

WOJCIECH LYSEK

Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences
ORCID 0000-0002-9180-5546

RICHARD PIPES: A LIFE AGAINST THE TIDE (1923–2018)

Abstract

The article discusses the life and work of the outstanding Sovietologist Richard Pipes, who was born in a Polonized Jewish family in Polish Cieszyn. After an adventurous trip to the United States in 1939 and 1940, he graduated in history from Harvard University and devoted himself to scientific work. For the next half a century, Pipes dealt with the historical and contemporary aspects of Russia. In his numerous publications, including more than 20 monographs, he emphasised that the Soviet Union continued rather than broke with the political practice of tsarist Russia. In his professional work, he thus contested views prevailing among American researchers and society. From the 1960s, Pipes was involved in political activities. He was sceptical about détente, advocating more decisive actions towards the Soviet Union. Between 1981 and 1983, he was the director of the Department of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the National Security Council in the administration of President Ronald Reagan. Although retiring in 1996, he did not give up his scientific activity. Pipes died on 17 May 2018; according to his last will, his private book collection of 3,500 volumes has been donated to the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Keywords: revolution, Russia, Richard Pipes, Soviet studies.

INTRODUCTION

When recalling the excellent historian Richard Pipes, who died on 17 May 2018, it is worth looking through the extensive biography to see his achievements and also the circumstances in which he worked.

We can assume from Professor Andrzej Nowak that Pipes' personal contact with violence unleashed by Józef Stalin and Adolf Hitler was a lasting experience for him. He was, therefore, never tempted by historical revisionism, seeking "positive sides" in the system that prevailed in the Soviet Union (USSR). This principled approach exposed Pipes to ostracism by a large part of the "progressive" Soviet environment.¹

In turn, when looking at Pipes from the perspective of his achievements, it is appropriate to classify him as the leading representative of the "theory of continuation of Russian autocracy in the form of the Soviet regime."² He advocated a historical approach to the phenomenon of the system prevailing in the Soviet Union, the first totalitarian state in the history of the world.³ However, a description of Pipes' views should start with a few words about his place of birth.

CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

Richard Pipes was born in 1923 in Polish Cieszyn, where his father, Marek Pipes, was a co-owner of a chocolate factory.⁴ He grew up in a Jewish assimilated family,⁵ strongly associated with the Polish tradition of independence. Between 1914 and 1917, Marek Pipes served in the Third Brigade of the Polish Legions.⁶ At that time, he made friends with officers who co-founded, particularly after 1926, the elite of the Second Polish Republic.⁷

For most of his stay in Poland, Richard Pipes lived in Warsaw. After the occupation of the country by Wehrmacht, he left the city

¹ A. Nowak, *Richard Pipes: historyk „imperium zła”*, „Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej” 2018, No. LIII, p. 8.

² As quoted in M. Kornat, *Sowiecki totalitaryzm w myśli historycznej Richarda Pipesa*, „Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej” 2018, No. LIII, p. 17.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 19, 28–29.

⁴ The Pipes family lived in Cieszyn for four years. Marek Pipes and his three partners opened the Dea chocolate factory, which still exists under the name "Olza" and produces the popular Prince Polo bars. However, in Kraków, with the support of several other people, he founded a branch of the company Pischinger & Co., which currently functions as Wawel. Cf. R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs of a Non-Belonger*, New Haven 2003, pp.17–18.

⁵ After puberty, Pipes began to describe himself as "a non-practicing, orthodox Jew." *Ibidem*, p. 23.

⁶ M. Gałęzowski, *Na wzór Berka Joselewicza. Żołnierze i oficerowie pochodzenia żydowskiego w Legionach Polskich*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 528–529.

