

THE POLISH AMERICAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA

POLAM

SUMMER 2020 VOLUME 42 ISSUE 2 WWW.PACIM.ORG

Long Summer

Message from PACIM President

Exclusive Interview with Barbara Gruszka-Zych

Reflections on Penderecki and Tyrmand

Introducing Agata Nowicka

Shifting of Poland's Borders

The Forgotten Epidemic 1918-1920

Polish Pronunciation

From the Editor



“The times are extraordinary,” notes Barbara Gruszka-Zych, renowned Polish journalist and poet in an exclusive interview for this POLAM issue. Indeed, we live in exceptional times – a small, invisible virus changed the life of the whole planet within weeks. Many of us lost their jobs, have reduced income, worry about the future and current social unrest that started in Minnesota, adds uncertainty to our lives.

We cannot ignore the reality around us – this is why I decided to devote space for an article about the pandemic of 1918-1920 that caused deaths of millions of people worldwide including both the US and Poland. Also, the current POLAM’s cover by Grzegorz Litynski of Wroclaw should remind us and future generations that we did live in “extraordinary times.”

The article “Shifting of Poland’s Borders after WWII” reminds us of a tragic chapter of Polish history that forced millions of Poles to leave everything behind and start a new life somewhere else. Others left Poland as a result of the economic or political constraints. One of them was Leopold Tyrmand – an unbelievable story of a Polish Jew who spent most of WWII in ... Nazi Germany using a fake French passport until he was sent to a concentration camp, returned to devastated Poland in 1946, and finally left the country disappointed by communist rule in the 1960s to set up a very successful life in the US. Such stories may provide us with more strength to continue our daily efforts.

We understand better and better every day that despite unexpected hardships we should plan for our future, the future of POLAM, and PACIM with even more energy. Under the new leadership PACIM is undergoing significant changes – see Pawel’ Mroz presidential address on the next page for more details. There are restrictions on events or public meetings, but POLAM can be prepared, printed, and delivered to your homes.

On a final note, there is another reason for optimism: a high number of membership renewals following the last issue of POLAM is a clear evidence that the new format of our magazine piqued the interest of Polish-Americans in Minnesota.

THANK YOU for your support and notes of encouragement!

I do hope you enjoy this issue of POLAM as well!

Katarzyna Litak

Editor-in-Chief

POLAM

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Table of Contents:

- P. 3 Message from PACIM President
- P. 5 Introducing Agata Nowicka
- P. 6 Exclusive Interview with Barbara Gruszka-Zych
- P. 8 Shifting of Poland’s Borders 75 years ago
- P. 10 Wroclaw
- P. 12 All Seasons of Leopold Tyrmand
- P. 14 The Forgotten Epidemic 1918-1920
- P.16 Reflection on Krzysztof Penderecki
- P. 17 Polish Pronunciation
- P. 18 Grants for Kalejdoskop Polski

Cover: Wroclaw, Poland. **This page:** The Millennium Bridge, Wroclaw. Photos By G. Litynski.

From the President



Dear PACIM Members,

Summer has arrived, treasured time in Minnesota. As the weather is getting warmer and the days are getting longer we all are getting ready to fuel our barbecues and plan out vacation trips.

Or at least that's how it used to be...

Each year PACIM and other organizations across the Minneapolis area and the beautiful state of Minnesota plan to host a wide variety of events and programs. These programs are pivotal to advancing our mission of education, cultural heritage, and the service to our members.

Or at least that's how it used to be...

We live however in challenging and uncertain times and together we face an extraordinary public health crisis known as COVID19 pandemic. The unwelcome arrival of the virus has forced PACIM and other organizations in Minnesota and across the country to cancel, reschedule and postpone their summer events and activities. Additionally, in a remarkable development in the midst of a pandemic, Minnesota, and the United States are also witnessing one of the broadest, sustained waves of protest in decades following the heinous killing of George Floyd. PACIM Board condemns the unnecessary and preventable death of George Floyd and we grieve with Mr. Floyds Family and friends. PACIM Board also strongly opposes any kind of racism, bigotry, or inequality that plays a corrosive and destructive role in our society. PACIM welcomes every person in our community irrespective of race, color, religion, national origin or citizenship status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, or military status. We hope that recent events and national discussion they elicited will lead to the broader national consensus that will lead to greater equality, inclusion, and acceptance of people of all walks of life within our society.

Running a non-profit organization of the scale of PACIM is a difficult business in the best of times and PACIM itself has had its own challenges, particularly when it comes to understanding the role and the responsibilities of the PACIM Board Members as stewards of the nonprofit organization for which they serve. Under Minnesota law, directors of Minnesota nonprofits are responsible for the management, finances, and other affairs of the corporation. Directors must be active, informed, and engaged, as they are considered fiduciaries and they are subject to the fiduciary duties of care, loyalty, and obedience to the law. Additionally, as a non-profit organization, we are accountable for upholding these values as part of our social contract with the membership community.

Unfortunately, PACIM Board has experienced in recent years a period of difficulties to fulfill that charge which created uncertainty for members and resulted in a legal complaint against PACIM and its Board. Since the last elections, PACIM Board and I have been working on improving transparency, accountability, and record-keeping, particularly in the area of PACIM finances, and we all are fully committed to the highest standards of integrity essential to fulfill these fiduciary duties. The Board and I have worked with the plaintiffs on the legal complaint and I am happy to let you know that we were able to arrive at a mutually agreeable stipulation of dismissal without prejudice. During the last PACIM Board meeting, the Board Members voted to approve the stipulation and bring to an end this difficult chapter in PACIM's history. This is a great success and a victory for PACIM as a community and it gives me hope for the new beginning and the opportunity for all members to again work together to better serve PACIM and its members.

Striking the balance between the safety and the continuity amidst uncertainty is not easy and I fully appreciate how the decisions to cancel PACIM summer programming have the potential to significantly influence your perception of how PACIM serves its members. However, PACIM Board has used this time effectively:



The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota is a non-profit organization offering broad-ranging programs and events that provide opportunity to grow deeper in understanding and appreciation of Polish and Polish American traditions, culture, and history.

SUPPORT PACIM:

PACIM grows through contributions from our members, donors, and organizations who believe in our mission to connect the Americans and Poles through art, science, and culture. As a non-profit charitable organization, PACIM uses your gifts to host the library and sponsor new and exciting programming for our community.

Memberships: PACIM's Membership Program is designed for dedicated supporters to play a significant role in sustaining the organization while gaining preferred access. All members receive free access to our library, POLAM publication, email notifications, and invitations to our events.

Our membership levels increased in 2019 to keep up with rising costs. All memberships include POLAM.

