with current human actions, but also memories of previous ones. The recounted stories were redesigned, criticizing the political thought of the Portuguese dictator, who was praised during the Polish Sanation (Sanacja) movement. The final content of the message about past events was shaped already, regardless of the type of political system; also the individual conditioning scared the authors of the time, modifying the personality, culture, ambitions and the benefits they expected to present after the publication of their version of history.

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