⁷ Several of these acquaintances enabled the Pipes family to be saved in October 1939. One of them was Bolesław Wieniawa-Długoszowski (Polish ambassador in Rome from May 1938 to June 1940), who helped the Pipes family during their stay in the Eternal City. Cf. R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, pp. 15, 33.

with his parents on 27 October 1939 and travelled through Munich, Innsbruck and Rome using a false South American visa. He described the adventurous journey to the United States (US) in his recollections entitled *VIXI: Memoirs of a Non-Belonger*. He devoted a lot of space to pre-war Poland, writing about anti-Semitism among other issues. Nevertheless, his memories are dominated by a feeling of affection towards his country of origin.⁸

Upon arriving in the United States, Pipes' parents settled in Elimira near New York in 1940. Shortly after arrival, he began studying at Miskingum College, Ohio.⁹ In 1942, he was called into the US Army and remained in the US after receiving citizenship in 1943.¹⁰

In 1938, he discovered a passion for the history of art.¹¹ He devoted a book entitled *Russia's Itinerant Painters* to this subject (2008). It concerns representatives of realistic painting who were involved in public activity.¹² These first serious interests, as well as later ones regarding scientific work, raised his practical father's fears, who worried about his son's lack of interest in running a family business and choosing such an uncertain life path.¹³

BEGINNINGS OF PIPES' INTEREST IN RUSSIA

Richard Pipes began to be interested in Russia during his stay in the US. Earlier, this country had not attracted his attention and his knowledge of Russia had been quite scanty despite its geographical proximity to the Second Polish Republic. As he claimed, "Russia was separated by an impassable wall." However, he had a reason to search for news about it. During World War I, two of his mother's brothers found themselves in tsarist Russia and did not return to the reborn Poland afterwards. They married Russian women and settled in Leningrad. Even scant information about terror in the 1930s did not manage to arouse young Pipes' interest in that country.¹⁴

⁸ W. Materski, *Opinia dla Senatu Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w związku z nadaniem tytułu doktora honoris causa Profesorowi Richardowi Pipesowi*, in: J. Malicki (ed.), *Historia est testis temporum. Księga Pamiątkowa z okazji Jubileuszu 90-lecia Profesorów Richarda Pipesa, Piotra Wandycza, Zbigniewa Wójcika*, Warszawa 2017, p. 21.

⁹ W. Grimes, *Richard Pipes, Historian of Russia and Reagan Aide, Dies at 94*, "The New York Times", May 17, 2018, <http://archive.fo/95jAf#selection-451.0-451.166> [access: December 1, 2018].

¹⁰ W. Materski, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹¹ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, p. 25.

¹² W. Materski, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹³ R. Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 37–38.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 15–16.

Having been pushed to study Russian at Cornell University as part of his service in the US Air Force, the future researcher of Russia began to learn about the specifics of this country.¹⁵ Around 1941, he realised that his knowledge of Polish would help him learn Russian.¹⁶

In 1946, after the end of World War II, thousands of US army soldiers were demobilised. Pipes took part in President Harry Truman's programme aimed at mitigating the effects of this phenomenon, and, along with other soldiers, began his studies.¹⁷ He decided to combine his new interests in Russia with history, choosing between three colleges : Columbia, Yale and Harvard. As he claimed, he preferred Harvard from the beginning. He was finally convinced by the extremely friendly and helpful Professor Mikhail Karpowicz, who worked there, and by the large number of bookstores in the small town of Cambridge where Harvard University is located.¹⁸

He decided to specialise in history after reading *Historia generale de la civilisation en Europe* (1828) by Francois Guizot who presented a philosophical approach. Pipes joined this trend because, in his research, he understood history as relations between events, the links between them, as well as its causes and effects.¹⁹ Taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the US education system, he passed smoothly from master's to doctoral studies, finishing the latter with a doctoral degree from Harvard University in 1950.

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Russia remained Pipes' area of research throughout the entire period of his professional activity. In his works, he focused on the history of the tsarist state in modern times and in recent history. In his scientific work, he dealt with the historical and contemporary aspects of Russia. He obtained his doctorate for his work about the Bolshevik theory of nationality entitled *The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism 1917–1923*, which was published in 1954.