Patron \$200.00

Donor \$150.00

Sponsor \$80.00

Household \$60.00

Individual \$40.00

Add \$5.00 for ACPC Membership

*See our Membership Form on page 19

For expanded information about our programs and events, please check our website: www.pacim.org

Location:

43 SE Main Street #228
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**Select Sundays Only
1-4 PM
Check Website
pacim.org**

To redress concerns regarding PACIM finances and prevent similar issues in the future we have started the process of conducting a review of PACIM finances with the aim to professionally audit and reconstruct PACIM financial records and establish policies that will govern how PACIM's financial records are maintained and shared with the Board and its members. We are now ready to file for 2019 taxes and we are working on the review of the 2017-2018 records.

In the area of Governance, PACIM Board is committed to updating the Bylaws as well as establishing the conflict of interest policy for the board members. Governed by the bylaws PACIM elections have been scheduled for December 19th, 2020 and we set up a select Nomination and Elections Committee.

PACIM Board has also created the following standing committees: Education and Scholarship Committee, Membership and Polonia relationships Committee, Arts and Entertainment Committee, Finance and Budget Committee, Library Committee, Multimedia/Social Media, and Communications Committee.

Additionally, PACIM Board has established a PACIM Ambassadors Advisory Board and I am very grateful to Mr. John Bieniek, a former PACIM President, who kindly agreed to Chair this Board. If any PACIM members are interested to join any of the Committees please send an email to office@pacim.org.

PACIM Summer programming, while limited to the virtual space, includes upcoming webinars thanks to the newly acquired GSuite for Non-profits capabilities that allow us to host virtual webinars, classes, and other events (see pacim.org for details).

We are also working on updating the PACIM website so it can be more user friendly and allow us to better communicate with PACIM members. Moreover, we are putting together plans to safely open the PACIM library and are working with the landlord to comply with the restrictions and limitations of the pandemic.

Finally, PACIM has renewed the Minnesota Council for Non-Profits membership and its ACPC organizational membership.

There is no doubt in my mind that recent local and national events and the challenges we face as the organization and the community has brought stress, perhaps fear and a host of other emotions for everyone. Nevertheless, I am certain that each and every PACIM member shares our commitment to this organization and I am deeply GRATEFUL for your continuous support and understanding. What gives me HOPE for the future is the overwhelming support and the increase in the membership renewal rate we experienced after the last PolAm issue. What I am PROUD of is how PACIM, as the organization is finding new ways to improve how it serves its members and the Polonia in Minnesota.

To close, I would like to encourage members to reach out to PACIM Board at office@pacim.org with ideas and proposals that will benefit this organization and the community. Your input is immensely valuable as we continue this journey together.

With best wishes,

Dr. Pawel Mroz

President,

Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota



Martha Pachnik

(1931 - 2020)

Martha was a past board member of PACIM and organizer of the PACIM's Festival of Nation's Polish Booth for many years as well as our Soup Festival. She was very proud of her Polish ancestry.

Thank you Martha!

The PACIM Board

The Visual Forum



Agata Nowicka

Illustrator and comics artist, author of posters, and book illustrations. Born in 1976 in Gdansk, Poland. She has been living in the New York City since 2015 and working with the international press including *The New Yorker*, *TIME* and *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Die Welt* as well as commercial ones, including agencies DDB, McCann, Leo Burnett. Her works have been featured in Taschen's *Illustration Now!*, *American Illustration Book*, and *Communication Arts Annual*.

Agata has been actively involved in the promotion of Polish contemporary illustration, giving lectures and workshops as well as curating numerous exhibitions in Poland and abroad. Polish visual art, with its renowned Polish Poster School and a rich illustration tradition, has proved influential for many artists around the world - Henryk Tomaszewski, Waldemar Świerzy and Jan Młodożeniec are globally recognized names. There is something unique about Polish illustration and Agata Nowicka represents the younger generation of Polish artists who were brought up on books with illustrations by masters of illustration such as Janusz Stanny, Józef Wilkoń, or Jan Marcin Szancer.

Website: <http://agatanowicka.com>



The Literary Circle



Barbara Gruszka-Zych (b. 1961) is a renowned Polish poet, journalist, and literary critic. She was born and grew up in Czeladz. She had her literary debut at age 14 in the popular Polish magazine *Świat Młodych*. She completed Polish Language studies at the University of Silesia in Katowice. Later she graduated from Catholic University in Lublin with a degree in Theology. Barbara Gruszka-Zych's specializes in documentaries. Barbara conducted numerous interviews with distinguished artists, such as Josif Brodski, Agnieszka Holland, Wojciech Kilar, Czeslaw Milosz, and Krzysztof Zanussi. Barbara wrote over a dozen books and twenty volumes of poems. Her work has been translated into Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Lithuanian, and Russian. Barbara has received many honors including the Jan Twardowski Award (2015), Award of the Polish Journalists Society (2012), and Award of "Silesia Press" (2009), and Award of City of Czeladz (2005). Prominent literary critic Tomasz Burek recognized Barbara's collection of poems "Szara jak wróbel" (2012) as one of the ten most important books published in Poland after 1989.

Exclusive Interview with Poet and Journalist Barbara Gruszka-Zych

By Grzegorz Litynski

G: During our previous conversation, you talked about the demise of journalism during the pandemic times.

Barbara: Journalism is about being where the action is. I don't believe one can do good reporting via the telephone. Good journalism is a story checked by a journalist on the ground, it only makes sense when you can go and talk to five or ten people yourself and verify the facts. However, if a story is handed over from one reporter to another, the interpretation of the writer may be completely inconsistent with reality.

G: Do you think the pandemic influenced the way that journalism is done now?

Barbara: During a pandemic, one certainly writes differently. The biggest changes took place in how to write reports that require you to go to the scene in person, meet the people, experience it, and explore with your senses. They even say journalists do "participating reportages." I do not like this phrase, but the point is that we participate in something that we are in the middle of. Now the movement is restricted due to the travel ban and one cannot be where the action is.

When it comes to the pandemic, it caused writers' paralysis, or a bit of "pretend" journalism as we can not travel. Journalism itself is a journey, as written by Melchior Wankowicz. It is

about going behind closed doors and crossing boundaries. Journalism, above all, is a journey, a process, and movement. Now the movement is only imaginary. All we are talking about now is out of the ordinary. As long as this state of emergency is in effect our writings will be twisted and turned upside down. The journalistic journey that is about the journey of meeting with another person with humility, will someday return. I truly hope so.

G: Are there any positive changes in the journalistic work forced by the pandemic?

Barbara: Interviews during a pandemic have a chance to be more interesting

“During an interview a flash of truth, sudden exposure of my interviewee, my hero, lasts only a few seconds, but it is worth waiting for that moment.”

“Very bold poetry by a woman writer, revealing femininity as absorbing the world with all with her senses.”

