

Advancing Poland in Exile: World War II Intellectuals in North America

Abstract

The outbreak of World War II left thousands of Polish citizens unable to safely return to their homeland, among them scholars who were quick to form a “Polish University in Exile” in Paris as a means of ensuring wartime continuity in their respective fields, followed by an Association of Polish University Professors and Lecturers in London after the fall of France. The cadre of intellectuals and artists who were in the United States in 1939 were joined during and in the immediate aftermath of the war by hundreds of others. This article chronicles the efforts of these academics to not only support the political and military goals of the Polish government-in-exile, but especially their creation of valuable, enduring organizations in North America that preserved priceless archival materials, published important monographs and journals, and greatly broadened the North American footprint of Polish studies among both Polish and non-Polish scholars in all their diverse disciplines.

Key words: intellectuals, United States of America, Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, Piłsudski Institute, Polish American Historical Association

Abstrakt

Wybuch II wojny światowej uniemożliwił tysiącom polskich obywateli bezpieczny powrót do ojczyzny. Wśród nich znaleźli się uczeni, którzy szybko utworzyli Uniwersytet Polski za Granicą w Paryżu jako sposób na zapewnienie wojennej ciągłości w swoich dziedzinach. Kolejne działania podejmowano w Londynie, już po upadku Francji. Polskie życie naukowe rozwijało się także w innych częściach świata. Do kadry intelektualistów i artystów, którzy znaleźli się w Stanach Zjednoczonych w 1939 roku, dołączyły w czasie wojny i bezpośrednio po niej setki innych osób.

Niniejszy artykuł jest kroniką wysiłków tych naukowców, którzy nie tylko wspierali polityczne i wojskowe cele polskiego rządu na uchodźstwie, ale przede wszystkim stworzyli cenne, trwałe organizacje w Ameryce Północnej, które zachowały bezcenne materiały archiwalne, opublikowały ważne monografie i czasopisma oraz znacznie poszerzyły północnoamerykański ślad polskich studiów wśród polskich i niepolskich naukowców we wszystkich różnych dyscyplinach.

Słowa kluczowe: intelektualiści, Stany Zjednoczone, Polski Instytut Naukowy w Ameryce, Instytut Piłsudskiego, Polsko-Amerykańskie Stowarzyszenie Historyczne

As the first hint of light began to replace the darkness on the early morning of September 1, 1939, the Polish countryside was serene. People who rose early were looking forward to a pleasant day. These expectations were shattered at 4:45 in the morning by the deafening thunder of the German battleship *Schleswig-Holstein's* guns opening fire on the Polish fortress at Westerplatte. Within minutes, artillery shells rained down on Polish targets followed by waves of bombers striking far and wide across the country. There would be no more „pleasant” days in Poland for a *very* long time.

With the outbreak of war, thousands of Polish citizens found themselves unable to safely return to their homeland. Some were abroad on business, attached to political missions, finishing late summer travel, or through a variety of other circumstances. The severe devastation and dislocations created by the invasion and the subsequent Soviet move into Poland were severe. As their nation fell under brutal occupation, some individuals and small groups were able to escape through Scandinavia or Romania to France or England. Scholars who reached France, determined to prevent Polish learning from becoming a victim of the conflict, created a „Polish University in Exile” in Paris as a means of ensuring wartime continuity in their respective fields. With the fall of France, London became the *de facto* capital of the Polish emigration in the West. Refugee scholars from Poland arrived through many escape routes, joining compatriots already there to form the Association of Polish University Professors and Lecturers to continue their scholarly activities and support, as much as possible, the cause of Poland¹.

¹ *Polish American Historical Association 1942–1951*, Orchard Lake 1951, p. 2; J.J. Kulczycki, *Polish Historians in the United States and Canada*, „The Polish Review” 2008, vol. 53, no. 4, p. 457; P.S. Wandycz, *Historia emigracyjna – Refleksje*, „Rocznik Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności” 1999/2000, p. 219;

Some of these exiles moved on to the United States where they joined their compatriots who had been there when hostilities broke out. Data from the US Immigration and Naturalization Service reveals that 18,068 arrived in the US in the years between 1940 and 1945 inclusive². Among those in the country in 1939 or arriving during the war was a cadre of scholars and intellectuals permanently or temporarily affiliated with universities or other academic institutions abroad or arriving as refugees from the European chaos. Having experienced life in an autonomous Poland during the interwar years and as surviving members of the elite of prewar Polish academe, especially after the imprisonment and murder of so many of their colleagues in occupied Poland, they were deeply defensive of the nation independence and its cultural and intellectual heritage. Oskar Halecki held the position of chair in East European history at Warsaw University, was a member of the Polish Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference after World War I, and later gained appointment to the League of Nations Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland. Bronisław Malinowski enjoyed an international reputation as an anthropologist and ethnologist gained initially from his acclaimed 1922 publication *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*, then, as now, considered a seminal groundbreaking work in field research. Waław Lednicki was an expert on Russian literature at the Jagiellonian University noted especially for his work on Pushkin. Rafał Taubenschlag was a legal scholar and dean of the Jagiellonian University Law School. Chemist Wojciech Świętoślowski had served as the deputy chairman of the International Chemical Union and was generally recognized as the originator of modern thermochemistry. Ignacy Matuszewski, Waław Jędrzejewicz, and Henryk Floyar-Raychman were ministers in the prewar Polish government. All of these, and more, were already prominent scholars with international reputations giving them status not only within Polish academic circles but internationally as well. As such, they were uniquely positioned to keep alive the flame of Polish learning during these nightmarish years and to influence Americans on behalf of the Polish cause.

Members of the wartime group were of course not the first Poles to arrive in the United States. The earliest came into the Dutch colony of New Nether-

P. Wandycz, *Polish, Hungarian and Czechoslovak Political Emigration and the Origins of the Cold War*, „The Polish Review” 2002, vol. 47, no. 3, p. 319.

² H.Z. Lopata, *Polish Immigration to the United States of America: Problems of Estimation and Parameters*, „The Polish Review” 1976, vol. 21, no. 4, p. 96. These included 4,768 in 1940, 4,688 in 1941, 2,376 in 1942, 1,647 in 1943, 1,420 in 1944, and 3,169 in 1945.

land, which eventually became New York, and the British Jamestown colony in Virginia. Group migration began with the exiles of the 1830–31 revolt and later the Polish uprisings in 1846 and 1863. Members of all these groups attempted to maintain contact with each other and to continue their activities on behalf of Poland. With the mass migration beginning in the 1870s, the new immigrants began forming religious and secular organizations which, in one form or another, all remained concerned with the fate of their partitioned homeland, contributing men, finances, and relief support toward its eventual recreation as a sovereign nation after World War I. Although some of the new World War II arrivals joined existing organizations as individuals, as a group they tended to form their own associations.