¹⁵ W. Grimes, *Richard Pipes, Historian of Russia...*

¹⁶ R. Pipes, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–49.

¹⁷ *In Memoriam: Richard Pipes*, Davies Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, May 17, 2018, <https://daviscenter.fas.harvard.edu/news/memoriam-richard-pipes> [access: December 1, 2018].

¹⁸ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, p. 62.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

While working on this dissertation, Pipes assumed that Russia was a multinational empire before and after the revolution.²⁰ For an immigrant from Central and Eastern Europe, this was obvious. From 1950, Pipes was sure that the national question would weaken central power in Russia and lead to the collapse of the empire in the future.²¹

However, according to most Western specialists dealing with the Soviet Union, this statement seemed exotic and extremely bold.²² In general, it should be emphasised that in the mid-twentieth century such views were criticised by almost all specialists in this subject.²³ In the US after World War II, most historians shared the revisionist approach to the Soviet Union which emphasised social and economic issues, referring to the French Annales school.

After 1968, the Bolshevik Revolution was even considered a genuine social explosion and not a political upheaval as suggested by its critics, such as Richard Pipes, Martin Malia and Robert Conquest, who were perceived as “Cold War instigators” by revisionists.²⁴ The revisionist approach, represented by Sheila Fitzpatrick, among others, refrained from human and moral evaluation of the USSR, which – as Pipes indicated – largely contributed to the erroneous prediction of this country’s future.²⁵

In 1950, Pipes obtained his doctoral degree and also published his first scientific article. As he himself admitted, it was a work on Russian military colonies under Alexander I published in “The Journal of Modern History.” However, according to Professor Mirosław Filipowicz, a review which appeared in “The Russian Review” in 1950 should be considered Pipes’ first publication.²⁶

²⁰ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, pp. 75–76.

²¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski developed his views at the same time. However, he had already preached the existence of “Soviet nationalism” in his master’s thesis, proving that “it was a Russian empire after all.” In later years, as a national security advisor to President Jimmy Carter, he supported national movements within the USSR. However, due to the sluggishness of bureaucracy, relevant activities were not implemented. For more, see: A. Lubowski, *Zbig. Człowiek, który podminował Kreml*, Warszawa 2011, pp. 25, 42–44; *Strateg* [The Strategist], a documentary, TVN, 2013, the recording is in the possession of the author.

²² A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii? Przypadki Leopolda Łabędzia, Adama Ulama i Richarda Pipesa*, in: A. Nowak, *Oftary, imperia i historycy. Studium przypadków (od XVIII do XXI wieku)*, Kraków 2009, p. 164.

²³ M. Filipowicz, *Emigranci i jankesi. O amerykańskich historykach Rosji*, Lublin 2007, p. 83.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 116–117.

²⁵ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, p. 94–95.

²⁶ M. Filipowicz, *Emigranci i jankesi*, Lublin 2007, p. 80.

In 1963, Pipes obtained a professorship at Harvard University. Until his retirement in 1996, he lectured there on modern history and political science, particularly on the history of Russia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and Central and Eastern Europe after World War II.²⁷

In 1964, based on Pipes' idea which appeared at his seminar and was implemented by his students, *Krytyka* [Criticism] was created – a periodical magazine about books on the history of Russia, published in the Soviet Union. With 500 subscribers, the magazine did not make a financial loss and was published three times a year until 1984, when the number of students dealing with the history of Russia at Harvard fell to two or three people.²⁸

In the 1960s, Pipes was recognised as one of the most outstanding Russianists, an expert on the history of Russia and its multilingual residents. Between 1968 and 1973, he managed the Russian Research Center, which was created after World War II to deal with conflicts and global threats caused by communism.²⁹