Czesław Miłosz, Polish-American Nobel Prize Winner in Literature about Barbara’s poetry.

than when we could meet in person. This is because the interviewee may be starved for conversation and be more open, may say more. In a sense, it could become a confessional situation, more favorable to openness, and that's what we, journalists listening to another person, always hope for.

G: A number of newspapers and magazines have moved to the Internet. What do you think about the situation?

Barbara: Many paper titles have been suspended, transferred to the internet or even closed. On the Internet, you don't really know where the truth lies. It is very difficult to verify the truth over the Internet. When I talked to my colleagues looking for materials for articles on the Internet, they often said that when researching the Internet on any given topic, they would find three sources, and each claims something different. Even Wikipedia and other Internet encyclopedias are mistaken in accounts about the same facts. Svetlana

Alexievich, a Belarusian Nobel Laureate, wrote that during communist times there was only one newspaper and everyone believed what was written in it. Now, one checks three newspapers and each represents a different view of reality. Unfortunately, both scenarios make readers uncomfortable.

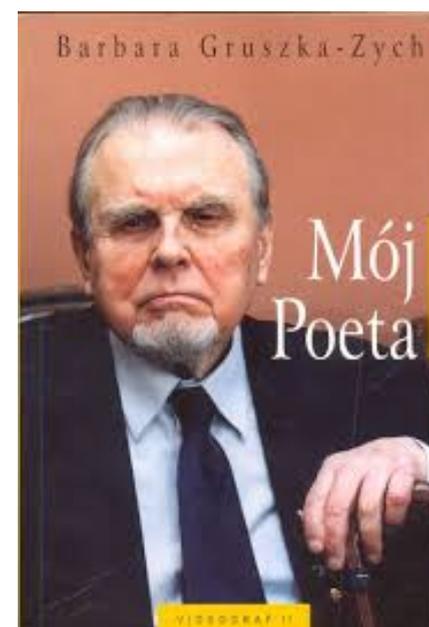
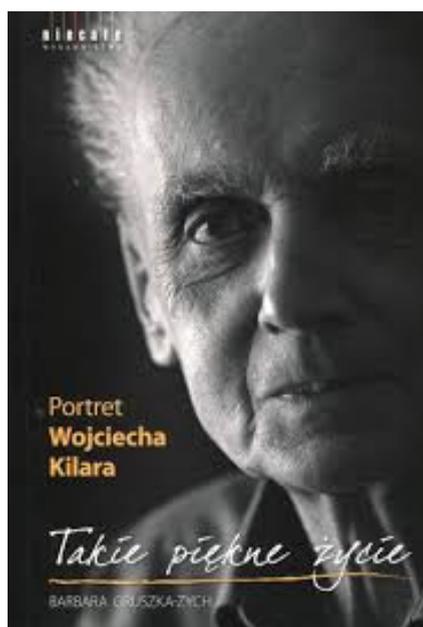
G: Was there a moment when you truly felt that we were living in unusual times? A moment that moved you deeply?

Barbara: Yes, the times are extraordinary. Few weeks ago *The New York Times* on the first page published a list of names of one thousand people that have died of COVID. Was there ever a time like that in history of the press that the first page of a popular newspaper turned into a grand obituary? I don't think so, I do not think it has ever happened. It was a shocking sight. Maybe only since the Second World War, was there was an open conversation about death. Everyone has been

sweeping the subject under the rug, or rather yoga mats. Taking care of the body and fitness is in fashion; as not to be too fat, be fit, have blood pressure regulated, and so on. The subject of death has been ignored for a long time. And now it turns out that death exists, that man needs to get used to it, get acquainted with the thought and prepare for it. I keep bringing it up in my poetry, and also my journalism, that man has a soul that turns toward eternity.

G: What are you working on now?

Barbara: I am working on a book about the community "Bethlehem" in Jaworzno. This is a community of formerly homeless, founded by priest Mirosław Tosza. Next year will be its 25th jubilee since he moved in with a group of homeless people in an old, ruined school. Now they have a wonderful community house and are building another one. Everything is in the Hundertwasser style, with colorful tiled fireplaces and floors, that would be beautiful to photograph. ■



Historical Perspectives

75 YEARS AGO



Tehran Conference (1943). From left to right: Joseph Stalin, Theodore Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill. Source: Wikipedia.

Shifting of Poland's Borders after WWII

By Grzegorz Litynski

Summary: *75 years ago, in 1945, WWII ended. As a result of the global conflict, Poland underwent significant territorial changes. Eastern territories of Poland became part of the Soviet Empire-several historically and economically significant cities were lost, to mention Lwów, Wilno, Stanisławów, and Grodno. At the same time, Poland was granted German territory east of the Oder and Neisse Rivers including Pomerania, Silesia, and the southern part of East Prussia. Consequently, prominent German cities including Breslau (now Wrocław) and Stettin (Szczecin) became Polish. The decision about the Polish borders was made by the Allies without consulting the Polish government in exile.*

Polish East Frontier Before WWII: 160 miles East of the Curzon Line

After WWI, the Supreme War Council set up the so-called Curzon line, which was supposed to serve as the Polish east border. It was believed that this dividing line would peacefully separate ethnic groups as the territories west from the Curzon line were inhabited mostly by

the Poles and that east of the Curzon line the population consisted mainly of the Ukrainians, Byelorussians, and Jews. However, the reality was different. The matter of Poland's eastern frontier became a very dynamic issue and depended mainly on the result of the military actions in the course of the Polish-Bolshevik war. In March 1921, both countries signed the Treaty of Riga, which ignored the Curzon line. The frontier between Poland and the Soviet Union was about 160 miles east of the line. For the coming 18 years, it became the official border between Poland and the Soviet Union, was recognized by other countries and by the League of Nations in 1923.

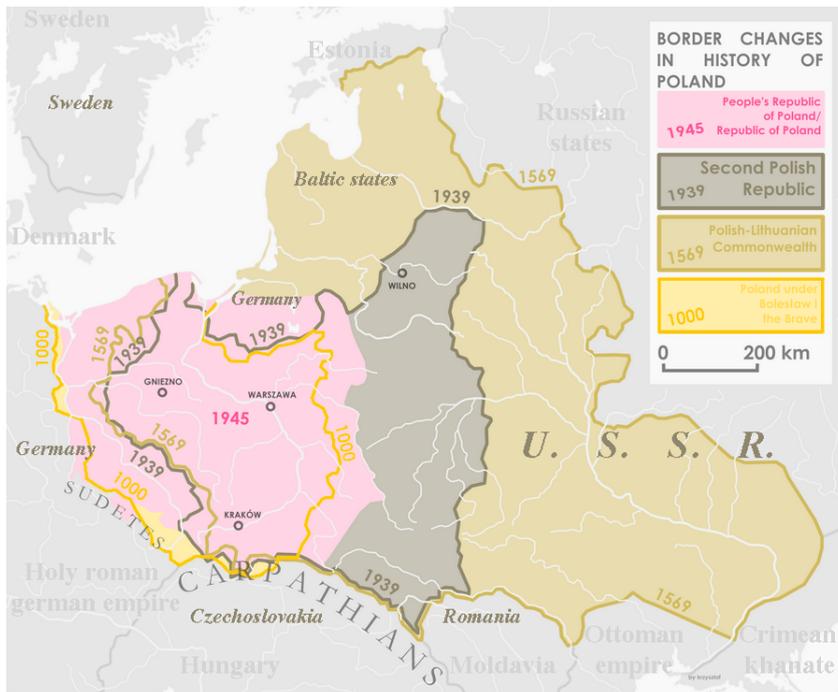
Stalin-Hitler Pact: Poland partitioned

On August 23, 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact, which became known as the Hitler-Stalin Treaty. The agreement provided not only a guarantee of peace to the parties but also defined the borders between both powers once the German-Soviet coalition had defeated Poland. On September 1,

