

On the Riddle of “The Russian Sphinx”

Marian Broda

University of Lodz, Lodz, Poland

The aim of this article is to analyze one of the most recognized in the Russian intellectual-cultural tradition and Russians' social self-consciousness ways of identification of the nature of Russianness and Russia—and comprehend it in the category of the “Russian Sphinx”. The Russian thinkers and writers discussing the nature of Russia often return to the motif of Sphinx. Opposed to its ancient Greek archetype-counterpart, “the Russian Sphinx” does not have to resort to intricate questions—he is a riddle himself. As I show and explain, the livelihood and dissemination of the Russia-Sphinx motif in the homeland of Dostoyevski are not incidental. This motif is a synthetic medium of many archetypal contents, which accurately articulate a set of traditional intuitions and imaginations held by the Russians and concerning the alleged essence, nature, or depth of “Russianness”. To conclude, I demonstrate the need to make the people comprehending Russia in a similar way aware that the accompanying, the particular—in its basic framework a priori assumed by them—image of the Russian reality is *de facto* a correlate of their subjective cognitive intention.

Keywords: Russia, Sphinx, Oedipus, riddle, tradition, post-Kantian perspective

Introduction

Central current of the Russian intellectual, cultural, and social tradition is delineated by the posed-for-centuries questions about Russia, connected most often with the finally comprehended idea of “Understanding Russia”: solving the “Russian Riddle” or the need to live, contemplate or express the depth of the “Russian Mystery”. Due to the livelihood, permanency, and centrality of similar questions and attempts of self-cognition in Russian philosophy, thought, and culture, their analysis also creates heuristically fertile cognitive perspective to conduct more general research of both intellectual-cultural tradition and Russians' social self-cognition. It happens mostly when the possibilities created by the post-Kantian theoretical perspective are used, allowing to show, recognize, and explain the way in which the subject and object of cognitive relation inter-assume and inter-shape each other as the results of particular sense-formative processes, directed at the intention of “understanding Russia”, realized by the subject asking about it in this particular, not any other way.

The aim of my article is, in particular, to analyze one of the most cultivated and most disseminated in the Russian intellectual-cultural tradition and Russians' collective self-consciousness ways of identification of the essence or nature of Russianness—and comprehending it in the category of the “Russian Sphinx”. I intend to identify, indicate, and analyze the set of essential contents inscribed then in this alleged essence or nature of Russianness, circumstances and indications of livelihood and central place of the similar way of thinking in the

intellectual-cultural tradition and Russians' self-cognition, as well as to identify and determine the status, character, and collective consequences concurrent with the conceptualization of the Russian reality.

In the general philosophical dimension, the theoretical-methodological basis of my research is, relevant to the post-Kantian theoretical perspective, the epistemological point of view—programmatically opposed to the epistemic standpoint relevant to the pre-Kantian philosophy—in the interpretation presented by the Polish philosopher Marek Siemek (Siemek, 1987, pp. 42-44, 49-57, 69-75). The results of my previous research—my own analysis of the Russian self-cognition attempts from the programmatically post-Kantian perspective i.e. epistemological viewpoint—connected, among others, with comprehending Russia in the category of "Russia-Soul of the World", "Moscow-Third Rome", and the "Russian Sphinx" I have already presented in books *Poniat' Rossiju, Russkije woprosy o Rossii, Historia a eschatologia. Studia nad myślą Konstantego Leontjewa i "zagadką Rossii, "Zrozumieć Rosję"? O rosyjskiej zagadce-tajemnicy*, published in Poland, as well as *Ponyat Rossiju?* and *Russkije voprosy o Rossii*, published in Russia.

The basic research method applied by me is the philosophical and cultural text analysis, in which the representative participants of the Russian intellectual and cultural tradition recognize and define its identity in the category of the "Russian Sphinx". The article consists of two main parts. In the first part, *Archetypes and specifications*, I present and juxtapose chosen quotations of Russian thinkers comprehending Russia in this particular way, as well as diagnoses and opinions of both Russian and foreign researchers, in which similar self-cognitive attempts have become the subject of their attention and reflection. In the second part, *"To think with what has been thought" and to personify*, I indicate and analyze the mental, religious, and cultural fundamentals of livelihood and—specifying its character—conditions of the examined way in which Russianness and Russia are comprehended in the area of the local intellectual and collective Russians' self-consciousness. In *Conclusion* I demonstrate the need to make the people attempting to "comprehend Russia" in a similar way aware that the concurrent image of the Russian reality is—in its fundamental shape—*de facto* a correlate of their own attitude towards life and an assumed *a priori* result of a particular subjective sense-formative intention.

