

Final Report

Visegrad Scholarship “Languages of Freedom”
Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives (Budapest)

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Freedom in Exile: Munich Institute, Transnational Scholarship, and Ukrainian-Jewish Relations, 1950s-1970s

Project Outline

When I started my research period at the OSA, I intended to find direct traces of Solomon Goldelman at the Institute for the Study of the USSR, or the Munich Institute. Solomon Goldelman (1885-1974) was a member of the *Poalei Zion* (Workers of Zion) party in Ukraine prior to 1917 and in this capacity also actively participated in Ukrainian state-building during the revolutionary period of 1917-1920. He consistently argued in favor of Ukrainian-Jewish cooperation, even when he left Ukraine as the Bolsheviks were dismantling the Ukrainian People’s Republic and the Jewish population of Ukrainian territories was perishing in the deadly waves of pogroms. In the years after World War II and the establishment of the State of Israel, Goldelman reconnected with many of his former Ukrainian colleagues, including those who had links to ‘the Munich Institute’ as it was commonly referred to in the letters, as opposed to its full name – the Institute for the Study of History and Culture of the USSR and later, after 1955, the Institute for the Study of the USSR.

I was aware that Goldelman had worked with the Institute and participated in the Institute’s conferences in Europe based on his extensive correspondence with the Institute, preserved in his personal archive at the National Library of Israel. According to Evgeniy Kodin, the organizational archive of the Munich Institute is believed to have been destroyed after the Institute’s closure and handover of the documents to RFE/RL in 1972, with the Institute’s staff being pressured into giving up majority of their documents under the threat of legal action in case they didn’t.¹ This, therefore, created the situation when the most realistic sources for uncovering the history of the Institute are 1) either personal archives of the people involved in the Institute and its activities, which are, due to the transnational character of the Institute’s work and diverse geography of its contributors, dispersed

¹ E.V. Kodin, *Miunkhenskii institut po izucheniiu istorii i kul'tury SSSR, 1950-1972 gg.: evropeiskii tsentr sovetologii?* (Smolensk: SmolGU, 2016), 4.

over a number of countries and even continents (one such example is Goldelman's archive); 2) or publications of the Institute – hence my work with these publications at the OSA archive.

The Key Sources Consulted

Publications of the Institute for the Study of the USSR

Forty Years of the Soviet Regime: A Symposium of the Institute for the Study of the USSR (Proceedings of the Ninth Institute Conference) - Munich, July 26-27, 1957	In English	
Ученые записки Института по изучению СССР, Том 1, Выпуск 1, 1963 [Research Records of the Institute for Study of the USSR]	In Russian	
Материалы и сообщения исследовательского отдела [Materials and Communications of the Research Department]	In Russian	40 issues from January 1959 to 1964, including special issue dedicated to the First Conference of the Economic Section of the Institute, July 30-31, 1958 (in Russian) and special issue on the Student Seminar 1962, Independent Research Papers of Seminar Students (in English)
Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR	In English	19 issues from March 1954 to September 1955
Бюллетень Института по изучению истории и культуры СССР	In Russian	5 issues, in parallel to English-language ones
Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the USSR	In English	27 issues from October 1955 to December 1957
Вестник Института по изучению истории и культуры СССР [Herald (or Journal) of the Institute for Study of the History and Culture of the USSR]	In Russian	15 issues from 1951 to December 1955
Вестник Института по изучению СССР [Herald (or Journal) of the Institute for Study of the USSR]	In Russian	8 issues in 1956-1957
Soviet Society Today: A Symposium of the Institute for the Study of the USSR (Proceedings of the tenth Institute conference) Munich, July 25-26, 1958 / [Edited by Oliver J. Frederiksen]	In English	1958
Institute Publications	In English	4 issues, published in 1959, 1961, 1965 and 1969
Ukrains'kyi zbirnyk [Ukrainian Review]	In Ukrainian	1 issue (Book 17, 1960)
Analiz tekushchikh sobytii v Sovetskom Soiuze [Analysis of the Current Events in the Soviet Union]	In Russian	165 issues from November 1964 to December 1971

This wide selection of the Institute's publications gives an insight into the many topics the Institute prioritized as well as into the diverse authorship of these publications. Some of these works were produced for internal purposes (marked "not for publication"), such as *Materials and Communications*, the periodical of the Research Department, which was founded in 1953. This may challenge the accepted view that propaganda was the sole goal of the Institute's contributors, as argued by Charles O'Connell and Benjamin Tromly,² as the scholars associated with the Institute in fact seemed intent on producing material for internal discussions and believed in the importance of the quality review: "The main task of the Publications Board consisted in assigning reviewers to the scholarly works received and making final decisions in this regard."³ In looking at these publications, I was interested in identifying the Ukrainian authors as well as those authors who touched upon Jewish topics. They were the ones that Solomon Goldelman and his writings were in a real or thematic dialogue with.