Many of the Poles who spent the wartime years in the United States settled in the New York City and Chicago areas because of the availability of employment. In New York they formed the War Refugee Association in the United States (*Zrzeszenie Uchodźców Wojennych z Polski w Stanach Zjednoczonych*) and in Chicago the Circle of Polish Refugees (*Koło Uchodźców Polskich*), both with missions to assist fellow Poles in their relocation and subsistence in America. Others established the Polish National Theater (*Polski Teatr Narodowy*) and the Polish Artists' Theater (*Polski Teatr Artystów*) in New York, while the renowned poet Jan Lechoń edited the *Tygodnik Polski* (*Polish Weekly*) dedicated to continuation of Polish literary traditions including the duty of those abroad to continue working for the cause of Poland. Others banded together in small disciplinary groups, but regardless of their professional avocations they retained an active and sincere concern for the welfare of their homeland leading to the founding of several organizations destined to play important roles in the continuation of Polish learning as well as providing very real and significant support for the restoration of Polish independence³.

The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences

With the war raging in Europe and Poland occupied, on December 20, 1940, Oskar Halecki took the lead in convening a meeting of Polish scholars in New York City to consider how they might continue their academic activities during the balance of the war. Because most of those present had been mem-

³ Between 1936 and 1977, 101,000 Poles were admitted to the US through normal channels. In addition, 19,430 arrived as refugees and 135,302 as displaced persons under special legislation. T. Polzin, *The Polish Americans: Whence and Whither*, Pulaski 1973, pp. 65, 77.

bers of the Polska Akademia Umiejętności (Polish Academy of Learning) in Kraków, they determined to organize a branch of the Akademia to „continue Polish scientific activities ... spread knowledge about Poland and Polish culture in the United States” and „deepen cultural relations between Poland and America”⁴. In early 1941 the group appealed to the Polish government-in-exile in London for sanction and support, both of which were readily approved by Prof. Stanisław Kot, Minister of the Interior. Between May 1942 and July 1945, the London government provided \$106,000 (\$2,281,000 in 2023 dollars; 9,634,622 PLN) in support for the new Institute, a considerable sum at that time. With this endorsement, led by Halecki as its first executive director and Bronisław Malinowski as its first president, the new Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (Polski Instytut Naukowy w Ameryce) gained incorporation under the laws of New York State as an autonomous research center of the Polska Akademia Umiejętności with one of its missions being to provide a liaison between Polish and American scholars⁵. This was important, Halecki believed, because „the future cultural reconstruction of Poland needed the help of our American friends and especially of the American Polonia”⁶.

The first meeting of the new organization took place in the prestigious Pierpont Morgan Library on May 15, 1942. By 1943 the 26 members of the Institute’s Board of Directors included eight Poles, four Americans of Polish descent, and fourteen Americans with no Polish ancestry. It listed 33 active members and 37 corresponding members, both categories containing Poles, Americans, Canadians, Polish Americans, and at last two foreign members—a total of 70. A year later the active membership had grown to 57, 42 corresponding members, and 14 others for a total of 113⁷. Within two years the Institute had established branches in Chicago and Montréal. A formal

⁴ Paul Best, *Polish-American Scholarly Organizations in Pastor of the Poles: Polish American Essays Presented to Right Reverend Monsignor John P. Wodarski in Honor of the Fiftieth Year of His Ordination*, ed. S.A. Blejwas and M.B. Biskupski, New Britain 1982, pp. 159–60.

⁵ S. Flis, *The Archives of the Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America*, „Polish American Studies” 2003, vol. 60, no. 1, pp. 81–82; T.V. Gromada, *Polish Institute: The First 50 Years, 1942–1992: An Historical Survey*, New York 1995, pp. 25–26, 28; Feliks Gross, *A Half Century of Changing Mission of the Institute in Polish Institute: The First 50 Years, 1942–1992: An Historical Survey*, ed. T.V. Gromada, New York 1995, pp. 18–22; T.V. Gromada, *Haiman and Halecki in Light of the Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America Archives*, „Polish American Studies” 2006, vol. 63, no. 2, p. 83.

⁶ Gromada, *Haiman and Halecki*, p. 84.

⁷ *General Development of the Institute*, „Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America,” 1, 4, p. 679; *General Development of the Institute*, „Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America,” 2, 4, p. 904.

Canadian branch was inaugurated at a meeting held at McGill University in Montréal on October 21, 1943. Chaired jointly by Mgr. Olivier Maurault, Rector of the Université de Montréal and President of the Royal Society of Canada, and F. Cyril James, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of McGill University, the attendees were addressed in English, French and Polish by the Hon. Victor Podoski, the Polish Minister to Canada. In attendance for the occasion were representatives of the diplomatic corps and many of the leading academic institutions and societies in Canada: the Art Association, Association of Polish Engineers, Association Canadienne Française pour l'Avancement des Sciences, Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Illuminating Engineering Society, International Labor Organization, PEN Club, Polish Defence Committee, Royal Society of Canada, Société des Sciences Morales et Politiques, Société Historique de Montréal, and Women's University Association⁸.

Among the organizers of the Canadian section were Wanda Stachiewicz, an artist and writer who founded the Polish Library at McGill University, Dr. Tadeusz Brzeziński, the Polish consul in Montréal, and Professors Joseph Pawlikowski of the École Polytechnique de Montréal, Bolesław Szczeniowski of the Université de Montréal, and Tadeusz Poznański of Université Laval. Also included were several Canadian scholars including James B. Collip of the Royal Society of Canada, Jacques Rousseau of the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Science, and McGill professors Wiler G. Penfield, W. Bovey, Roderick D. MacLennan, and C. MacMillan. Much as with its parent organization, the Canadian section promoted the development and dissemination of research on Polish topics and supported publications, lectures, conferences, concerts, and artistic events, while also cultivating further relationships with non-Polish Canadian scholars. In 1944 it initiated a library of published and archival materials on Poland and the Polish experience in Canada which is today maintained by McGill University as the only independent Polish public library in North America. Its published holdings reached over 48,000 titles by 2023. In 1976, the Canadian section became an autonomous public institution under the name of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada (Polski Instytut Naukowy w Kanadzie) adopting as its slogan „Nauka, Wiedza, Kultura” (Learning, Knowledge, Culture). Since then, it has organized conferences on Witold Gombrowicz, Witold

⁸ O. Halecki, *General Development of the Institute*, „Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America” vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 271–72.