Archetypes and Specifications

The Russian writers discussing the nature of Russia often return to the well-fixed and popular motif of Sphinx, a mythical beast with face and breast of a woman, torso of a bull or dog, claws of a lion, tail of a dragon or serpent and wings of a bird. This monstrosity was sent to Thebes, once upon a time, by Hera, the goddess of marital faithfulness, as a punishment for sin against nature. The beast posed a riddle to all travelers faring through its ravine, and if no correct answer was given, it devoured the unlucky victims. When Oedipus became the first man to find that the creature from the riddle is human, Sphinx threw himself into an abyss and perished.

The motif of Sphinx fixed in the Russian tradition should not be understood only as a method to express the banal understanding of the mystery of Russia. In fact, this symbol combines a series of important archetypal contents of universal value, which are at the same time subject to various cultural specifications. Sphinx—mythical creature out of tales, consisting of the elements of human and four animals—is a riddle *par excellence* and is an expression of transcendence, as it "hides something, which cannot be fully explained" (Cirlot, 2000, p. 367). Carl Jung saw him as the symbol of "the terrifying matrix"—expressing the meaning and image of death, the spirit longing to the substance or subdued to the relentless law (destiny), and also the cruel aspect of

nature, its indifference to human suffering. Those are projected on the more general, clearly ambivalent symbolics of mother, which is the symbol of collective, left, and nighttime side of the existence, the spring of the water of life (Cirlot, 2000, pp. 249-250). The mask related to mother's *imago* and the nature

...also hides the myth of multiplicity and mysterious fragmentation of the universe. The esoteric tradition sees Sphinx of Giza as a synthesis of the entire lore of the past. He looks straight into the rising sun, just like he is pondering on heaven and earth. Therefore, although still located in the sphere of heterogeneity, he is a symbol unifying the four elements with the quintessence, i.e. the spirit symbolized by the human part of the statue. (Cirlot, 2000, p. 367)

In the structures of symbolical thinking, the mythical creatures, with Sphinx being the prime example, have a particular intermediate position in the universe. They stand between the determined creatures and the amorphous world, being "the symbols of persistent inertia and transformism, but also the will to overcome the ready-made forms and to establish a strong system of psychical projection" (Cirlot, 2000, p. 484).

The first articulations of the Russian reflections on Sphinx, made by Grzegorz Skovoroda, are not the attempts to identify the nature of Russia, but the discussion of Biblical contents—"Her name—Sphinx, virgin head, lion torso" (Skovoroda, 1973, p. 369). They accent mostly the ambivalent, double meaning of the considered symbol: good and perverse, true and false, salutary and fatal, wise and mad. "Lion-virgin" impersonates "mad world which tempts and succumbs to temptation"; it greets the thoughtless ones with a virgin visage, but her nails are the claws of a lion, which kill the soul (Skovoroda, 1973, p. 369).

Aleksander Herzen relates the motif of Sphinx to Russia: to the inner, mystical essence of Russianness covered by a layer of outer forms—untrue, imposed, strange and disguising forms: "Chaadaev and the Slavs [i.e. Slavophiles] were equally confronted with the unresolved Sphinx of Russian life, the Sphinx sleeping under soldier's coat and czar's supervision..." (Gertsen, 1986, p. 226).

The creator of archetypal, poetic vision of the inconceivability of Russia, Fyodor Tyutchev, associates the unforeseeable, enigmatic quality of Russia with the special connection the country has with unforeseeable and enigmatic nature—a Sphinx (Ryabov, 1999, p. 113). Vyatcheslav Ivanov, who considers Sphinx to be the symbol of "mystery of gender" emphasizes, although not to an ultimate extent, the strength of "female" elements in the widest meaning present in "Slavic women" (Ivanov, 1987, p. 670). In the opinion of Georgyi Fedotov, Petersburg—"the German stain on Russian map", representing "male", urban, rationalist, "Apollonian", type of identity and world perception—is preceded by the "female" Russia (embodied by rural, irrational, mysterious and "Dionysian" Moscow). As he argues: "He still grieves Russia and solves its mystery: more than ever before, it became a Sphinx to him" (Fedotov, 1991, p. 50).