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

The main area of Pipes' activity in the public sphere was criticism of the US conciliatory policy towards the Soviet Union. In the early 1960s, Pipes, alongside Zbigniew Brzezinski and Adam Ulam (all three came from Poland), publicly advocated Washington's more decisive position during the Cuban crisis.³⁰ In the 1970s, Pipes became a consultant to Senator Henry Jackson in a campaign against the détente policy, which he believed was wrong.³¹

The first state structure to which Professor Pipes belonged was "Team B", operating in 1976. President Gerald Ford appointed a group of independent specialists to analyse reports of the Central Intelligence Agency on the policies and strategies of the Soviet Union.³² The team was led by Pipes and included Paul Nitze and Paul Wolfowitz. The

²⁷ W. Materski, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

²⁸ R. Pipes, *VIX: Memoirs...*, p. 94.

²⁹ W. Materski, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

³⁰ A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii?*, in: *idem, Ofiary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, p. 155.

³¹ *Detente* (franc. *odprężenie*) – this term is used in international relations to denote the easing of strained relations between the parties to the Cold War in the 1970s.

³² W. Grimes, *op. cit.*

team showed that Soviet strategists did not seek balance but aimed at achieving a nuclear advantage over the US.³³

Pipes continued his involvement in the neoconservative Committee on the Present Danger in the late 1970s.³⁴ Thanks to his consistent position towards the USSR, Pipes became the director of the Eastern Europe Department and the Soviet Union in the National Security Council under President Ronald Reagan between 1981 and 1983.³⁵

Among US officials, Pipes occupied the eighteenth position, equal to the Assistant Secretary of State in European Affairs,³⁶ or a three-star general with a salary of \$57,500 per year. He served for two years, half of the presidency term, because Harvard did not allow its lecturers to leave for a longer period.³⁷

The nomination of Pipes aroused interest in Moscow, his promotion was considered bad news for mutual relations and he was said to be another Brzezinski.³⁸ In this way, not only did Pipes represent the alleged Polish influence among the most important collaborators of the US president,³⁹ but he also strengthened the belief in the existence of the Polish school of Soviet studies.

For two years, Pipes drew the attention of the Soviet press, hardly surprising because the advice of the Harvard professor followed a different path to previous practice, which had been based on behavioural psychology. Instead of punishing the Soviet Union for aggression and rewarding it for good behaviour on the international stage, while carefully avoiding interfering in the internal affairs of the regime, the adviser to President Ronald Reagan pushed for action to change the internal system of the USSR, including by refusing economic cooperation and implementing a simultaneous arms programme. This was meant to lead to a reform of the command-and-control economy and prevent any military advantage of the USSR over the US.⁴⁰ As

³³ A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii? Przypadki Leopolda Łabędzie, Adama Ulama i Richarda Pipesa*, in: *idem, Ofiary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, p. 154.

³⁴ W. Grimes, *op. cit.*

³⁵ W. Materski, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

³⁶ Richard Pipes was to serve the function of Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, but Alexander Haig, who had different views, refused to nominate him.

³⁷ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, p. 159.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 200.

³⁹ W. Serczyk, *Opinia dla Senatu Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w związku z nadaniem tytułu doktora honoris causa Profesorowi Richardowi Pipesowi*, in: J. Malicki (ed.), *Historia est testis temporum*, Warszawa 2017, p. 27.

⁴⁰ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, pp. 160, 200–201. Seeing a weak state in the internal affairs of the USSR is another common feature that has been the subject of appeals by R. Pipes, Z. Brzeziński and A. Ulam since the 1960s. Cf. A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii?*, in: *idem, Ofiary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, pp. 170–171.

a result, the proposed policy was called “Pipes’ doctrine.” Its aim was to undermine the USSR’s influence by not improving relations with the country.⁴¹

As Richard V. Allen, head of the National Security Council, the media exaggerated the influence of Pipes on the policy of the administration. It should be noted, however, that it was the professor from Harvard University who created the title of the treatise *Strategic Arms Reduction Talks* (START), which replaced *Strategic Arms Limitations Talks* (SALT). The goal was not only to limit the increase in nuclear arms but also to reduce existing arsenals.⁴²