1939, Germany attacked Poland from the West, South, and North. While the Polish Army was desperately fighting against the German invader, on September 17, 1939, Stalin's troops attacked Poland from the East. Within the next weeks, German and Soviet armies crushed Polish resistance and took the entire territory of Poland. As agreed in the Hitler-Stalin Treaty, the country was divided-up along the Curzon line.

The Soviet-German War. Stalin's military success

The situation changed when the Germans attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, and the Eastern Front in Russia became the crucial battlefield of WWII. The Germans quickly pushed the Soviet troops to the east and reached the suburbs of Moscow in October 1941. But the Soviet Union joined the Allies and received enormous military support from the Western countries in the form of technical expertise, food, and military equipment - among other things the Red



Source: Wikipedia

The Polish territory after WWI covered an area of 386,000 square kilometers. After WWII, Poland 1939's territory decreased to ca. 312,000 square kilometers. The loss of land was about 74,000 square kilometers.

Army received 7,000 tanks, 400,000 trucks, and as many as 12,000 airplanes. In January 1943, the Germans 6th Army was destroyed in Stalingrad. In the coming months, German troops or European Axis powers were defeated numerous times by the Red Army, such as at the Battle of Kursk in July and August 1943, the Battle of Smolensk in August – October 1943 and the Lower Dnieper Offensive in mid-October 1943. The Soviet troops continuously moved westward and gained control.

The Tehran Conference (Nov-Dec 1943) and the issue of the Polish borders

In November 1943, Stalin, Winston Churchill, and Franklin D. Roosevelt met in the Soviet embassy in Tehran to discuss military cooperation and post-war settlement. It was an excellent moment for Stalin to get a dominant position during the negotiations. The Western Powers were still unable to open the promised western front. At the same time, Stalin demonstrated impressive military gains. The Allied powers desperately needed Stalin's cooperation especially given the fears of German-Soviet armistice. Churchill and Roosevelt were ready to make numerous concessions. On November 29, 1943, Churchill proposed to Stalin that

“Poland should be pushed westward.” Stalin understood that the Allies were ready to discuss the borders without the involvement of the Polish government in exile. He reacted almost immediately. On December 1, 1943, Stalin insisted that Poland should accept the Curzon line (as he had agreed on it with Hitler in August 1939). The border along the Curzon line, noted Stalin, would be ethnically fair. The “Big Three” set an irreversible course in regards to Poland's borders.

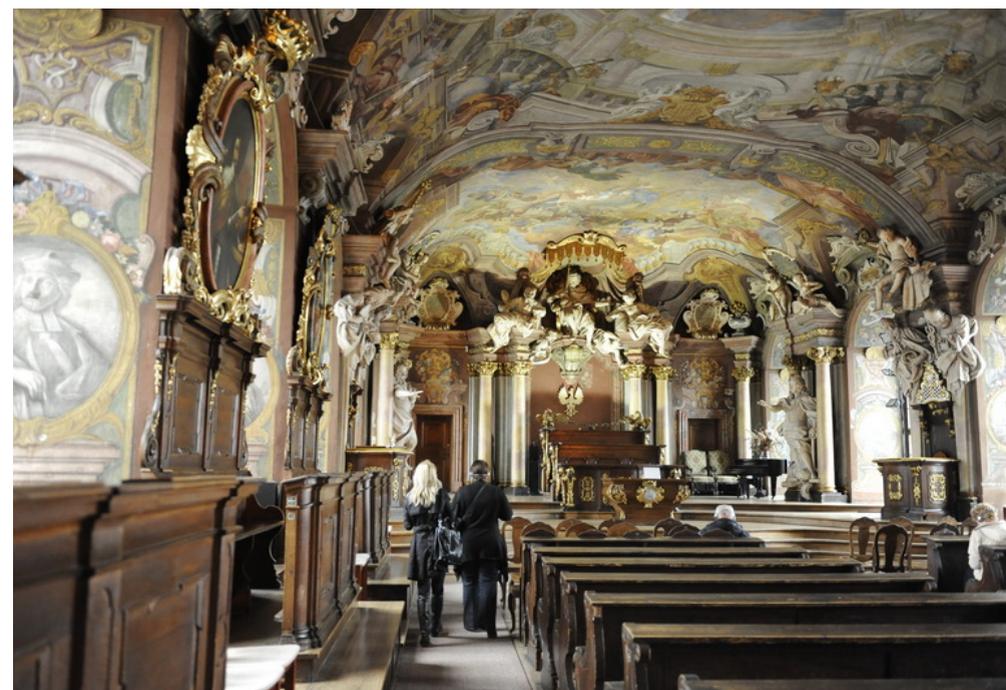
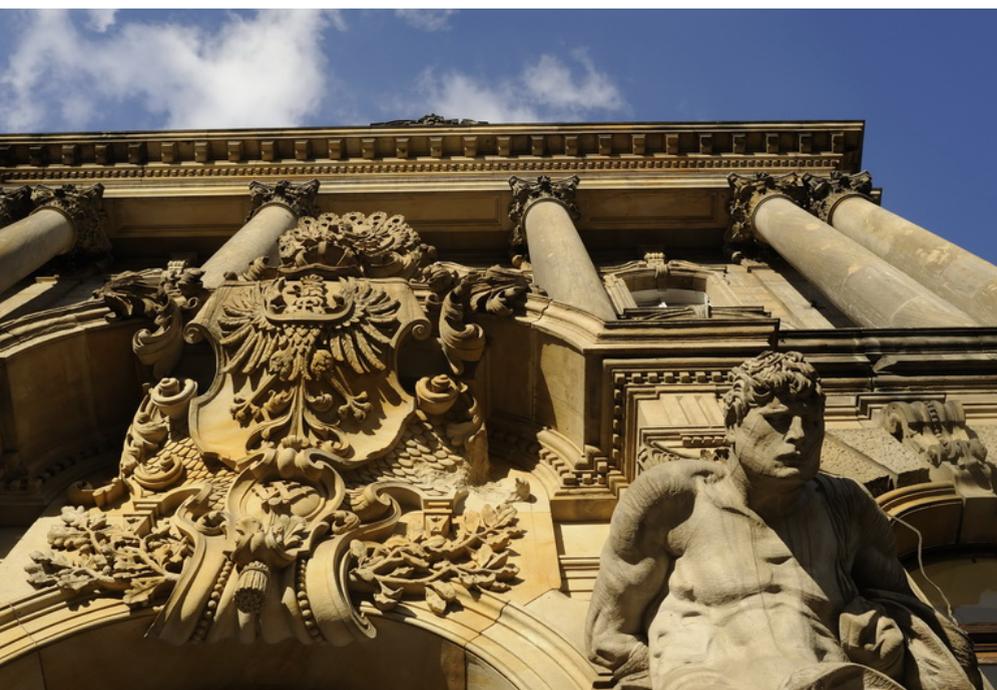
Stalin's Power Play