The famous poem by Alexander Blok, *The Scythians*, also includes the identification "Russia is a Sphinx", which serves here to express the disturbing, threatening enigma of Russia, influencing the future fate of the world (Afanasev, 2001, pp. 360-361). Sergei Bulgakov on the other hand, connects the examined motif directly with the problem of the Russian intelligentsia, which

...with the utmost fierceness was demonstrated by the Russian revolution, this mirror of our whole life, the experience of our spiritual and cultural-historic forces, even today remains the riddle of the Russian Oedipus, fixing the attention on the evil Sphinx. (Bulgakov, 2008, p. 63)

In my opinion, the livelihood of the Russian Sphinx motif is not a coincidence and is connected first and

foremost with the fact that it is a synthetic medium of all manner of archetypical contents, articulating a set of Russians' basic intuitions concerning the alleged essence or depth of Russianness. It expresses the mystery, something that cannot be entirely unraveled, that creates attitudes typical for the *sacrum* experience, evoking both fascination and fear, able to save, set free, but also to deceive and confuse... It is a symbol of common, "nighttime" side of the existence, "female", lunar conscience, the drive to overcome the already finished, "ready-made" forms, which differentiate and segment the world. It links the human (female) with the animal, combines all four elements with the spirit, unites heaven and earth and directs the world towards Divinity (Broda, 2011, pp. 55-64).

The opinions of Russians themselves on Russia and "Russianness" are strongly related or corresponding to the universal symbolics of Sphinx. They all emphasize, for example, the enigma and inconceivability of Russia (F. Tyutchev, V. Ivanov, A. Ardov), ambivalence of opinion arisen about Russia (M. Berdayev, M. Losski), the willingness to overcome the existing forms, which divide the world (A. Gertsen, M. Berdayev, W. Shubart), the ability to mediatyzacji and to conciliate diverse values (F. Dostoyevski, W. Rozanow, M. Berdayev), function of linking heaven and earth, opening the Future, ascending towards Unity and Transcendence, its eschatological quality (P. Tchaadayev, F. Dostoyevski, A. Gertsen, D. Merezhkovski, W. Solovyov, M. Berdayev, W. Shubart). Those opinions also underline the female, intuitive and lunar character of Russian conscience (I. Kireyevski, S. Frank, M. Berdayev) (Ryabov, 1999, pp. 104-119, 199-212, 227-233 and other; Domnikov, 2002, pp. 60-70, 90-96), as opposed to the male, individualistic, rational conscience.

In the opinion of many Russian natives, Russia—just like the Sphinx of Thebes, sent as the punishment for lack of faithfulness and sins against nature—became an unresolvable enigma, when their life (e.g. the life of "German" Petersburg) lost its natural, authentic link with the true nature of "Russianness" and delved into the things external, foreign, fallen, present and worldly.

Just like Sphinx in the ancient philosophy connected within himself essentially irreconcilable differences—traits of a lion and of a human being—Russian culture accommodates together, mutually contradicting, inner layers of old Slavic mythological culture, Orthodox values, European cultural norms and, finally, the rules of the Soviet system. (Kutyavin & Leontyeva, 2006, p. 169)

The crisis situations—regarded as "a source of painful experiences, something invalid and incorrect, requiring overcoming" (Kutyavin & Leontyeva, 2006, p. 169)—recurring in Russia each time intensify this feeling and the attempts to solve "the riddle of Russia". The mythical ravine—a place of encounter of Sphinx and Oedipus—is a good metaphor of those situations. It is a symbol of danger, of sinking in the things lower and fallen, but also an initiating experience and regeneration, the ability to look into own *psyche* and the "soul of the world", which brings back the Unity and Fullness (Cirlot, 2000, p. 440).

I. Solonievich refers to historical precedence and claims that the attempts to solve the riddle of "Russian Sphinx" bring about a deadly risk for both parties: "Until now, all Oedipuses were devoured by Russia—and they gave no happiness to the Russian nation. Russia would be better without Oedipuses, Oedipuses without Russia, and both of them—without the future game of riddles" (Solonievich, 1991, p. 184).