Lutosławski, Arthur Szyk, Czesław Miłosz, and Bruno Schulz, among others, as well as publishing numerous books, proceedings, and a *Bulletin*⁹.

As an indication of the seriousness and success of attempts by the New York-based Institute to involve American scholars, frequent participants in its activities included Professors Henry L. Roberts, a leading scholar of Eastern Europe, and Philip Mosely who did groundbreaking work on the South Slav „zadruga” in southeastern Europe, both of Columbia University, President Henry Noble McCracken of Vassar College, and renowned poet Archibald MacLeish. A listing of some of the groups represented in its early meetings and conferences includes organizations with little if any previous connection to Poland except, perhaps, an individual scholar among their faculties: Fordham, Harvard, Princeton, Pennsylvania, and Yale Universities along with the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, American Council of Learned Societies, National Academy of Science, and Social Science Research Council¹⁰. To those gathered at the founding meeting, Halecki asserted „The first and most immediate objective of the Polish Institute ... is to assure for the duration of the war the continuity of Poland’s cultural development”. But then he went further.

Today, however, continuity is not enough. Cultural post-war reconstruction, which after this total war will prove much more difficult than ever before, must be prepared right now. ... Without the cooperation of all our American friends, and more especially of the American ‘Polonia,’ Poland’s cultural reconstruction would hardly be possible¹¹.

Thus, from its very inception, the Institute viewed attracting American and Polish American support as essential to the success of its mission.

Looking at its early wartime activities, the Institute was very successful in forging relationships with the American scholarly community. During its first full year of operation from May 1942 to April 30, 1943, the Institute sponsored 102 lectures and addresses. Some of its conferences and discussions took place at leading colleges and universities such as Columbia,

⁹ Polski Instytut Naukowy w Kanadzie – <https://www.polishinstitute.org/> (accessed: 17.01.2023); Halecki, *General Development of the Institute*, pp. 271–72; quotations from „The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada and the Polish Library” <https://www.gg.ca/en/heraldry/public-register/project/1700> (accessed: 17.01.2023).

¹⁰ Gromada, *Polish Institute*, pp. 26, 31; Q. Wright, O. Halecki, S.P. Duggan and A. Senn, *General Development of the Institute*, „Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America” 1943, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 222–24.

¹¹ Wright, Halecki, Duggan and Senn, *General Development*, pp. 222–23.

Fordham, Harvard, Montréal, Northwestern, Pittsburgh, Toronto, and Vassar. These attracted many of the most reputable scholars, writers, and artists in America including John La Farge, Archibald MacLeish, Bernard de Voto and presidents James Conant (Harvard), Robert Kerner (University of California), Charles Seymour (Yale), and Robert J. Gannon (Fordham). Waldo G. Leland, director of the American Council of Learned Societies, took an active part on the Institute's Council and actively engaged in scholarly meetings. „Never before has there been such close contact and cooperation between American and Polish scholars” noted Thaddeus V. Gromada. „As a result of this interaction, an important segment of American society developed a better understanding and respect for Polish culture and learning”¹².

To achieve its goal of continuing the traditions of Polish scholarship and artistic endeavor the Institute immediately launched several initiatives in addition to its program of lectures and conferences. Two of these were aimed at collecting and preserving scholarly materials. The first, begun soon after the official incorporation of the organization, was the creation of a library and archive including books, scientific periodicals and original documents as well as developing a catalog of Polish documentary sources held in other US repositories. Under the care of its first leader, Lucja Marecka Borska, a professional from the New York Public Library, the collection began to gather materials from its members, Polish diplomatic and academic organizations abroad, and books related to East European studies including several hundred donated by the Polish Roman Catholic Union headquarters in Chicago. Among the more important early accessions were books and documents donated by Edward H.L. Corwin, the former secretary of the American Polish Relief Committee during World War I and author of *The Political History of Poland*, and Zygmunt Stojowski, the noted pianist and composer¹³.

The second initiative involved publishing ventures, both those by the Institute and others with its support. Some of the more important, which also reflect the diversity of interests, included Taubenschlag's *The Law of Greco-Roman Egypt in the Light of the Papyri, 332 B.C.-640 A.D.* (1944), Alexander Turyn's *The Manuscript Tradition of the Tragedies of Aeschylus* (1943) and *Pindari Epinicia* (1944), Mieczysław Haiman's *Kosciuszko in the American Revolution* (1943), Władysław Gorczyński's *Comparison of Climate of the United States and Europe with Special Attention to Poland and Her Baltic Coast* (1945), and George R. Noyes' *Poems by Adam Mickiewicz* (1944). The

¹² Quotation from Gromada, *Polish Institute*, 27; *General Development of the Institute*, p. 679.

¹³ Flis, *Archives*, p. 81; Wright, Halecki, Duggan and Senn, *General Development*, p. 185.

Institute also began holding scholarly meetings modeled on those of the prewar Polska Akademia Umiejętności and publishing the *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America*. The intent of the publication was to replace a prewar journal published by the Kraków group with its content recording the activities of the Institute along with publishing reports, academic papers delivered at conferences, lists of newly published scientific matter, and related materials. By 1946, when it ceased publication due to the loss of funding from the London government, the *Bulletin's* twelve issues contained 3,100 pages including 206 articles¹⁴.

Despite its noteworthy participation as an Allied nation in World War II, the end of the European conflict in May 1945 brought only continued occupation by a foreign power, the Soviet Union. Worse, because the United States and United Kingdom recognized the Soviet-sponsored government in Poland, the London government-in-exile lost its influence and its ability to continue support for Polish groups including the New York-based Institute. Before leaving his post as Consul General in New York, Sylwin Strakacz, wrote to Halecki to thank the Institute „for fulfilling the responsible mission of representing the truth about Poland and of strengthening the traditional friendship binding our nation with the American people, and maintaining a spiritual bond with the learned world of the West”¹⁵.