On January 4, 1944, a few weeks after the Tehran conference, the Red Army entered the territory of Poland. On January 11, 1944, TASS – the official Soviet state news agency - stated that the eastern lands of Poland were incorporated into the Soviet Union. According to TASS, as compensation, Poland would gain German territory east of the Oder and Neisse Rivers. Stalin openly began his power game with the silent approval of the Allies. When the "Big Three" met for another conference in Yalta in February 1945, the Soviet troops took over the whole territory of Poland with millions of soldiers and NKWD forces. By the Yalta conference, Stalin had gained a dominant position again. In the final conference statement, the "Big Three" agreed that “the eastern frontier of Poland should

follow the Curzon Line.” And further: "Poland must receive substantial accessions in the territory in the north and west" however "final delimitation of the western frontier of Poland should thereafter await the peace conference.”

Poland Shifts to the West

As a result of WWII, Poland's eastern territories became part of the Soviet Empire. A number of historically and economically significant cities were lost - Lwów, Wilno, Stanisławów, and Grodno. Poland was granted German territory east of the Oder and Neisse Rivers with Pomerania, Silesia, and the southern part of East Prussia including the cities of Breslau (now Wrocław) and Stettin (Szczecin). What followed was one of the biggest migrations in modern history. About 3.5 million Germans were expelled from Poland by October 1947. At the same time, about 1.5 million Polish people living east of the Curzon line were expelled, mainly to former German territories. About 0.5 million Ukrainians, Byelorussians, and Lithuanians were driven out from Poland to the Soviet Union. These resettlements were carried out forcibly, often in awful conditions. Nobody will ever know how many people died due to the shift of Poland's borders.



Wrocław

was the biggest city that Poland gained as a result of shifting of its borders in 1945. It is now the fourth largest city in Poland with 650,000 inhabitants (2019). It was first established in the 10th century and acquired city rights in 1214. Some buildings date back to the 1200s.

This page from the top: Wroclaw Train Depot (circa 1850's), the Cathedral Island (Ostrow Tumski). Building Facade from 1896. Wroclaw University Leopold's Hall (Aula Leopoldina) 1728-32.

Opposite page: East and South Facade of Wroclaw City Hall built 13th-16th Century. All photos G. Litynski.





All Seasons of Leopold Tyrmand

By Connor Arneson

Leopold Tyrmand was born on May 16th, 1920 to a Jewish family in Warsaw, just a few months before the Soviet army reached the outskirts of the city (see the previous issue of POLAM for the 1920 Battle of Warsaw). Growing up, Tyrmand graduated from a local preparatory school and left for Paris at the age of 18 to study architecture. However, Tyrmand's life changed dramatically when, while vacationing back home in Warsaw, the German army crossed into Poland, beginning the Second World War. In the chaos of the invasion, Tyrmand became separated from his family and fled to the city of Wilno. This city soon fell as well, not to the Germans, but to the now-advancing Soviets.

In 1941, Tyrmand was arrested by the Soviets for his contact with the Polish Underground and sentenced to eight years in prison. While being transported

out of Poland, the Germans began their invasion of the Soviet Union, and the train carrying Tyrmand was bombed by the German air force, freeing the young author. Nonetheless, Tyrmand would spend three years working in German-occupied Europe with a fake French passport until being liberated by Norwegian forces at the end of the war from the Grini Concentration Camp. His family was not so lucky. His father, along with 3 million other Polish Jews, was murdered in the Holocaust.

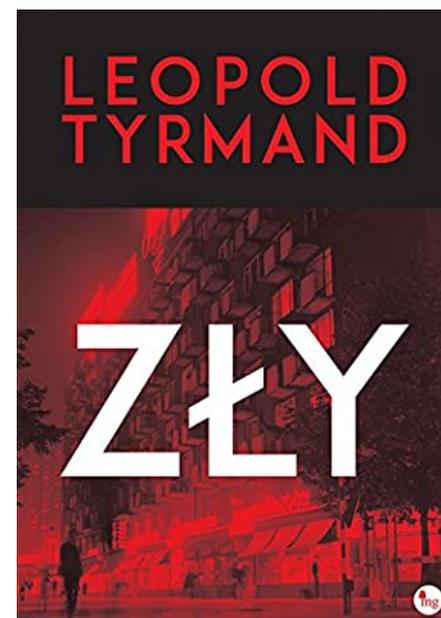
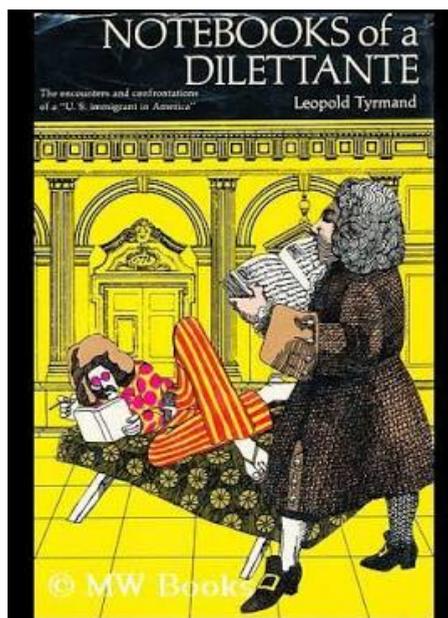
Life in communist Poland, 1946-1965

After a brief stint in the Red Cross in Norway, Tyrmand returned to Poland in 1946 and resumed work as a journalist. He wrote for the Krakow Catholic weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* and began skiing with a priest named Karol Wojtyła, who later became widely known as Pope John Paul II. Yet, this

period of stability would end when the *Tygodnik Powszechny* was shut down by the communist regime for refusing to publish Josef Stalin's obituary.