If you take into account the energy spent in Russia for cultivation of the secret or Sysypheic attempts to solve the inherent enigma (Solovev, 2001, pp. 41-43, 84-85), and also the impact of similar opinions on the ability of rational understanding and shaping the future of the country—Solonievich's statement, modified and generalized

in the manner given above, is quite strikingly true. A certain extent of predictability of development processes and results of undertaken actions is one of the conditions of their rational and effective conduct. However, the metaphor of Sphinx-Oedipus encounter also contains other contents worth consideration. It shows the typical for Russian culture and mentality situation of "either-or": one or the other partner must perish. It also keeps its destructive power in scope of mutual relations between individual interlocutors of Sphinx: if one of them solves the riddle, the cognitive sense of answers given by the others is dubious. They can only accept this "solution" as their own or to promote their own ideas, equally exclusive and destructive for others.

We must admit, that in a certain sense this is very true: the existence of "Russian Sphinx", as far as it is situated as a riddle, would be annihilated in the moment, when the solution for the riddle is found; "Oedipus" struggling with the Russian riddle, as far as he reduces himself to the status of a learning entity, denies it and annihilates himself as an entity if he misses his target. We should note, however, was this entity able to meet probably the hardest of all Russian challenges—related to awareness of multiple dimensions of reality, variety of orders of meaning, difference of the types of lore, cultural and social relativity and situationism of questions posed with others in the long historic dialogue (Broda, 1998, pp. 64-67), etc.—then, instead of full destruction of one part of the Oedipus-Sphinx opposition, an opportunity to enhance the self-conscience of the involved entity would occur.

"To Think With What Has Been Thought" and to Personify

In the ancient Greek riddle of Sphinx the answer is human being—just as in case of "the Russian Sphinx". "Oedipus", Russian intellectual cannot solve the riddle of Russia in a definite, permanent manner, which would be important for the entire community, restore the identity and assure a full rebirth. In other words, he cannot *de facto* "annihilate" its existence—if it is a riddle—because the mental and cultural mechanisms (Broda, 2001, pp. 281-285, 297-300) formed throughout centuries lead to constant reproduction of this riddle. By its very nature, the riddle both requires and excludes the ability of definite answer valid for everyone. As shown by Italian scholar, Vittorio Strada, there is "a vicious circle" functioning inside "the Russian riddle": questioning intellectuals try to understand Russia, define the nature of its past and future. On the other hand, Russia with its past and presence shall define the intellectuals themselves, with all their attempts to define Russia and Russian "idea" or "fate". If you stay within this vicious circle, one can endlessly walk the perimeter and intoxicate one's mind with one's and Russia's "specificity", "inconceivability", and "enigma", thus only recreating the ever existing—because assumed—initial situation (Strada, 1996, pp. 23-24). To break this vicious circle of "the Russian riddle" is not an easy matter. This due to (what is characteristic for Russian thinking) unwillingness to accept any distance between the learner and the subject of cognition—between the thinker and its subject. Russian tradition tells you to "think the things thought", "think the subject of the thoughts", not to explain, but rather to personify (Faryno, 2001, p. 378).

It is not incidental that sophic thinking becomes an ideal, and sophiology—a privileged system of knowledge: "Sophia" is immanent to all existence, and its reflexivity is manifested, as it is believed, in its ability—unique only to itself alone—"to think with its own self". This particular cult of Sophia present in the Russian tradition is a proof of the sacral or *quasi*-sacral character of the sought knowledge and certain hopes it arises. If the knowledge is found, the hopes promise to overcome the isolation, national or universal regeneration,

restoration of identity, final discovery of the self (Faryno, 2001, pp. 378-382; Paprocki, 2000, pp. 414-428), etc. It is the need to contact the sacred reality, not bound by divisions and polarizations from the sphere of *profanum*, with experience, which cannot be described with concepts, with reality accessible only through a certain emotional reaction arisen in the self, which experience it (Sarnowski, 1988, p. 85). Understanding of the words articulating the contents of updated experience of Russian *sacrum* converges with the feeling of participation in sacral or *quasi*-sacral reality and with moral obligation (Kořakowski, 1998, pp. 190-192). A human being, who underwent this experience, feels at the same time: dependency on *sacrum*, alienation from everything, which is not concurrent with *sacrum*, unification within *sacrum* and, as a result, a certain salvation-liberation. It does not seem that this could be a permanent act for human being, who is after all involved also in the sphere of *profanum*—and perhaps it is merely an illusion or fantasy.