The new reality of international politics brought considerable change to the Institute. First, its members were faced with the decision of either returning to a nation dominated by Marxist ideology or remaining permanently in the West where they would enjoy freedom of research and expression. Some returned; most did not. Second, originally conceived as an extension of the Kraków Akademia, there was the question of whether that historical and emotional bond should be retained. Unequivocally, because of their anti-Communist sentiments, those who elected to stay in the West and their American-born supporters chose to sever those ties by amending the Institute's New York State charter to become an independent American corporation that scrupulously avoided any contact with the Soviet-controlled government, its representatives, and its embassies and consulates. Later it obtained non-profit, tax exempt status as an independent American educational society. Third, the loss of funding from the London government caused a serious financial crisis only partially and temporarily eased by donations from some Polish American organizations and

¹⁴ *General Development of the Institute* (July 1944), p. 903; *Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America*, „Nature,” 3835, p. 499; Gromada, *Polish Institute*, p. 27.

¹⁵ Gromada, *Polish Institute*, pp. 27–28.

American learned societies which allowed the Institute to take part in such activities as conferences on The University and its World Responsibilities at Princeton, The Conference on the Declaration of Human Rights sponsored by the US State Department, and The Conference on International Educational Reconstruction in Washington, DC, all in 1947. These were but a few examples of the Institute's increasing involvement in promoting academic freedom and the cause of Poland despite its reduced funding¹⁶.

By 1951, however, most of the subventions had ceased, forcing the Institute to exist on its own resources supplemented by occasional grants for specific purposes. Fortunately for its future, two benefactors emerged to fill the void. One of these was Stanisław Strzetelski, a noted Polish journalist who escaped to Western Europe during the war to continue his efforts on behalf of his homeland. Arriving in the US in early 1941, he became director of the Press Department of the Polish Information Center in New York, was among the founders of the National Committee of Americans of Polish Descent and became head of the Polish Section of the Free Europe Committee. Strzetelski organized a fundraising drive among the Polish communities in the tri-state region around New York City which raised some \$5,000, enough to keep the Institute running in the mid-1950s. The other benefactor was Alfred Jurzykowski. Although details on his early life are sketchy, according to a Brazilian writer, during the 1930s he earned a degree in economics and business, established a department store and a Mercedes-Benz dealership in Warsaw, and served in the Polish army. Following the disastrous German invasion of 1939, he escaped to Western Europe, eventually arriving in New York in 1940 and then moving to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he founded *Distribuidores Unidos do Brasil S.A.*, and became wealthy importing Mercedes-Benz products and later manufacturing trucks and busses at a facility in São Paulo¹⁷. Jurzykowski became a major benefactor of Polish causes, including purchasing a townhouse in New York City that he leased to the Polish Institute for \$1 per year and donating thousands of dollars to the maintenance of the library and archives and for other purposes includ-

¹⁶ Feliks Gross, *Half Century*, p. 19; Best, *Scholarly Organizations*, pp. 155–57, 159–60, 162; Gromada, *Polish Institute*, pp. 28–29; Gromada, *Haiman and Halecki*, pp. 88–89, 91; J. Wojdon, *W imieniu Sześciu Milionów...: Kongres Polonii Amerykańskiej w latach 1944–1968*, Toruń 2005, pp. 312–13.

¹⁷ Gromada, *Polish Institute*, pp. 28–29, 32–33; „Głos Narodu” 11 listopada 1938 r.; Alfred Jurzykowski *Dies at 67*; *Aided Polish Art and Science*, May 31, 1966, p. 43; P. Kutney, „O polonês que trouxe a Mercedes-Benz ao Brasil,” *Automotive Business*, May 8, 2021 <https://automotivebusiness.com.br/pt/posts/noticias/o-polones-que-trouxe-a-mercedes-benz-ao-brasil/> (accessed: August 13.08.2022); C. Karkowski, *Pierwsze lata Alfreda Jurzykowskiego w Nowym Jorku*, „*Polonia Journal*” 2016, no. 3–4, p. 57.

ing the establishment of an annual awards program „designed to recognize Poles (no matter what their residence) who made outstanding contributions in the fields of literature, music, arts and sciences”¹⁸. These generous donations were enough to support the Institute, and even expand its programs, during the lean years of the 1950s.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, in addition to sponsoring academic conferences, lectures, publications, and promoting the dissemination of research on Poland, the Institute established, in 1956, *The Polish Review* as a peer-reviewed multidisciplinary academic journal to replace the earlier *Bulletin* and promote scholarship on Poland, the Polish diaspora, and related topics. With the easing of some restrictions once Władysław Gomułka came to power in the „Polish October” of 1956, the Institute also pursued with vigor a new mission as, in the words of Feliks Gross, „an active agency of academic freedom as well as human and political rights” while at the same time offering „a pragmatic help and assistance to Polish educational institutions and scholars”¹⁹. In terms of the latter, the Institute provided individual support to Polish scholars and to institutions in the form of providing books, medical supplies and instruments, and other such assistance. It also sponsored major international conferences in 1966, 1971 and 1975, established a stipend program to provide financial assistance for Polish scholars visiting the United States and managed successful drives to provide books and other educational materials to Polish universities. However, these were but a few examples of the Institute’s increasing involvement in promoting academic freedom and the cause of Poland²⁰.

Although the Polish Institute’s activities were primarily directed toward maintaining and promoting Polish intellectual traditions and developing working relationships with American academics, members of the Institute were quite naturally also interested in the political issues of the day as they related to their homeland. In May 1944, members of the Institute were numbered among the more than 2,600 representatives of various organizations who met in Buffalo, New York, to establish the Polish American Congress (PAC; Kongres Polonii Amerykańskiej) as a political lobbying organization to promote the cause of Poland²¹. In 1946, PIASA leader Oskar

¹⁸ Gromada, *Polish Institute*, p. 36.

¹⁹ Gross, *Half Century*, p. 19.

²⁰ Best, *Scholarly Organizations*, pp. 155–57, 159–60, 162; Gromada, *Polish Institute*, pp. 29, 32.

²¹ Wojdon, *W imieniu Sześciu Milionów*, pp. 312–13; R. Szymczak, *Cold War Airwaves: The Polish American Congress and the Justice for Poland Campaign*, „Polish American Studies” 2015, vol. 72, no. 1, p. 42; D.E. Pienkos, „Polish American Congress” in *The Polish American Encyclopedia*, ed. J.S. Pula, Jefferson, 2011, pp. 377–78.