The archival boxes I consulted pertain to the HU OSA 300 Records of Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty Research Institute and include:

HU OSA 300-4-3 Communist Area Analysis Department: Subject Files Relating to the Soviet Union:

- HU OSA 300-4-3:19/8 (World Politics: Foreign Relations: Near East)
- HU OSA 300-4-3:19/9 (World Politics: Foreign Relations: Near East)
- HU OSA 300-4-3:19/10 (World Politics: Foreign Relations: Near East)
- HU OSA 300-4-3:19/11 (World Politics: Foreign Relations: Near/Middle East)
- HU OSA 300-4-3:19/12 (World Politics: Foreign Relations: Near/Middle East)

HU OSA 300-7-6 US Office: Subject Files Relating to the Soviet Union:

- HU OSA 300-7-6:13/5 (Foreign Policy: Middle East)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:13/6 (Foreign Policy: Middle East [1/2])
- HU OSA 300-7-6:14/1 (Foreign Policy: Middle East [2/2])
- HU OSA 300-7-6:14/2 (Foreign Policy: Middle East)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:14/3 (Foreign Policy: Middle East)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:14/4 (Foreign Policy: Middle East [1/2])
- HU OSA 300-7-6:14/5 (Foreign Policy: Middle East [2/2])
- HU OSA 300-7-6:14/6 (Foreign Policy: Middle East)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:14/7 (Foreign Policy: Middle East)

² Charles T. O'Connell, "The Munich Institute for the Study of the USSR: Origin and Social Composition," *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, no. 808 (1990): 30–32, <https://doi.org/10.5195/cbp.1990.47>; Benjamin Tromly, *Cold War Exiles and the CIA: Plotting to Free Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 152.

³ Iz zhyzni Instituta [From the Life of the Institute], *Vestnik* No. 2 (15), April-June 1955, 123.

- HU OSA 300-7-6:24/4 (Minorities: Jews)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:24/5 (Minorities: Jews)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:25/1 (Minorities: Jews)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:25/2 (Minorities: Jews)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:25/3 (Minorities: Jews)
- HU OSA 300-7-6:25/4 (Minorities: Jews [1/2])
- HU OSA 300-7-6:25/5 (Minorities: Jews [2/2])

HU OSA 300-6-1 Media and Opinion Research Department:

- HU OSA 300-6-1:8 (Administrative Files)

HU OSA 300-8-11 Publications Department:

- HU OSA 300-8-11:1 (Daily Information Bulletin)

HU OSA 300-6-1 Media and Opinion Research Department: Administrative Files; The Arab-Israel Conflict and Public Opinion in Eastern Europe:

- HU OSA 300-6-1:12/1 (The Arab-Israeli Conflict and Public Opinion in Eastern Europe)

HU OSA 300-85 Samizdat Archives:

- HU OSA 300-85-12:191/5 (National Question: Jews: Ukraine)

HU OSA 300-7-5 US Office: Subject Files Relating to Eastern Europe:

- HU OSA 300-7-5:14/2 (Minorities: Jews: Periodicals)

These materials exemplify the significance of the public discussion of the problem of antisemitism and anti-Zionism in the Soviet Union, unfolding particularly visibly in the 1960s, in connection with Trofim Kichko's *Judaism without Embellishment* (1963) and the Six-Day War between Israel and the Arab states, backed by the Soviet Union (1967). The fact that Kichko's book was published by the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kyiv resulted in foregrounding of the issue of Ukrainian antisemitism and had reverberations even in the U.S. press.⁴ Reports and newspaper clippings from this collection also deal extensively with the Soviet antagonism towards the State of Israel, which is significant in the context of Goldelman's worldview, who often drew parallels between

⁴ HU OSA 300-7-6:24/4, Box 24, To: All Radio Desks, from Newsroom, Statements on Soviet Jewish Life. Judd L. Teller, who is described as an "expert on Jewish persecution in the USSR and author of several books on the subject, including 'the Kremlin, the Jews and the Middle East' and 'Scapegoats of the Revolution'" (p.3) wrote about Ukrainians in an accusatory tone. His piece from April 16, 1964 in N.Y. Times was the response to Walter Dushyck and his defense of Ukrainians after *Judaism without Embellishment* (his response is called "Anti-Semitism in Ukraine: Record of Nationalist Movement, Collaboration with Nazis Cited"). Then, in response to Teller, Eugene Sanjour responded with "Anti-Semitism in Ukraine: Blanket Charge Against Nationalist Movement Disputed," also, like Dushyck, defending Ukrainians against "blanket" accusations (April 25, 1964, N.Y. Times).

the histories of Ukrainian and Israeli statehoods and highlighted their affinities. He believed that as a state for Jews came into existence, so a sovereign Ukraine would be reinstated.

Research Outcomes

My key hypothesis was that the links established and sustained through the Institute contributed to Ukrainian-Jewish *rapprochement* and though it still needs further development, my research at the OSA has been of tremendous value for contextualizing the Ukrainian-Jewish dialogue in 1950s-1970s and particularly contextualizing Goldelman's writings for the Institute with regard to the broader pool of publications the Institute released over the years of its existence.