The inevitable disappointment is even bigger, now the experience of depth of Russian "mystery" and drama of own helplessness towards it is available. This disappointment leads to next attempts to tackle the "Russian riddle", etc. Those attempts are not only performed by Russian thinkers/mystics; they are also more or less conscious basis and framework for reflections of millions of Russians about their own identity and spiritual/social order offering a place for their country and themselves. The effort made by thinkers and Russian authorities to find a formula of new Russian concept—able to replace the existing chaos with higher order, the division with unity and the helplessness with might—go in a similar direction. The most sensitive of Russians show that such striving is not free of dramatic tension caused on one side by the will to find any moral/axiologic absolute and to possess the exclusive, all-assuming "higher" truth, and, on the other side, the fear of loss of self-containment and the deprivation of personal moral responsibility (Kelly, 1978, pp. XVI-XVII). As long as you stay within the closed circle of "the mystery/riddle", there is no space for critical distance towards own mental constructs, for self-awareness. There is no space for the ability to understand the fact of subject projection of meaning made earlier—thus also, the choice of meaning made earlier.

However, this is not an incidental situation. Russian mentality, culture or reality on general—grown on the soil of Orthodox religion—shows much stronger eschatological intensity than in the West. It seeks fullness, total reintegration, which would be able to overcome the universal diversity seen as the result of the Fall, the challenge and the temporary condition: the diversity of multiple spheres of life, types of knowledge and orders of meaning. This mentality reinforces the need of urgent totalization of meaning and parallel tendencies to direct connection of social, political, economic, religious, or historiosophic issues with philosophical questions. There is trend to blur the boundary between the *sacrum* and *prophanum*, religion and ideology, eschatology and politics, theory and practice, scientific analysis of social dynamics and historiosophy, etc. Similarly, the essential difference of particular types of knowledge is blurred (unconsciously or as a task for execution): (1) the knowledge aimed for achievements and technical control over nature; (2) the formative knowledge, related to what is formative and related with the very nature of the object; and (3) metaphysical, delivering knowledge, directing a human toward absolute in any understanding of the word (Scheler, 1987, pp. 415-415, 418-420, 4424-426). The related roles, respectively, of specialist researcher, wise philosopher and priest are now overlapping, driven by the idea of higher synthesis and "integral truth" (Solovev, 1990, pp. 187-188). The term "truth" is contaminated with elements related to esoteriological, eschatological (or *quasi*-eschatological) ethics, aesthetics, historiosophy, ideology, etc.

To put things with a certain exaggeration: all elements permeate and overlap all others. The entire multiplicity of experienced reality is more directly related to the alleged "essence" or "center", which determine—as it is believed—the special identity of Russia (and therefore on the special mission it bears, the fate of its past and future history, etc.). Reaching the essence or the bottom of Russianness is not only a cognitive or rational action. It includes some elements of sacral experience and the related desire of spiritual and material transformation.

Russian conscience is only poorly aware of Kantian heritage. The fact of meaning-forming projection performed earlier, which helps to constitute the researched "subjectivity", and also the act of choice of meaning made by the individual (even unconsciously) are hardly ever in the field of vision. This absence, weakness or transformation—usually distorting the original sense—of Kantian ideas in Russia, and also the failure to present the subjective moment in the Russian cognitive objectivity in general are an effect of some elements strongly present in this culture and thinking. These are elements of mystical realism, antiphenomenalism, ontologism, cosmism, orientation for totality, community-based anti-individualism, maximalism, etc. These elements were grown on the basis of Eastern Christianity, and in the era after Peter the Great, they were in many cases strengthened by the conscious or instinctive turn towards ideas and values alternative to the Western ones (Broda, 1998, pp. 44-54, 58-63; Ryabov, 1999, pp. 298-301; Andreev, 1970, pp. 11-12; Fedotov, 1946, pp. 9-15, 175-177). Subjective—in the negative meaning of "subjectivity"—character is assigned only to the other, alternative cognitive and Western attempts (Broda, 2002, pp. 14-22), described as "customary", "superficial", "external", "untrue" or "missed"—and not with their own attempt, in which as it is believed, the Russia itself and its "soul", "concept", "mystery" or just solved "riddle" is present and expressed.