During this time of unemployment, Tyrmand began a diary, a day-by-day account of the months of January to April of 1954. Highly critical of many Polish artists and politicians, the diary is a reflective piece of literature that analyzes many of the systems and structures that surrounded Tyrmand throughout his early life. Nevertheless, Tyrmand's work on these notes would stop in the middle of a sentence when he finally received a job offer.

Working for the Czytelnik Publishing House, Tyrmand was commissioned to write a thriller novel set in the city of Warsaw. The resulting work, *The Man with White Eyes*, polarized critics but was a massive success with the public and



afforded Tyrmand a certain level of upward mobility. However, Tyrmand soon began to fall out of the State's favor once more. His 1959 work, *The Seven Long Voyages*, was denied publication. That same year he received a fellowship from the U.S. Department of State. He immediately applied for approval to leave Poland. After six years of waiting, Tyrmand finally departed for the United States in 1965.

American Dream, 1965-1984

"I am terribly absorbed in adjusting my sense of distance. The vastness of this continent makes me think of the small, cozy narrowness of Europe with excessive sympathy."

After arriving in America, Tyrmand began his several-month tour of the country that culminated in the creation of his *American Diary* which he decided to send to one of the most prestigious publications of the 1960s, *The New Yorker*. At this time, the journal was receiving over 250,000 articles annually for consideration, but miraculously, they took interest in Tyrmand. *American Diary* was published in November of 1967. It was unprecedented — a Polish journalist, who had just learned English, made his U.S. debut in *The New Yorker*. That same year, Tyrmand — under pressure from communist authorities — was officially voted out of the Polish Writers' Union for "writing in the West

against the Union and its members." His works stopped being published in his homeland, translations were never issued, and he began to disappear from Polish culture.

Meanwhile, the Tyrmand of America was becoming increasingly different from the Tyrmand who hosted jazz festivals and defied the government in Poland. Now deeply conservative and anti-communist, Tyrmand was hired by the Rockford Institute, a conservative think tank. Here, Tyrmand co-founded *The Chronicles*, a leading paleoconservative journal that continues today. Throughout the 1970s, in-between working on *The Chronicles*,

Tyrmand slowly edited his notes from the first months of 1954 into a readable text. *Diary 1954*, his most famous work, was published for the first time in 1980. Leopold Tyrmand died four years later in Fort Meyers, FL.

This shift in Tyrmand's life is difficult to pin down. Perhaps he saw the hippie movement of the era as the first step on the road to communism in America. Perhaps his seemingly liberal views in Poland were comparatively conservative in the democratic United States. Perhaps his worldview had simply changed over time. We may never know. ■

"In thy light do we see."
Inscription on Leopold Tyrmand's tombstone

The Sejm (parliament) of Poland declared 2020 the year of Leopold Tyrmand. However, as 2020 rolls on and we find ourselves in the midst of a deadly pandemic and civil unrest, it may be worth taking a closer look at the fascinating and deeply conflicted life of the man this year was supposed to be about for Poles around the world.

Photo: Leopold Tyrmand, 1983, Czesław Czapliński/Fotonova/East News.



The forgotten epidemic in Poland (1918-1920)

By Grzegorz Litynski



SUMMARY: In Poland, one of the most deadly epidemics of all time caused as many 100,000 - 200,000 deaths. The deadly virus of influenza reached the country at the end of WWI, around the time of the declaration of independence in November 1918, as Poland was involved in several critical border wars. This epidemic was a part of the worldwide flu pandemic that killed between 20 and 50 million people.

The Great War, known today as World War I, was a terrifying human disaster the likes of which never been seen before. It was the first industrial war. Extensive use of old and new technologies killed millions of people. The repeated attacks and counter-attacks employed enormous artillery bombardments, machine guns, flamethrowers, and poison gases. They caused severe casualties with no significant advances, i.e., the Battle of Verdun (1916) with 700,000 casualties on both sides and the Battle of the Somme (1916) with over a million deaths.

In 1917 the United States joined WWI. In the coming months, the United States mobilized over four million military personnel. Before the troops were sent to the battlefields of Europe, the soldiers were crowded in hundreds of military camps between the East and West coast. These were the ideal circumstances for the spread of infectious diseases. Indeed, on March 4, 1918, the first report of flu, later incorrectly known as Spanish influenza, was noted in the United States. A private, Albert Gitchell of the U.S. Army reported fever, headache, and other symptoms in Fort Riley, Kansas. Within days hundreds of other soldiers complained about the same; many of them died very soon.

Unfortunately, the 1918 pandemic flu had a very high mortality rate among young adults, including soldiers. The spread of the disease was not openly discussed, as military censors stopped any press publications about these topics to maintain morale. Despite the epidemic, the U.S. troops started to sail -

in overcrowded conditions - across the Atlantic: 84,000 soldiers were sent to Europe in March and 120,000 in April of 1918. Later on, as many as 10,000 soldiers daily (sic!) traveled to Europe, and the deadly virus traveled with them. It is estimated that 30,000 soldiers passed away before they even reached the coast of France. Altogether, the army suffered around 57,000 deaths from influenza. More soldiers and military staff died due to this disease than on the European battlefields (50,000).

By the summer of 1918, about 2 million US soldiers had arrived in France and changed the balance of the conflict. The American troops played a crucial role in defeating German forces and the final Allied offensive. In November 1918, WWI ended. The scarcity of food, hunger, economic instability, and poverty, as well as poor hygiene conditions among soldiers and war refugees returning home were ideal conditions for further spread of the disease. Within months influenza

“Everywhere, in villages and towns, carpenters make nothing but coffins. The population has been so worn out by the disease that it become incapable of working for long periods of time. The farming suffers greatly. Potatoes are not harvested and will soon begin to rot; no soil is sown for winter crops.”

(Daily Głos Narodu, Oct. 22, 1918)

spread very quickly over Europe. In France approximately 300,000 people died due to this deadly disease, in Germany 450,000, in Spain 250,000, and in England and Wales 250,000.

Influenza reached Poland in the Summer of 1918. The population was poorly prepared to handle the flu; the country was severely destroyed and in deplorable economic condition. It was still under the occupation of foreign armies, so the priority for Polish people was getting its independence after 123 years of partition rather than taking care of medical issues.

The first cases of influenza appeared in Lwów (Lviv) in June 1918, and a few weeks later, in Cracow. In October, the epidemic reached Sosnowiec. On July 21, 1918, a Warsaw daily *Kurjer Warszawski* published an article “Hiszpańska gorączka” or “Spanish fever.” It is the oldest known written record of this disease in Poland. The first

wave of influenza reached its peak in December 1918, only a month after the declaration of independence. That month there were about 100 reported deaths in Warsaw, among them Zofia Sosnkowska, the 10-year-old daughter of General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, one of the closest coworkers of Marshal Józef Piłsudski. A few weeks later, Sosnkowski (age 34) became severely sick himself as well. He survived, but his grief-stricken wife ended up in a psychiatric clinic in Tworki and the couple divorced a year later. Another wave of influenza attacked the capital of Poland at the end of 1919 – Warsaw noted about 150 deaths weekly at the time.