SCIENTIFIC WORK

In addition to lecturing and managing the Russian Research Center throughout his entire university career, Richard Pipes was a member of the editorial boards of “Strategic Review” and “The Journal of Strategic Studies.” He presented his knowledge gained over many years of study in over 20 monographs, which were translated into many languages, including Polish. It is worth noting that Pipes’ writing is informative for a wide audience and thus serves an educational function.⁴³ As a side note, similar opinions also apply to another Pole – Adam Ulam, but only one of his books entitled *The Kirov Affair* was published in Polish in 1991. English was the first language for neither researcher nor yet they were considered masters of literary style.⁴⁴

Among Pipes’ books that are worth mentioning are his first monograph, which he wrote after obtaining a doctorate, about the Russian conservative Nicholas Karamzin and his political concepts (1959), another monograph (entitled *Social Democracy and the St. Petersburg Labor Movement, 1885–1897*) about the workers’ movement in St Petersburg between 1885 and 1897 (1963) and a two-volume biography of Peter Struve (vol. I: *Struve, Liberal on the Left* (1970), vol. II – *Struve, Liberal on the Right* (1980)). These books ensured Pipes’ reputation as an outstanding authority in the field of nineteenth- and twentieth-century history of Russia.⁴⁵ It should be

⁴¹ W. Serczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁴² R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, pp. 145–146.

⁴³ W. Materski, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–17, 22.

⁴⁴ M. Filipowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

⁴⁵ A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii?*, in: *idem, Ofiary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, p. 153.

noted that he prepared the last of the works mentioned for many years. The first volume was published in 1970 and the next after ten years, in 1980. Moreover, in the early years of the 1980s, he published two books that were the result of his political commitment to US-Soviet relations. His book entitled *US-Soviet Relations in the Era of Détente* was published in 1981, followed by *Survival is Not Enough: Soviet Realities and America's Future*, which appeared three years later.⁴⁶

However, Pipes' trilogy discussing the history of the revolution, and, more broadly, Russia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought him the greatest popularity among scholars and the general public. The trilogy consisted of *Tsarist Russia* (1974), *The Russian Revolution* (1990) and *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* (1993). In these books, he described the mechanisms by which the Bolshevik party had come to power, as well as its close and further roots.⁴⁷

The theme of the Russian Revolution with which Pipes was associated shaped his entire generation. He argued that without October 1917, the world would have returned to the path from before World War I because the Nazis would not have gained power. Not only did the Bolsheviks inspire Adolf Hitler, but they also constituted a visible threat of communism to the Germans. Also, in terms of foreign policy, it is difficult to imagine World War II and the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939, which was extremely important for Central Europe, without the events in Russia.⁴⁸ The same applies to the entire Cold War era.⁴⁹

Pipes showed the most important social and political changes taking place in the world at that time through the prism of events at the turn of the century in Russia. He explained the ideological foundations of Soviet communism and the undemocratic system that prevailed in Russia from nineteenth-century tsarism to the party oligarchy of the Soviet Union.⁵⁰

In this way, he included chance and favourable circumstances in the analysis of trends in the “long duration” of Russian history and

⁴⁶ W. Grimes, *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, p. 221.

⁴⁸ This international agreement determined the fate of many millions of people, including R. Pipes, as well as those coming from Poland and dealing with the USSR, such as Z. Brzezinski, A. Ulam and Leopold Łabędź. A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii?*, in: *idem, Oftary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, p. 159.

⁴⁹ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, p. 217–218.