Halecki accompanied PAC president Charles Rozmarek to lobby on behalf of Poland at the Paris Peace Conference. In the postwar years the PAC provided financial support to PIASA and successfully lobbied the US Congress for legislation allowing the entry into the country of Polish displaced persons along with former members of the Polish armed forces in exile and their families. Under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 and the amended Displaced Persons Law of 1950, between June 1948 and June 1953 about 140,000 Polish citizens arrived in the US. Altogether, between 1945 and 1966 some 253,000 Polish citizens entered the United States. The PAC continued its efforts on behalf of Poland throughout the era of Communist domination of Eastern Europe. Beginning in 1945, PIASA's members took part in the PAC-supported Justice for Poland radio series, later participated in Voice of America and Radio Free Europe broadcasts, and successfully joined the effort to convince the US Congress to investigate the Katyń Massacre²².

The year 1974 marked a significant turning point in the history of the Institute when John A. Gronouski, Dean of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, former Postmaster General under Pres. John F. Kennedy, and U.S. Ambassador to Poland under Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson, took office as its first American-born president. The occasion did not go unnoticed. Because of changing political circumstances and the passage of time, Feliks Gross, elected Executive Director in 1975, observed that by the 1970s „the exile era of the Institute was over.”²³ As confirmation of this, the Institute's Bylaws were soon changed to substitute „of” in place of „in,” making the new name the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America. However, because of the passionate and persistent efforts of its early organizers, the founding generation bequeathed to the Institute a new generation that eagerly pursued their predecessors' vision. They were, Gross explained:

American scholars of Polish as well as other origins interested in Polish and Central and Eastern European Studies. It was a new crop of Polish American academicians, children of immigrants, a new intellectual class in Polonia. They were American educated, free of historical prejudices, eager to introduce Polish and East European studies in American colleges and universities. They knew

²² Wojdon, *W imieniu Sześciu Milionów*, pp. 312–13; Gross, *A Half Century*, p. 21; J.S. Pula, *American Immigration Policy and the Dillingham Commission*, „Polish American Studies” 1980, vol. 37, no. 1, pp. 13–14; Gromada, *Polish Institute*, p. 29; Szymczak, *Cold War Airwaves*, pp. 51–53, 56–57; Pienkos, *Polish American Congress*, pp. 377–78.

²³ Gross, *Half Century*, p. 20.

well the American college classroom as well as educational needs. But it was also a far broader interest of American scholars which has enriched the Institute²⁴.

The new group included many people with Polish ancestry, but as evidence of the broadening interest in East European studies promoted by the Institute, it also included people with no Polish heritage such as Daniel Gerould, Paul Knoll, Tom Bird, and Neal Pease. Preeminent among the emerging leadership group was Thaddeus V. Gromada, Gross's successor as Executive Director and the driving force behind the Institute's activities over the next four decades²⁵.

By 1972 the Institute's membership had increased to 506. In that year it affiliated with the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, broadening its contacts with other scholars in the broader field of Slavic studies. It also began to effectively apply for and obtain funding from non-Polish sources such as a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation for a research project on the Polish American ethnic group and another from the National Endowment for the Humanities for preservation of the Institute's archival collections and to begin an Oral History Project to create an archive of memoirs of Polish émigrés and prominent Polish Americans. It also began the collection of postwar archival materials relating to the activity of Polish émigrés during World War II and their political and social thought in the postwar years. With this support, and other grants from the Alfred Sloane Foundation and the National Endowment for Democracy, PIASA's archives continued to grow and become a recognized destination for increasing numbers of scholars from both North America and Europe, and at the same time greatly expanding the Institute's membership base to over 1,300 by 1980²⁶.

By 2000, the Institute's Alfred Jurzykowski Memorial Library held over 25,000 volumes while its archives contained 77 collections consisting of microfilms, audio tapes, videos, and nearly 152 linear meters (500 linear feet) of traditional documents such as correspondence, diaries, maps, and reports. Its wealth of valuable archival collections spans the years 1501 to

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ Ibidem. Among this new generation of scholars, Gross named Zbigniew Brzeziński, Thaddeus V. Gromada, Eugene Kusielewicz, Anna Cienciała, Ludwik Krzyżanowski, Joseph Wiczczak, Susanne Lotarski, Piotr Wandycz, Paul Best, Stanislaus Blejwas, James Pula, and M.B. Biskupski.

²⁶ Pienkos, *Polish American Congress*, pp. 377–78; Gromada, *Polish Institute*, pp. 394–95; Gromada, *Polish Institute*, pp. 28–29, 47; Wojdon, *Sześciu Milionów*, pp. 312–13. Today the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies is known as the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies.

the present and encompasses not only materials related to Poland but resources from the Polish diaspora worldwide. Among the more important collections are the Potocki family papers including records of Łańcut Castle and correspondence with such prominent families as the Czartoryskis, Lubomirskis, Opalińskis, Ossolińskis, Ostrogskis and Radziwiłłs, among others. Diplomatic compilations include the records of the Polish Legation in Rio de Janeiro (1918–1945), the Polish Embassy in the United States (1919–1945), the Józef Lipski Papers, the League of Nations, the Free City of Gdańsk, and the Polish-Soviet War (1919–1920). Highlights among the political documents are the records of the Polish Christian Democratic Labor Party, the Polish National Party, the Polish Socialist Party, the Federalist movement in exile (1942–1957), the Polish Federalist Association Division in Chicago (1950–1955), the Polish Freedom Movement „NID” Division in New York, and a collection of documents from the democratic opposition in Poland (1963–1985). Among the audio recordings are some 200 broadcasts of Radio Free Europe in New York (1951–1989)²⁷.

The papers of important intellectuals and political leaders include those of Andrzej Bobkowski, Feliks Gross, Oskar Halecki, Ludwik Krzyżanowski, Jan Lechon, Waław Lednicki, Bohdan Pawłowicz, Karol Popiel, Kazimierz Wierzyński, Józef and Halina Wittlin, and Szczepan Karol Zimmer. Polish diaspora collections of interest include the Latin American material of Edmund Urbanski and Juan Wyskota-Zakrzewski; the Thaddeus V. Gromada, Frank Renkiewicz, and Frank B. Roman papers relating to the Poles in the United States; and records of the Polish American Congress Commission of Education, Polonia Technica (Association of Polish-American Engineers), and the Tatra Eagle Publishing House²⁸. Over the years the library and archives became, in the words of Feliks Gross, a „*pied á terre*” for Polish scholars, writers, artists, and journalists²⁹.