We need to consider that Poland was struggling with two other epidemics right after WWI. An estimated 320,000 people suffered from typhus. It is believed that almost 10 percent of them passed away. Another 5,000 people died from dysentery. And how many casualties did Poland suffer from influenza? We have minimal sources about the pandemic of 1918-1920 in

Poland because no records were kept or found. The reasons for the limited collection of data are clear: Poland was busy with independence, and the ordinary people were concentrating on day-to-day life, getting jobs to survive, or rebuilding their destroyed houses. The newspapers were preoccupied with Polish border wars with Germans or Bolsheviks, the Versailles Treaty, or the daily supply of food.

The Polish historians estimate that around 100,000 – 200,000 people died due to influenza. In comparison with the current COVID-19 pandemic, the number seems quite large, but we need to remember that there were around 20-50 million (sic!) deaths due to 1918 influenza worldwide. Still, for Poland, it was one of the most deadly epidemics of all time. ■

Courtesy of the Polish American Medical Society of Minnesota www.pamsm.org



US Navy Ship 1918. Source: CDC.



Red Cross Volunteers Boston 1918. Source: CDC.

Opposite Page: Historical photo of the 1918 Spanish influenza ward at Camp Funston, Kansas, showing the many patients ill with the flu. Source: US Army photographer.

Krzysztof Penderecki

By Ola Schmelig

Krzysztof Penderecki was born in 1933 in Dębica, a town in south-eastern Poland. He came from a multi-cultural family with Armenian-German-Polish roots and a passion for music. His Armenian ancestry was highlighted in 2015 with the premiere of a new choral work, *Psalm No 3*, commemorating the Armenian Genocide of 1915, at Carnegie Hall, New York. Young Penderecki wanted to become a virtuoso. Upon graduating from grammar school, he moved to Kraków in 1951, where he studied violin and music theory at Jagiellonian University.

Penderecki was an unknown 28-year-old assistant professor in the Composition Department of the State Musical Academy in Kraków when he won the first, second and third prizes for his *Strophes* for soprano, voice (reciting) and ten instruments (1959), *Emanations* for two string orchestras (1958-59) and for his *Psalms of David* for mixed choir, string instruments and percussion (1958). In 1960, he composed a piece for 52 strings entitled 8'37" (the duration of the composition), for which he received a prize the following year from the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers in Paris. The work is now known as *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*. *Threnody* is classic early Penderecki; it's vividly unconventional writing for massed strings, including quarter-tones, tremolos, and multiple

glissandi to evoke highly emotive and political subject matter.

In 1968-69, Penderecki wrote his first opera, *The Devils of Loudun*, commissioned by the Hamburg State Opera where it had its world premiere in 1969. In 1972 Penderecki began his conducting career. Since that year, he has been seen on the podiums of the most important orchestras of the world. In the years between 1972 and 1978, Krzysztof Penderecki was a professor at the Yale University School of Music. He wrote his first symphony in 1973 in which he attempted to summarize his 20 years of experience – a time of avant-garde, radical searching. In his subsequent symphonies, Penderecki distanced himself from the avant-garde language and ceased to experiment with sonorism. In 1980 Penderecki started to compose *Polish Requiem*, which contained a piece to commemorate those killed in anti-government riots there in 1970 (*Lacrimosa*), Cardinal Wyszyński (*Agnus Dei*), the Warsaw Uprising and St. Maksymilian Kolbe (*Dies Irae*) and victims of the Katyń Massacre.

Untold numbers of people are familiar with Penderecki's music – perhaps without knowing it – thanks to films such as Martin Scorsese's *Shutter Island* (2010), Alfonso Cuarón's *Children of Men* (2006), William Friedkin's *The*



Source: Krzysztof Penderecki, photo: Bogdan Krężel / Przekrój / Visavis.pl / Forum/culture.pl

Exorcist (1973), and especially *The Shining* (1980), Stanley Kubrick's thriller that included the compositions *Polymorphia* and *The Awakening of Jacob* to frightening effect. In Poland, Krzysztof Penderecki wrote music for one full-length feature film - *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa* by Wojciech Jerzy Has (1964) in which music-like melodies are interwoven with the unsettling sounds of synthesizers and machines. David Lynch has used Penderecki's music in the soundtracks of the films *Wild at Heart* (1990), *Inland Empire* (2006), and the TV series *Twin Peaks* (2017).

He has inspired a number of contemporary musicians across genres, such as Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, who composed his *48 Responses to Polymorphia* on the basis of Penderecki's own *Polymorphia*. In March 2012 the US-based recording label Nonesuch released Krzysztof Penderecki and Jonny Greenwood, a critically-acclaimed collaboration between the two composers.

Penderecki composed four operas, eight symphonies and other orchestral pieces, a variety of instrumental concertos, choral settings of mainly religious texts, as well as chamber and instrumental works.

On 29 March 2020, Penderecki died in his home in Kraków, Poland. ■

Polish Pronunciation

By Malgorzata Mroz Ph.D.



Meryl Streep once commented on the time when she had been most scared in her whole career: It was when she had to adopt a Polish accent during the first reading of the script of ‘Sophie’s Choice’. She had taken Polish classes to better prepare for that role and kept practicing Polish pronunciation at home until her young son would complain: “No Polish, mommy!” As a Polish teacher, I understand how hard it must have been for her. Even though Polish pronunciation is regular, there are frequent consonant clusters and nasal vowels that do not exist in English.

Polish word for ‘hello’ is *cześć* – and it is even hard to decipher not to mention to pronounce. The letters *cz* together make a sound close to *ch* in ‘chop’, *e* is close to *e* in ‘egg’, *ś* is close to *sh* in ‘sheep’, and *ć* is close to *ch* in ‘cheap’.

You may have noticed that some Polish letters have diacritic marks, sometimes called accents. However, unlike in French or Spanish, letters with diacritics are independent letters that make different sounds. Two words that may seem the same for an English speaker are pronounced differently in Polish, for example *bak* and *bąk*, are ‘fuel tank’ and ‘bumblebee’ respectively.

Maybe you tried to locate your Polish ancestors in the past; you looked at the map of Poland, and tried to read the names of Polish towns. It is a daunting task. Some of the cities include *Warszawa*, *Kraków*, *Łódź*, *Wrocław*, *Szczecin*, *Gdańsk*, *Kołobrzeg*, *Rzeszów*, *Szczytno*, *Częstochowa*, and *Szczepieszyn*. Remember that *w* is pronounced as *v* in ‘vet’ and *sz* is pronounced as *sh* in ‘shop’. So *Warszawa* is pronounced as /Varshaava/, *Wrocław* is close to /vrotswav/, and *Kraków* is /krakuv/.