⁵⁰ A. Nowak, *Październik upolowany*, in: *idem, Polacy, Rosjanie i biesy*, Kraków 1998, p. 194.

communist ideology.⁵¹ According to Professor Mirosław Filipowicz, the main work by Pipes is timeless and matches great works in historiography which, with all their “temporal” restrictions, pose the most important historical and moral questions.⁵²

Despite his retirement, Pipes continued to publish books, including: *The Unknown Lenin: From the Secret Archive* (published in 1996, based on documents published after the collapse of the USSR), *Property and Freedom* (1999) and *The Dagaev Affair: Terror and Treason in Tsarist Russia* (2003).⁵³

Pipes’ assessment of the difficult history of Russia of recent centuries contained in the book entitled *Property and freedom*, also published in Polish in 2000, is worth emphasising. He borrowed the term ‘patrimonial state’ from the sociologist Max Weber, which denotes a state in which the ruler not only rules, but also has his domain, invalidating the concept of private property and freedom. He regarded it as the cause of the misfortunes of Russian statehood, which could not evolve beyond authoritarian authority that took on many faces.⁵⁴

This approach caused outrage in the mid-1970s when Pipes published *Tsarist Russia*. In this way, the author created a “theory of continuation” independent of earlier historiography.⁵⁵ As he claimed, it unconsciously referred to the pre-war classic book representing pre-war Soviet studies in Poland entitled *From White to Red Tsarism* (1923–1935) by Jan Kucharzewski, with whom he became acquainted as an educated researcher.⁵⁶ It is also possible that Pipes subconsciously

⁵¹ A. Nowak, *ZSRR jako przedmiot badań historycznych*, in: *idem, Polacy, Rosjanie i biesy. Studia i szkice historyczne z XIX i XX wieku*, Kraków 1998, p. 188.

⁵² Cf. M. Filipowicz, *Emigranci i jankesi. O amerykańskich historykach Rosji*, Lublin 2007, pp. 348–349.

⁵³ A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii?*, in: *idem, Ofiary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, p. 154.

⁵⁴ W. Grimes, *op. cit.*

⁵⁵ This approach is also referred to, as Martin Malia wanted, the “cyclical school.” It assumes the perception of the similarities between the tsarist autocracy and the Soviet Union with its imperial activity, methods of expansion and persecution. The liberal Russian “state supporters” in the nineteenth century and J. Kucharzewski, author of *From White to Red Tsarism* (1923–1935) also fall into this trend. None of their works is mentioned in the books by R. Pipes. Cf. A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii?*, in: *idem, Ofiary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, p. 166, footnote 37; A. Nowak, *Październik upolowany*, in: *idem, Polacy, Rosjanie i biesy*, p. 192; A. Nowak, *ZSRR jako przedmiot badań historycznych*, in: *idem, Polacy, Rosjanie i biesy*, Kraków 1998, pp. 183–185.

⁵⁶ Cf. „*To imperium się rozpadnie*”. *Z profesorem Richardem Pipesem rozmawia Andrzej Nowak*, in: R. Pipes, *Rosja, komunizm i świat. Wybór esejów*, Kraków 2002, pp. 212–213. The approaches of these two researchers are worth comparing. They both described and interpreted Bolshevism in an interdisciplinary manner and interpreted it not from an ideological but imperial perspective. J. Kucharzewski showed Russia’s timeless approach based on historical material. By contrast, R. Pipes was interested in the present times

shared the attitudes of many Poles, among whom he grew up, towards their eastern neighbour.⁵⁷ Accordingly, he believed that Russian institutions and culture are distinct and stable.⁵⁸ Hence, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's allegations of a "Polish perspective" could have arisen.⁵⁹

Moreover, the thesis about the patrimonial monarchy as a source of Bolshevism contradicted the views of the well-known writer opposed to Soviet power. The dissident considered it unacceptable to combine tsarism with communism. According to Solzhenitsyn, these were opposing forces and he blamed Western ideologies, such as Marxism, for the misfortunes of the Russians.⁶⁰

Despite the unfriendly perception of Pipes' achievements in the Soviet Union, the Harvard professor became specifically appreciated after it collapsed. In 1992, the Constitutional Court of Russia appointed him as an expert during a trial against the local Communist Party.⁶¹

Communism: A History (2001, Polish edition – 2008) was the culmination of Pipes' interest in the Russian revolution. In this book, Pipes announced the verdict: "Communism was not a good idea that went wrong; it was a bad idea."⁶²

PIPES' REWARDS AND LEGACY

Although Pipes had formally retired in 1996, he remained professionally active. His analyses and journalistic articles were published in *Foreign Affairs*, *Commentary*, *Encounter* and *The New York Times*, as well as in Polish newspapers.