Conclusion

Russian "Oedipus/intellectual" can of course refuse to acknowledge any positive sense in tackling the "riddle of Russia" and refuse to become Oedipus—therefore breaking the community tradition. However, he can also avoid the "bad dychotomy" of losing his roots and lack of critical distance—and to acknowledge the specificity of relation he has with Russia/Sphinx, i.e. the mutual dependency of the objective and subjective side. He can acknowledge the mutual assumption and constitution of those two elements: the human asking about Russia in a specific way and the image of Russian reality, as seen in the manner correlated with the character of his position.

As the Russian philosopher, Sergei Avierincev explains: "According to the logic of mythological symbols, to comprehend the riddle and to capture the person telling it is one and the same" (Avierincev, 1997, p. 161).

Oedipus solves the riddle of the Sphinx, but unfortunately, he cannot solve the riddle of his own fate, as the knowledge that he possesses is unique: it is knowledge-strength, knowledge-ruling, knowledge-power, but potentially also blindness by strength, by ruling, by power. Therefore, we are dealing with the pragmatic knowledge, oriented outward, which is not "about self-knowledge, conscientious solving of one's own mystery, but about the diffusion of the outside world's secrets, about controlling and taking it in possession" (Avierincev, 1997, p. 163), leading from time to time its "omnipotent" possessor almost into self-adoration and, let's add this ourselves, false self-consciousness. Since, however, as Avierincev continues, Oedipus is looking for other words of wisdom—for finding oneself in the truth—he has to direct himself inward and—minding the difference

between directness and essence, between incomparable, without distorting its authentic sense, types of power—refrain himself from his hypertrophic ambitions and expectations, connected with the identification of knowledge and power.

Analyzing it more generally, from the post-Kantian perspective and connected with its epistemological viewpoint, it is the "Russian Oedipus" who should in particular acknowledge that each cognitive attempt marked by a question about Russia—and in particular, the desire to understand it in its entirety—is inevitably a subjective philosophical or intellectual act. In the result of this act, the achieved "objectivity" of Russianness is not something external to the started meaning-forming process, but only a correlate of the defined culture-forming intent (Siemek, 1978, pp. 24-27).

To disclose this intent, to ask for its direction and meaning is to put under question the Russian self-cognitive efforts it marks and the objective order they recognize as true or real—as they assume it earlier. The acknowledgement of their objective character and sense, cultural and social historical context and own relations with it does not need to lead to rupture of those relations and loss of roots. On the contrary—it helps to maintain the dialogical connection, to deepen the self-awareness, create the "rift" of distance and liberty, and to understand, that the answer sought by this "Russian Oedipus" is related (just as in case of his Thebean predecessor) to himself and the basis of his mother culture. It can only help him to understand better—both in the individual, existential sense and the cultural/social sense—the answer to the following issues: who is the person asking about Russia? Why does he do it, what does he aim to achieve? And why—even though the final goal cannot be achieved—does he still repeat the effort and ask about Russia, ask about himself...