Once you have mastered saying ‘hi’ and reading names of Polish cities, it is time to study some animals. *Pies* is a ‘dog’ not a pie, but it is pronounced as ‘pea-es’; *kot* ‘cat’ is fairly simple to say, but how about some insects: *chrząszcz* ‘beetle’, *pszczola* ‘bee’, *trzmiel* ‘hornet’, or some fish, such as *pstrąg* ‘trout’, *szczupak* ‘pike’ or *wzdręga* ‘rudd’, or some birds, such as *dzwoniec* ‘linnet’ or *gzęgźółka* ‘cuckoo’.

When reading Shakespeare in Polish, be careful when you say the famous *być albo nie być* ‘to be or not to be’ and avoid pronouncing it as *bić albo nie bić* which means ‘to beat or not to beat.’ Polish vowels are very pure in quality, so try to avoid your inclination to diphthongize vowels. The Letter *y* is pronounced as *i* in ‘bill’ and Polish *i* is close to *i* in ‘ski’.

If you think Shakespeare is too hard, try reading a children’s poem written by Jan Brzechwa.

*Chrząszcz brzmi w trzcinie w Szczepieszynie
I Szczepieszyn z tego słynie.
Wół go pyta: „Panie chrząszczu,
Po cóż pan tak brzęczy w gąszczu?”*

In Szczepieszyn a beetle sounds in the reeds
And Szczepieszyn is famous for this.
An ox asks him: “Mister beetle,
What are you buzzing in the bushes for?”

Polish can be ruthless, or *bezwzględny* for its language learners. However, as an ancient philosopher Socrates said:

“A life without challenges is not worth living.” ■

In the Neighborhood

Kalejdoskop Polski, Minnesota receives grants from the Minnesota Historical Society and Metro Regional Arts Council

In the 1980s, the **SOLIDARNOSĆ**/Solidarity movement in Poland became one of Europe's most notable social movements, playing a significant role in ending communist rule in Poland. As a consequence of participating in this movement, many individuals experienced terrible repression, including imprisonment by the state. Some of these individuals moved to Minnesota as refugees.

The Minnesota Historical Society has awarded a Minnesota Historical & Cultural Heritage Grant to the Polish American Medical Society of Minnesota for Kalejdoskop Project. The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council has approved an Arts Project Support Grant to this project as well. This summer we began the first phase of this 5-phase initiative that seeks to illuminate the experiences of Solidarnosc/ Solidarity political refugees in Minnesota.

If you have questions, suggestions or would like to contribute to the project please contact office@pamsm.org or

visit www.pamsm.org/kalejdoskop

Katarzyna Litak, M.D.

President, the Polish American Medical Society of MN



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With Marian Pierzchalski, former Solidarity activist and political prisoner in 1982 communist Poland.

Photo by G. Litynski.



Kalejdoskop Project aims to capture and preserve the history of Polish-American experiences and contributions to Minnesota. In our vision, this is a five-phase project, with each of the five phases collecting oral histories from Polish-American Minnesotans from different eras of immigration. Future visions for sharing the project include creating a mobile exhibit of the interviews, featuring samples of the narrative histories alongside photographic portraits. "Kalejdoskop Polski, MN" should deliver a strong visual message. With over 240,000 Polish-American Minnesotans in the state (State Demographic Data, 2015), but only four oral histories documenting this community in the MNHS archives, this project responds to a need that has been raised by the community to increase the visibility of the group.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

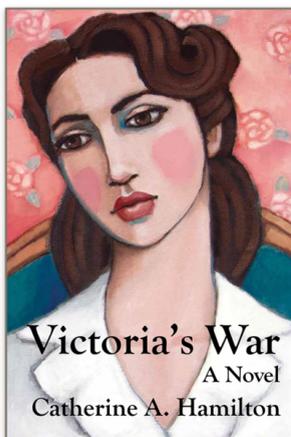
In the Neighborhood

Donation expands Polish-Slovak history offerings

By Mark Dillon

Mendota Heights - Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International is pleased to announce the addition of a collection of 30 research volumes and books related to 20 th century Polish, Slovak and Czechoslovak history to its CGSI Library.

Dr. Thaddeus Gromada, Professor Emeritus of European History at New Jersey City University and Past President, Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, has donated a unique collection of works in the area of Polish-Slovak-Czechoslovak history, diplomacy and political relations. CGSI believes there is an opportunity for greater understanding of shared culture, history and varied perspectives of persons of Polish, Slovak and Czech ancestry here in the Midwest. Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International has approximately 2,300 members globally and is one of the world's leading genealogy research resources for Czech, Slovak, Moravian, Bohemian, Carpatho-Rusyn and Silesian regional heritage. ■



A Conversation With Polish American Author Catherine A. Hamilton

Live from Portland, Oregon, Sat. July 11, 2020@1 PM

An interactive talk about her new novel Victoria's War. This work portrays the struggles and courage of Catholic women in Poland during World War II who were abducted and exploited for German forced labor operation. Characters and settings are based on family histories and research visits to the Rzeszów region southeast Poland.

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**ACPC (American Council for Polish Culture) is a national organization uniting like-minded groups and individuals in cities across the United States in promoting Polish Culture, heritage and history and intercultural understanding.*

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PACIM is grateful for the many gifts, endowments, and donations that make its mission a reality in the programs, events, publications and library collection under its guidance.

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MORE INFORMATION: PACIM.ORG

Polish Fall Soup Fest has been PACIM's tradition for many years. To honor this tradition in these challenging times we would like to propose

Polish Soup Fest Take Out

We are in the developing stages of this event but we would like to learn your preferences in our planning survey.

Please let us know if you would be interested in participation (YES___/NO___)
Indicate soups you like the best. Chose four.



Barszcz (Beet Root Soup)___



Krupnik (Barely Soup)___



Groszkowa (Green Pea Soup)___

Ogórkowa (Dill Pickle Soup)___

Żurek (Fermented Rye Soup)___

Grzybowa (Mushroom Soup)___

Fasolowa (Bean Soup)___

Bigos (Hunters Stew)___

Other (write ins allowed)_____

We anticipate that the soups would be ordered in advance and then picked up at the time of the event in October.

More information to follow.

Please mail this form with your reply by August 30, 2020 to

PACIM 43 Main Street, Ste 228 Minneapolis, MN 55414 or email to office@pacim.org

A Word about Membership Renewals

Thank you all that renewed the membership since the beginning of the year.

If your membership expired recently, we apologize for not reaching out with a renewal reminder. Please know all are welcome as we begin a new era, even though we can't be together in person. For a time, we are taking steps to bring Polish Americans in Minnesota closer in new and varied ways.

Renew today to help us build a better tomorrow.