The professor's controversial opinions, including about the lack of necessity to expand the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) in the late 1990s,

and not too distant Soviet reality. Still, he was one of the first to see the analogies of the Soviet system with Nazi totalitarianism. In his history of Russia, R. Pipes argues, like J. Kucharczyk, that the sources of the Soviet system were in the traditional, anti-state power, strengthened by the degenerated revolutionary movement and the tsarist police system. Cf. W. Serczyk, *op. cit.*, pp. 28–29; W. Śliwowska, *Opinia dla Senatu Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w związku z nadaniem tytułu doktora honoris causa Profesorowi Richardowi Pipesowi*, in: J. Malicki (ed.), *Historia est testis temporum. Księga Pamiątkowa z okazji Jubileuszu 90-lecia Profesorów Richarda Pipesa, Piotra Wandycza, Zbigniewa Wójcika*, Warszawa 2017, p. 34.

⁵⁷ For more, see: M. Kornat, *Sowiecki totalitaryzm w myśli historycznej Richarda Pipesa*, "Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej" 2018, No. LIII.

⁵⁸ R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, pp. 81–82.

⁵⁹ W. Materski, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 118.

⁶¹ *In Memoriam: Richard Pipes*, Davies Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, May 17, 2018, <https://daviscenter.fas.harvard.edu/news/memoriam-richard-pipes> [access: December 1, 2018].

⁶² R. Pipes, *Communism: A History*, New York 2001, p. 147.

are also worth mentioning. In 1996, in “Arcana”, he argued that he saw no need for this because Russia represented no threat to Eastern Europe. By contrast, NATO enlargement could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It would stimulate paranoia about encircling Russia, which was already strong and popular among influential military circles and politicians. He called for keeping it in reserve as a kind of warning in the event of Moscow’s brutal pressure on neighbouring countries.⁶³

In later years, Pipes also often shared his thoughts. In this context, it is appropriate to cite the interview concerning Russia that he gave in the newspaper “Rzeczpospolita” in 2017. He admitted that he had hoped for a democratic transformation of Russia in the 1990s. However, nearly twenty years later, he was convinced that there was no chance of this kind of scenario in the foreseeable future. He also emphasised Russian obedience to power resulting from historical experience, which contributed to the dictatorship in that country.⁶⁴

The merits of the professor were appreciated in Poland and he was elected a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences and granted membership of the International Consultative Council of the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He was also awarded the Commander’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland, the honorary title of Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Silesia and the University of Warsaw, as well as honorary citizenship of Cieszyn where the professor was born.⁶⁵

Pipes was also invited by the Norwegian Nobel Committee (2004) to give the so-called Spring Lectures, which was a special distinction. It is treated as an informal Nobel Prize in the humanities. He entitled his series of speeches *The Triumph and Fall of Russian Communism*. He took the opportunity to treat the subject as a contribution to a broad analysis from the perspective of a historian and a political scientist, but also a chance to explore human nature in terms of its limitations.⁶⁶

⁶³ Cf. *Dwugłos o NATO. Richard Pipes and Piotr Wandycz (1996 r.)*, Arcana, July 12, 2011, <http://www.portal.arcana.pl/Dwuglos-o-nato-richard-pipes-i-piotr-wandycz-1996-r,1419.html> [access: December 1, 2018].