After the resurrection of Polish independence from communist control, the Institute began to closely cooperate with universities and other academic institutions in Poland, reaffiliating with the new Polska Akademia Umiejętności in 1992. In the same year, President Gross and Executive Director Gromada met with officials of the Polska Akademia Nauk in Warsaw, initiating successful discussions toward cooperation between

²⁷ Gromada. *Polish Institute*, p. 24; Gross, „Half Century” p. 22; Flis, „Archives” pp. 83–84; „PIASA Archives” <https://archives.piasa.org/online-inventory/>(accessed: 30.11.2022).

²⁸ Gromada. *Polish Institute*, p. 24; Flis, „Archives” pp. 83–84; „PIASA Archives” <https://archives.piasa.org/online-inventory/>(accessed: 30.11.2022).

²⁹ Gross, „Half Century” p. 22.

the two organizations. Eventually, these, and other arrangements with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (Ministerstwo Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego) and the Polish State Archives (Archiwa Państwowe) led to the beginning of extensive efforts to catalogue and digitize the Institute's archival holdings for preservation and to make them more accessible to scholars worldwide³⁰.

Politically, the Institute also continued its role as a campaigner for Polish causes, providing vocal support and funding for Lech Wałęsa and the Solidarność movement, furnishing material backing during the period of martial law valued at more than \$160 million by 1990 (in 2023, \$371,370,161; 1,568,585,487 PLN), and later vigorously promoting Poland's entry into NATO³¹. As Polish Ambassador Bogusław Winid asserted, „American Polonia's lobbying campaign was one of the decisive factors that foretold success in winning the support of majorities in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate in favor of NATO expansion”³². With the reestablishment of a free Poland following the critical Polish parliamentary elections in 1989, PIASA reestablished full relations with the Polska Akademia Umiejętności and in 2000 held its 58th Annual Meeting in Kraków instituting a new era of cooperation between Polish and North America scholars in all disciplines. As historian Anna D. Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann explained:

The conference became a historical event for many reasons. The year 2000 marked the 600th anniversary of the renovation of the Uniwersytet Jagielloński and PIASA's conference was designated a part of the official Jubilee Celebration. The university and [the Polska Akademia Umiejętności] co-sponsored the event. The year 2000 is also the twentieth anniversary of the creation of Solidarność and the beginning of the road to end Communist domination in Poland, which allowed PIASA to return to its roots. The organizers of the multidisciplinary conference took great care to emphasize the symbolism of the occasion³³.

³⁰ Flis, „Archives” pp. 83–84.

³¹ D.E. Pienkos, *The Polish American Congress and the Organized Polish American Community Since 1999 Defining a New Mission After Poland's Entry to NATO*, „The Polish Review” 2015, vol. 60, no. 1, pp. 73–74.

³² B. Winid, *Rozszerzenie NATO w Kongresie Stanów Zjednoczonych, 1993–1998*, Warsaw 1999, pp. 96–97.

³³ A.D. Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann, *The Polish Post-World War II Diaspora: An Agenda for a New Millennium*, „Polish American Studies” 2000, vol. 57, no. 2, p. 45.

Since that time PIASA has held several conferences in Poland and in 2022 its Board of Directors voted to hold its conference in Poland every other year.

The Józef Piłsudski Institute

Much as a cadre of scholars from the prewar Polska Akademia Umiejętności were instrumental in forming PIASA, a group specializing in modern Polish history provided the impetus for creating another wartime academic organization. In June of 1942, devotees of Józef Piłsudski met in New York to create the National Committee of Americans of Polish Descent (Komitet Narodowy Amerykanów Polskiego Pochodzenia, or KNAPP) as a political lobbying organization. During its General Assembly in New York City on July 3–4, 1943, members decided to establish the Józef Piłsudski Institute for Research in the Modern History of Poland, planning for it to carry on the prewar activities of the Instytut Badania Najnowszej Historii Polski formed in Warsaw in 1923 and named after Piłsudski following his death in 1936. Among the founders were Ignacy Matuszewski, Waclaw Jędrzejewicz, and Henryk Floyar-Raychman, all former ministers in the prewar government, Franciszek Januszewski who was publisher of *Dziennik Polski* (Polish Daily News) in Detroit, and Maksymilian Węgrzynek the publisher of *Nowy Świat* (New World) in New York³⁴.

According to its bylaws:

The Institute's principal aim is the collection, preservation, and research of documents related to Poland's most recent history starting in 1863, creation of archives of historical texts, publishing of books and of academic papers pertinent to that field, offering scholarships for research in the history of Poland, organizing lectures and conferences³⁵

as well as collecting and preserving documents to reestablish the Institute's collections in Warsaw following the war. As with PIASA, once the postwar political climate became clear, the Piłsudski Institute opted to become an independent research organization and became increasingly

³⁴ P. Pietrzyk, *A Brief History of the Mission and Collections of the Piłsudski Institute of America for Research in the Modern History of Poland*, „Polish American Studies” 2003, vol. 60, no. 1, pp. 91–92.

³⁵ M. Haiman, *Polish Scholarship in the United States: 1939–1947*, „Polish American Studies” 1947, vol. 4, no. 3/4, p. 70.

critical of the Yalta agreement and the postwar Communist government in Poland³⁶.

In cooperation with the Piłsudski Institute in London, the New York organization participated in the publication of the magazine *Niepodległość* (Independence) and undertook its own support for books such as Waclaw Jędrzejewicz's editing of the three-volume *Poland in the British Parliament, 1939–1945* (1946–62), the memoirs of Ambassadors Józef Lipski and Juliusz Łukasiewicz, and other such publications providing English-speaking scholars with access to important information. One result was the use of the Piłsudski Institute resources and publications in such works as Richard M. Watt's *Bitter Glory*, Norman Davies's *The Heart of Europe: A Short History of Poland*, Anna Jaroszyńska-Kirchman's *The Exile Mission: The Polish Political Diaspora and Polish Americans 1939–1956*, director Mia Van Doren's film *The World was Ours: The Jewish Legacy of Vilna*, and a US Holocaust Memorial Museum exhibit titled *Fight and Rescue*, to name but a few³⁷.