The archival research itself led me to broader questions about the Institute, where my focus on Goldelman as a key figure in this re-emerging Ukrainian-Jewish dialogue became a signpost that allowed me to view and analyze the activities of the Institute through the prism of Goldelman's personal story. The correspondence that I had come across as part of Goldelman's personal archive in Jerusalem reveal the silenced (if all the Institute's internal materials had truly been destroyed) part of the Institute's history – the story that is difficult to trace through the official or unofficial publications of the Institute. However, the following puzzles-questions crystallized, which will continue to serve as the main focus of my further research in this direction.

Puzzle number 1: what was the relationship between the Munich Institute and the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty? Definitive connections between the two entities are not obvious in their documents and publications. However, there are indications that, besides sharing the source of funding (the Central Intelligence Agency) and location in Munich, the Munich Institute and the RFE/RL shared the same informational space⁵ as well as goals, including that of propagating the message that the Soviet Union was not what it pronounced to be, especially in resolving the national question(s).⁶ Moreover, similarly to RL, the Munich Institute scholars⁷ closely monitored what was

⁵ As highlighted in my presentation, there is evidence in Goldelman's personal correspondence that he was reading (or at least he received) publications of Radio Liberty (at that time still called "Radio Liberation") by the on-site Munich Institute staff, and that the research and analytics department of RFE/RL consulted some of the Munich Institute's publications in compiling their reports (Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the USSR from March 1968 is referenced, HU OSA 300-7-5:14/2, Box 14).

⁶ Gene Sosin, "Goals of Radio Liberty," in *Cold War Broadcasting Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, ed. A. Ross Johnson and R. Eugene Parta (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010), 17–18.

⁷ Though Charles T. O'Connell would strongly disagree with the designation of the Institute's staff as "scholars" ("The Munich Institute for the Study of the USSR: Origin and Social Composition," *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, no. 808 (1990): 1–46, <https://doi.org/10.5195/cbp.1990.47>).

happening and – even more significantly for them – what was being published in Soviet journals and books.

Puzzle number 2: how did Goldelman, who by the time the Institute was founded in the summer of 1950 lived in Israel, became part of it, as a correspondent member and as an author of a number of articles and even of a standalone publication⁸? I discovered that Goldelman was not the only one interested in Jewish topics, but his expertise on Ukrainian-Jewish relations stood out. Reviewing other pieces on Jewish topics, featured in the Institute's publications, was crucial for my understanding of the scholarly scene Goldelman was entering when he accepted the invitation of the Institute to write articles for them. The conditions of the Jewish population of the Soviet Union were on the Institute's radar, starting with the article as early as 1951 (on Soviet government and Jews in 1941-42, by V. Marchenko), and Goldelman's first contribution to the Institute's publications on this topic came out in *Ukrainsky Zbirnyk [Ukrainian Review]*, No. 14 (1958), in Ukrainian: "Dolya zhydivstva pid Sovyetamy" [The Lot of the Jews under the Soviets].

Puzzle number 3: why did Ukrainians cooperate with and write for the Munich Institute? Partially the answer to this question consists in the fact that the Institute's publications also came out in Ukrainian. The Ukrainian-language materials were published on a smaller scale, with English and Russian being the most common languages used (such as the monthly *Bulletin* in English and the quarterly *Vestnik* in Russian), but they were nevertheless possible (Ukrainian and Belarusian Reviews were launched alongside *Dergi* in Turkish). Most probably Ukrainians saw the Institute as a platform to have their voices heard, even if in languages other than Ukrainian. Working with the Institute's publications held at the OSA allowed me to place Goldelman's work in its relation to the work and expertise of other Ukrainian scholars, such as Panas Fedenko (1893-1981), Borys Martos (1879-1977), and others.

Thus, the archival materials documenting the activities of RFE / RL have been a rich source of information on the context within which Goldelman agreed to cooperate with the Munich Institute and to write about the plight of Jews in the Soviet Union and, even more importantly for my research interests – about Ukrainian-Jewish relations. This collection and its folders showcase that while it was not surprising for Goldelman to write very critically about the Soviet Union's policies for Jews, to write in defense of Ukrainians in the context of the difficult Ukrainian-Jewish relations required more than intellectual curiosity. Moreover, for Goldelman, the Munich Institute served as a space

⁸ Goldelman, Solomon, *Zhydivs'ka natsional'na avtonomiia na Ukraini, 1917-1920 rr.*, Issledovaniia i materialy (Miunkhen: Instytut dlia vyvchennia SRSR, 1963).

(intellectual and during conferences – physical) where he had the freedom to write about the topics he was most invested in. He was not restricted by the potential disapproval he could have received in Israel for writing positively about the experiences of Jews in Ukraine. To be fair, he did not think he was writing positively but believed he wrote constructively. In other words, only being in exile, he and his Ukrainian colleagues could have the freedom to write.

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