⁶⁴ Cf. *Rosjanie zawsze gardzili słabeuszami*, Wywiad z Richardem Pipesem przeprowadził Paweł Szaniawski, „Rzeczpospolita”, February 19, 2017, <https://www.rp.pl/Plus-Minus/302169957-Richard-Pipes-Rosjanie-zawsze-gardzili-slabeuszami.html> [access: December 1, 2018].

⁶⁵ W. Serczyk, *Opinia dla Senatu Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w związku z nadaniem tytułu doktora honoris causa Profesorowi Richardowi Pipesowi*, in: J. Malicki (ed.), *Historia est testis temporum*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 26.

⁶⁶ W. Materski, *op. cit.*, pp. 22–23.

From the 1970s, due to the professor's sensitivity to Polish affairs resulting from his and his wife's places of birth (his wife, Irena Roth,⁶⁷ was born in Warsaw), he repeatedly visited Poland and delivered lectures at universities and forums of scientific societies,⁶⁸ most frequently hosted by the Study of Eastern Europe at the University of Warsaw during its annual Summer Schools.⁶⁹

Since his departure in 1939, the language was the professor's link with his native land. Although Polish was the second language (his family spoke German on a daily basis), Pipes found it most useful for expressing himself at school and in conversations with his friends. As he said, when he lacked an English word, he thought about Polish equivalents rather than German ones.⁷⁰

Passing away on 17 May 2018, Pipes will remain in our memory as one of the greatest experts on the history of Russia. He showed this country's social and political transformations taking place from the nineteenth century to modern times against a broad background.⁷¹ As he created works verging on history and political science, he became a classic in his lifetime.

His works have stood the test of time. His analyses and assessments of the complicated and changing reality of the post-Soviet area, based on diligent, profound research and reliable selection of source materials, are a good starting point for further research. Faithful to the Latin motto of the poet Horace *Non omnis moriar* – 'Not all of me shall die', the professor donated a large collection of 3,500 books to the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

These valuable volumes were collected for over 50 years, beginning with historical monographs, issued before 1917 and occasionally purchased in 1957 during his stay in the USSR. Due to the regulations in force in the 1950s, their export was illegal. However, thanks to the efforts of a friendly Soviet professor, it was possible to overcome legal restrictions.⁷²

⁶⁷ W. Serczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁶⁸ W. Śliwowska, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁶⁹ J. Malicki, *Historia est testis temporum. Richard Pipes–Piotr Wandycz–Zbigniew Wójcik*, in: J. Malicki (ed.), *Historia est testis temporum*, Warszawa 2017, p. 9.

⁷⁰ A. Nowak, *Czy istnieje „polska szkoła” zachodniej sowietologii?*, in: *idem, Ofiary, imperia i historycy*, Kraków 2009, p. 153.

⁷¹ H. Samsonowicz, *Laudacja*, in: J. Malicki (ed.), *Historia est testis temporum. Księga Pamiątkowa z okazji Jubileuszu 90-lecia Profesorów Richarda Pipesa, Piotra Wandycza, Zbigniewa Wójcika*, Warszawa 2017, p. 36.

⁷² R. Pipes, *VIXI: Memoirs...*, p. 86.

Volumes included in the “The Professor Pipes’ Library” are of high scientific, historical and bibliophilic value, and are an excellent foundation for Russian studies which have a centuries-old tradition in Poland.

The biography of Richard Pipes is the right base for giving new dynamics to research on Russia. The professor connected two countries strongly linked with Russia/the Soviet Union by history and international policy. Hence, “The Professor Pipes’ Library” is a leaven connecting and encouraging scientists living by the Vistula and Potomac Rivers, and also more broadly the whole of Central and Eastern Europe, to conduct further study of Russia and the countries adjacent to it.

The matter seems even more up to date as the Russian Federation is again taking on an imperial face, so well-known from Pipes’ works, and the question of its activity is widely commented on in leading news programmes. Hence, the collections of one of the most outstanding historians and political scientists dealing with contemporary Eastern Europe, stored at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, are of great value to researchers dealing with Russia, and, more broadly, Central and Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet area.

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