In 2023, building on the efforts of its founders, the Piłsudski Institute maintains a reference library of over 20,000 volumes and more than 1,350 titles from the Polish Underground press in the 1970s through 1990s, over 20,000 photographs, 2,450 maps, an art gallery containing 240 works, an audiovisual collection of 16mm and 35mm films and audio and video cassettes including broadcasts of Radio Free Europe (1962–83), as well as films and other collections of historical materials relating to Poland in the 20th and 21st centuries. Despite all odds, the wartime organizers and their associates were able to rescue the Belweder Archive from the Instytut Badania Najnowszej Historii Polski and materials relating to the Silesian Uprisings of 1919–21 and the Ukrainian Military Mission in Poland (1919–31). Over the years this beginning expanded to more than one million documents including important records about Piłsudski, the Polish-Bolshevik War of 1919–22, the National Committee of Americans of Polish Descent (1942–65), the Consulate General in New York (1930–45), and the papers of Gen. Kazimierz Sosnkowski, Gen. Tadeusz Rozwadowski, historian Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, and diplomats Józef Lipski, Juliusz Łukasiewicz, Leon Orłowski, and Michał Sokolnicki among other military and political officials. Many of these have already been digitized in an ongoing program of

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ Piłsudski Institute of America website <https://www.pilsudski.org/en/> (accessed: 17.08.2022); Piłsudski Institute *Bulletins* and reports <https://www.pilsudski.org/en/digital-institute/institute-bulletins> (accessed: 17.08.2022).

preservation and to make them more accessible to scholars³⁸. All of this has established the Piłsudski Institute as a major research destination for scholars as well as a local cultural magnet in the New York City area.

The Polish American Historical Association

One of the first activities of the new Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences in America was the creation of scholarly sections with Oskar Halecki named to head the Historical and Political Sciences group. Perceptively, Halecki realized that support from American Polonia would be crucial to the work of the Institute. As its new executive director, he asserted „the future cultural reconstruction of Poland needed the help of our American friends and especially of the American Polonia”³⁹. As an outreach to that important group, at the section’s first meeting in September 1942 he proposed creating a special Committee to study of the history of Poles in the United States whose purpose would be „to gather documents pertaining to the life and activities of American Polonia, catalogue the materials dealing with the history of Polonia and begin research into the history, structure and evolution of the Polish community in America”⁴⁰. To lead the effort, Halecki tapped Mieczysław Haiman, a native of Poland who was Curator of the Archives and Museum of the Polish Roman Catholic Union in Chicago. Haiman’s Commission for Research on Polish Immigration established its headquarters at the museum and held its first conference on December 29–30, 1942. During its meeting at Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Orchard Lake, Michigan, in October 1944 the Commission changed its name to the Polish-American Historical Commission and in the same year began publishing the journal *Polish-American Studies* as an outlet for scholarly publishing on the Polish experience in the United States⁴¹.

³⁸ Pietrzyk, „Brief History,” 92–97; Iwona Korga, „Piłsudski Institute of America” <https://polishamericanstudies.org/text/99/ijp.html> (accessed: 17.08.2022).

³⁹ Wright, „General Development” p. 224.

⁴⁰ A. Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann, *The Polish American Historical Association: Looking Back, Looking Forward*, „Polish American Studies” 2008, vol. 65, no. 1, pp. 58–59.

⁴¹ R. Szymczak, *The Pioneer Days: Mieczysław Haiman and Polish American Historiography*, „Polish American Studies” 1993, vol. 50, no. 1, p. 12; *Polish American Historical Association 1942–1951, including Program of the Eighth Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois, December 27 and 28, 1951*, Orchard Lake 1951, pp. 2–3, 6; Gromada, *Haiman and Halecki*, pp. 84, 87; M. Haiman, *The Commission for Research on Polish Immigration*, „Polish American Studies” 1943, vol. 2, no. 1, p. 4; J. Pawlikowski, W. Kirkconnell, E. J. Kammer, K. Colegrove, F. W. Pawłowski and B. Szczeniowski, *General Development of the Institute*, „Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America” vol. 3, no. 3/4, pp. 422–23;

During the war, Haiman established publishing as a major objective of the Commission, leading with his own *Polish Pioneers in California* (1940), *Polish Pioneers in Pennsylvania* (1941), *Kosciuszko in the American Revolution* (1943), and *Kosciuszko, Leader and Exile* (1946). „Through research of this kind,” he explained:

we are building the most ideal and the most noble connecting link between America and Poland. It helps us to widen our knowledge of, and to enrich the history of both countries by discovering hitherto unknown facts which, though not always of great importance remain dear to us as heritage left by our pioneers⁴².

With the end of the war, the Commission confronted the same decision facing its parent Institute. It reacted the same way, severing ties with the postwar Soviet-dominated Warsaw government. To establish its position as an independent educational organization, in 1947 the group affiliated with the Catholic Historical Association and at its annual meeting in 1948 the membership voted to change the group's name to the Polish American Historical Association. Haiman outlined its goals as

(1) gathering of all kinds of documents pertaining to the life and activities of the Polish group in America, (2) cataloguing of printed works and manuscript materials dealing with the history of American Poles, and (3) research activity in the fields of biography, history, economics, statistics, etc. of the Polish group in the U.S.A⁴³.

Unfortunately, Haiman passed away, a victim of cancer, the following year. The mantle of leadership passed largely to the clergy led by Revs. Joseph Swastek and M. J. Madaj who gradually recruited American-trained academics such as Eugene Kusielewicz, Anthony Turhollow, and Frank Renkiewicz so that by the early 1960s the organization was gradually professionalizing. In 1965 it began holding its annual conference in conjunction with the American Historical Association and introduced what would be the first of a growing program of awards to recognize and encourage research on American Polonia. In 1972, PAHA incorporated as a 501(c)(3)

Polish American Historical Commission, „Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America” vol. 3, no. 2, p. 308.

⁴² A.F. Turhollow, *The Polish American Historical Association: An Act of Faith*, „Polish American Studies” 1980, vol. 37, no. 2, p. 64.

⁴³ Turhollow, *An Act of Faith*, p. 63.

not-for-profit organization and three years later was accepted as an affiliate of the prestigious American Historical Association. By the mid-1980s, PAHA's Board of Directors was dominated by American-born professionals, the successors of the original founders from the wartime intellectual émigrés. Through their efforts, *Polish American Studies* broadened its scope to include the diaspora in all North and South America and Europe, signed a publication agreement with the University of Illinois Press, and was also accepted into the JSTOR cooperative database. The affiliation with the university press further enhanced its status as a respected academic publication, while the acceptance into JSTOR made its entire run of issues available to researchers at over 6,000 locations around the world. PAHA also initiated a new Polish and Polish American Studies book series in conjunction with Ohio University Press, the first of its kind. By 2023, over twenty volumes had been published⁴⁴.

