



Invitation to the conference

Imperial and postimperial emigrations. The case of Russia

Warsaw, 4-5 October 2023

The topic of migration has intrigued scholars for at least several decades. The phenomenon of migration from former colonies/peripheries to the center of the former empire has been fairly well studied. In contrast, many aspects of reverse migration from the center of former empires remain unclear and lack a firmly grounded methodological foundation. An illustration of this unusual phenomenon, which we have been observing since February 2023, is the numerous departures of Russians to the former “periphery” of the Soviet Union, or more broadly: the Russian Empire. We can conclude that we are currently witnessing the largest wave of Russian emigration since the so-called “White emigration”, which left the country following the Bolshevik coup in 1917.

We would like to invite you to participate in our conference, during which we wish to reflect on the various contexts of emigration from Russia. In doing so, we do not want to limit ourselves to modern day. We intend to approach the topic in the broadest manner possible. For this reason, we propose three sections:

1. Section I will be devoted to emigration during the existence of the Russian Empire, that is, from 1721 to 1917. Here we would like to focus on two issues: the emigration of independence activists representing the various nations that were part of the Russian Empire, as well as the mass displacement of North Caucasians to the Ottoman Empire.

2. Section II will deal with emigration during the Soviet period, that is, from 1917 to 1991. Within this framework, the most important issues we would like to address are a) an analysis of the phenomenon of the so-called “White emigration”, i.e. those who left Russia after the Bolshevik coup and White defeat in the civil war, b) an outline of the phenomenon of emigration from non-Russian territories occupied militarily by the Bolsheviks, such as emigration from the independent Transcaucasian states, c) political emigration from the Soviet Union after World War II.
3. Section III will cover the phenomenon of emigration from the Russian Federation. Here, two periods will be key to our discussion. The first is the emigration from Russia that occurred immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union and primarily involved the departure of people heading to countries formed within the post-Soviet space. The second period is the several-month-long phenomenon of emigration of Russians after the Russian Federation launched full-scale hostilities against Ukraine in February 2022.

Form: stationary-hybrid.

The working languages of the conference are English, Russian, and Polish.

Please send your presentation proposals with short abstracts (max. 1000 characters) by June 15 to lab.pipes@isppan.waw.pl. The organizers will send a notification on the paper's acceptance by June 20, 2023.

Conference secretary: dr. Wojciech Łysek