References

- Afanasyev, Y. (2001). *Opasnaya Rossiya. Traditsii samovlastiya segodnya* (Threatening Russia. Traditions of autocracy today). Moscow: Rossiyskiy gosudarstvennyy gumanitarny universitet.
- Andreev, N. (1970). *Studies in Moscow. Western influence and Bizantine inheritance*. London: Variorum Reprints.
- Avierincev, S. (1997). *Na skrzyżowaniu tradycji* (On the crossroads of traditions). Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy .
- Broda, M. (1998). *Ponyat Rosiiu?* (Understanding Russia?). Moscow: Dialog-MGU.
- Broda, M. (2001). *Historia a eschatologia. Studia nad myślą Konstantego Leontiewa i "zagadką Rosji"* (History and eschatology. Studies on Konstantin Leontiev's thought and the "Russian riddle"). Lodz: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- Broda, M. (2002). Russia and the West: The root of the problem of mutual understanding. *Studies in East European Thought*, 54(1-2), 7-24.
- Broda, M. (2011). *"Zrozumieć Rosję"? O rosyjskiej zagadce-tajemnicy* ("Understanding Russia"? On Russian riddle-mystery). Lodz: Ibidem.
- Bulgakov, S. N. (2008). *Dva grada: Issledovaniya o prirode obshchestvennykh idealov* (Two cities: On the nature of social ideals). Moscow: Izdatelstvo Olega Abyshko.
- Cirlot, J. E. (2000). *Słownik symboli* (Dictionary of symbols). Cracow: Znak.
- Domnikov, S. D. (2002). *Mat-zemlya i Tsar-gorod. Rossiya kak traditsionnoye obshchestvo* (The Mother-Earth and the Tsar-City. Russia as a traditional society). Moscow: Aleteya.
- Faryno, Y. (2001). Myśliciel, Myśl, Refleksja (Thinker, thought, reflexion). In A. de Lazari (Ed.), *Idiei w Rossii. Idee w Rosji. Ideas in Russia* (Ideas in Russia. Ideas in Russia. Ideas in Russia) (Vol. 4). Lodz: Ibidem.
- Fedotov, G. (1946). *The Russian religious mind* (Vol. 2). Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Fedotov, G. P. (1991). *Sudba i grekhi Rossii* (The fate and sins of Russia) (Vol. 1). Sankt-Peterburg: Sofiya.
- Gertsen, A. I. (1986). Byloye i dumy (The past and thoughts). In *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh* (Works in two volumes) (Vol. 2). Moscow: Mysl.
- Ivanov, V. I. (1987). *Dukhovny lik slavyanstva* (The spiritual face of the Slavic culture). In *Sobraniye sochineniy v chetyrekh tomakh* (Vol. 4). Brussel: Foyer oriental chretien.

- Kelly, A. (1978). Introduction: A complex vision. In I. Berlin (Ed.), *Russian thinkers*. London: Hogarth Press.
- Kołąkowski, L. (1998). *Jeśli Boga nie ma* (If there is no God...). Cracow: Znak.
- Kutyavin, V., & Leontyeva, O. (2006). *Mifo russkom Sfinks* (The myth of the Russian Sphinx). *Evropa. Zhurnal Polskiego Instytutu Mezhdunarodnykh del*, (6), 167-171.
- Paprocki, H. (2000). *Softologija* (Sophiology). In A. de Lazari (Ed.), *Idiei w Rossii. Idee w Rosji. Ideas in Russia* (Ideas in Russia. Ideas in Russia) (Vol. 3). Lodz: Ibidem.
- Ryabov, O. V. (1999). *Russkaya filosofiya zhenstvennosti (XI-XX veka)* (Russian philosophy of femininity). Ivanovo: Yunona.
- Sarnowski, S. (1988). *Rozumność i świat. Próba wprowadzenia do filozofii* (Rationality and world. An introduction to philosophy). Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.
- Scheler, M. (1987). *Pisma z antropologii filozoficznej i teorii wiedzy* (Studies in antropological philosophy and theory of knowledge). Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.
- Siemek, M. (1978). Filozofia drugiej połowy XX wieku (Philosophy of the second half of the 20th century). In *Drogi współczesnej filozofii* (The ways of the contemporary philosophy). Warsaw: Czytelnik.
- Siemek, M. (1987). *Filozofia, dialektyka, rzeczywistość* (Philosophy, dialectics, reality). Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.
- Skovoroda, G. S. (1973). *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh* (Works in two volumes). Moscow: Mysl.
- Solonevich, I. L. (1991). *Narodnaya monarkhiya* (National monarchy). Moscow: Feniks.
- Solovyev, V. (1990). Filozofskiye nachala tselnogo znaniya (Philosophical fundaments of the integral knowledge). In *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh* (Works in two volumes). Moscow: Mysl.
- Solovyev, V. M. (2001). *Tayny russkoy dushi: Voprosy, otvety, versii* (Mysteries of the Russian soul. Questions, answers, versions). Moscow: Russkiy yazyk. Kursy.
- Strada, V. (1996). *V svete kontsa, v predvestii nachala (XIX vek)* (In dusk, sensing the dawn (19th century)). In E. L. Rudnitskaya (Ed.), *V razdumyakh o Rossii (XIX vek)* (In thoughts on Russia (XIX century)). Moscow: Arkheograficheskiy Tsentr.