Haiman credited the arrival of the wartime Polish academics with a major influence on „the mind of American Polonia, ... the lectures, conferences, periodically and lastly, the personal contacts of representatives of Polish scholarship with the Polonia necessarily quickened the process of development of native Polish American scholarship”⁴⁵. Although this was true in the 1940s, it became even more so in succeeding years as PAHA developed into an interdisciplinary academic and professional organization that continued and expanded upon the original purposes enshrined by its wartime founders. By 2023, PAHA had members in more than a dozen countries from North and South America to Europe and even China. *Polish American Studies* had published over 15,000 pages of academic studies, the organization sponsored or co-sponsored two dozen monographs, annual conferences with the American Historical Association drew both Polish and non-Polish participants, and cooperation with PIASA's conferences in Poland further broadened the dissemination of materials on the Polish diaspora. The original founders would be pleased, if not astonished, at how well their creation has fulfilled the role they envisioned for it those many years ago⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ J.J. Bukowczyk, „Harness for Posterity the Values of a Nation” — Fifty Years of the Polish American Historical Association and Polish American Studies, „Polish American Studies” 1993, vol. 50, no. 2, pp. 5–99; Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann, *Looking Back, Looking Forward*, pp. 60–62.

⁴⁵ Szymczak, „Pioneer Days,” p. 12.

⁴⁶ J.S. Pula, „A Retrospective on Polish American Studies,” presentation at the 75th Anniversary of PAHA Conference, Loyola University, Chicago, 2017.

Conclusion

When the deluge of war descended on Europe in 1939, thousands of Poles were stranded abroad to be joined by tens of thousands more as refugees and members of the political and military establishments in exile. Many thousands of these elected not to return to their homeland following the war due to it having fallen under Soviet control. Among these groups was a higher than average percentage of educated people—intellectuals, scientists, journalists, and exiled leaders of political factions—who eventually settled in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and several other nations⁴⁷. Although their contributions to Poland are often overlooked amid the focus on the political and military exigencies of the war and the international „Cold War” that followed, they contributed materially to the leadership of the anti-communist movement in the United States including participation in the establishment of the Polish American Congress as a political lobbying organization that met with US presidents, attended the United Nations Conference in San Francisco in 1945, and the Paris Conference in 1946, all to promote the Polish cause. Additionally, it lobbied the US Congress to adopt legislation allowing Polish displaced persons to enter the country in excess of the normal annual quotas then in effect and convinced it to initiate an investigation of the Katyń Massacre. Members of the Polish Institute and the Piłsudski Institute participated actively in the programming of Radio Free Europe and the Voice of America⁴⁸. In the words of the first head of RFE’s Polish Service, Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, „In the darkest years of Stalinism, the Security Office’s omnipotence, repressions, distortion of history and secrecy, Radio Free Europe gave Poles a sense that someone, somewhere, knows the truth and speaks the truth; that the crimes of the regime will be named and the perpetrators—punished”⁴⁹.

The long-term results of the exiles’ scholarly efforts substantially influenced the development of Polish studies as academic pursuits in North

⁴⁷ Polzin, *Polish Americans*, pp. 63–64, 70. A study by Danuta Mostwin revealed that 16.3 percent were executives, 29.5 percent professionals or semiprofessionals, 16.6 percent skilled workers, and only 16.3 percent unskilled workers. See D. Mostwin, *The Transplanted Family: A Study of Social Adjustment of the Polish Immigrant Family to the United States after the Second World War*, New York 1980 and *Emigranci polscy w USA*, Lublin, 1991.

⁴⁸ J. Wyrwał, *America’s Polish Heritage: A Social History of the Poles in America*, Detroit 1961, pp. 270–71; Szymczak, *Cold War Airwaves*, pp. 48, 52–53.

⁴⁹ Jan Nowak-Jeziorański: A “Great Beacon of Hope” in the “Darkest Hours of Communism” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty <https://pressroom.rferl.org/a/jan-nowak-jeziora%C5%84ski-a-great-beacon-of-hope-in-the-darkest-hours-of-communism-/30217286.html> (accessed: 23.07.2020).

America and, eventually, had an impact on scholars elsewhere including in Poland itself. Aside from joining American and Canadian academic and cultural organizations, the wartime exiles and their postwar refugee colleagues founded what quickly became the most important academic organizations for the advancement and preservation of Polish history, culture, and intellectual inquiry in North America: the Polish Institute of Arts and Science in/of America, the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada, the Józef Piłsudski Institute for the Study of the Modern History of Poland, and the Polish American Historical Association. These new organizations brought to North America an impetus toward Polish studies that had not previously existed and forged alliances with American and Canadian academics who were not of Polish ancestry, thereby broadening the appeal of Polish studies and the cadre of researchers working on Polish topics in the various academic disciplines. They published scores of important scholarly monographs, memoirs, and collections of documents, while also actively preserving important archival materials of all variety for the use of future scholars exploring Polish topics. Significantly, they also began publishing *The Polish Review*, today the leading journal for Polish studies in the Western Hemisphere, and *Polish American Studies*, the leading journal focusing on the Polish diaspora, both recognized as academic publications by not only the American Historical Association but also the Polish Ministry of Education and Science (Ministerstwo Edukacji i Nauki).

Individually, some of the members of these organizations founded Polish studies programs at universities that still exist today, while others joined faculties in their respective disciplines but continued to promote Poland and Polish intellectual traditions as well as introduce Polish-focused courses into their institutional curricula. They also cultivated, individually or through the organizations they founded, relationship with American scholars that gave Polish studies and the cause of Poland widespread recognition and support. Having been educated and grown to adulthood in a free interwar Poland, the wartime immigrants brought to their research, teaching, and public presentations a more realistic view of Polish intellectual development than the often inaccurate or incomplete memories handed down to the second and third generation progeny of the mass migration. Through the efforts of these exiles, generations of students were exposed to more current, accurate information on Poland than would otherwise have been available. Or, as Jan Kowalik explained it „The many Polish refugee intellectuals driven ashore to America intensified and enriched the activities of younger generations of Americans of Polish descent, creating

new organizations, and accelerating a trend toward a renaissance of ethnic self-consciousness"⁵⁰.

In all these ways, the Polish intellectual diaspora that accumulated in North America during and in the immediate years following World War II brought to the continent a stimulus for intellectual development that, over time, saw native-born Polish Americans move into leadership positions as the associations gradually moved from being émigré organizations to established American and Canadian educational and cultural associations carrying on the purposes and visions of their founders.

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⁵⁰ J. Kowalik, *The Polish Press in America*, San Francisco, 1978, p. 9.

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