



Alliance News

Toledo-Poznań Alliance quarterly newsletter – Summer 2020

NEWS from POLAND

The Blade Saturday Essay, July 6, 2020

Festivals, Ethnicity, and Coronavirus by David L. Jackson

Here in Northwest Ohio, we have been blessed with large numbers of church and other community-based Polish and polka festivals. Normally festival season would be going full blast right now. Of course, the coronavirus has shut down all our festivals this summer. While it's likely most of the celebrations will return once effective treatments and a vaccine are discovered, the Polish American community faces longer term threats than just the pandemic.

These threats mostly derive from being an ethnic community whose members do not all live in closely-knit urban neighborhoods anymore. Scholars call our kind of ethnicity "symbolic," which means it's less a part of our day-to-day lives and more something that we express at certain times of the year, such as holidays or during festival season.

Just as it is relatively easy to hide one's Polish American background, if one is so inclined, it is also easy to express it at the time and place of our choosing. This flexibility creates problems with meaning, authenticity, and survivability of ethnic traditions.

If everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day or Polish on Dyngus Day, is anyone really ethnic at all? If ethnicity can be turned on and off at will and has no consequences for daily life, just what does it mean?

Polish American identity can mean quite a lot for those who make the choice to participate in their heritage. It can be a recognition of the struggle and sacrifice made by previous generations to

make our lives as good as they are today. It's pretty easy to express one's Polish American identity by eating kielbasa, drinking beer, and dancing a polka at a festival. But it can be more even in the contest of a fun festival.

Recently I published a research article on North American Polish festivals in the *Journal of Heritage Tourism*. The article examines many different ethnic festivals before presenting the results of a survey of Polish festival organizers.

Whether Cajun, German, Scottish, Irish, or Polish, festival organizers worry about the authenticity of their events. They walk the line between presenting activities and foods that are so generic that a participant could not tell whose ethnicity they are celebrating while eating pizza, drinking beer, and listening to a rock or country band, versus events that are so strongly oriented toward the ethnic heritage and "high" culture that no one is having any fun.

The easy solution to the authenticity question is not to worry too much about it. More specifically, Polish American culture is a unique hybrid that combines aspects of Polish, American, and other cultures. We should revel in the creation and re-creation of our hyphenated identities. So what if there are no American-style polka bands in Poland? Bluegrass and Cajun music are American phenomena with European origins, too, and everyone love those.

On the other hand, it probably wouldn't be a bad idea to include some traditional Polish and so-called "high" culture elements such as films, literature and folk dancing as myriad festivals already do. One neat thing that some Cajun festivals do is to have French language speaking contests. I would love to see Polish festivals do the same thing to reward the younger generation in particular for learning the beautiful, but difficult Polish language.

Finally, my survey of Polish festival activists showed that the typical festival volunteer is a woman in her 50s or 60s. While appreciating the tremendous work activists have done to preserve our culture, we also need to think about what we are going to do when they can no longer work in the kitchens, beer tents, and ticket booths. Everyone can do more to help, this author included.

While the global coronavirus pandemic has shut down Polish festivals for this year, I believe they can come back stronger than ever next year, and the Polish American community can do an even better job of preserving and promoting our heritage and ever-changing ethnicity.

David J. Jackson is professor of political science at Bowling Green State University. He is a member of the Polish American Historical Association and the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America.

Festivals, ethnicity, and coronavirus is reprinted in Alliance News with the permission of The Blade.

TPA's 30th Anniversary

This year marks the Thirtieth Anniversary of the founding of the Toledo Poznan-Alliance at Saint Hedwig Parish. Here is a picture of the founders enjoying Polish pastries.



Front - Sister Ann Francis Klimkowski, Ursula Zula Cauffiel, Josephine Kozlowski, Anne Galloway, Dorothy Zammit, Dr. Marian Rejent.
Back- David Chelminski, Chuck Gondon, Walter Hilarski, Dr. Konrad Lasek, Reverend Paul Kwiatkowski, Ryszard Jan Zak

Since TPA had to cancel its spring events, there was no annual meeting and election of officers in 2020. Officers will remain the same until the next annual meeting. Jackie Konwinski is president, Stan Machosky is secretary and Tom Sorosiak is treasurer. The Board is always looking for someone to serve as vice president and for someone to understudy the treasurer's position. If you are interested, please call Jackie at 419.882.5045.

Due to the increasing number of Covid 19 cases in the United States and Ohio together with the fact that most of our members are 65 and over, TPA is canceling these events:

- participation in the PACT/TPA Scholarship Program
- participation in Polish Film Series rescheduled for October
- Dozynki, our traditional harvest celebration
- participation in the Toledo Sister Cities International Festival rescheduled for October
- participation in Wigilia, our traditional Christmas Eve supper.

The Board will be planning the anniversary celebration for Dozynki 2021 together with the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Sister Cities Agreement with Poznan. Once again, there is hope for more events next year. TPA will be in touch at Christmas time.

—Jackie Konwinski

Look for the Sgt. Alex Drabik Memorial Hwy on 1-475 between Central & Airport Hwy.



WARSAW Conservative Andrzej Duda Reelected President of Poland on July 12

Andrzej Duda of the Law and Justice Party earned 51.21 percent of the votes in a runoff election against Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski of the Civic Platform Party with 48.79 percent. Voters observed strict coronavirus protections during the highest turnout since the country became independent of communism.

President Duda had support from older voters along with voters in rural areas and in Eastern Europe. He promised to work for “traditional families,” a phrase with appeal to older voters and church goers, social issues and wealth distribution. He plans to finish reforms of the judiciary and other institutions. He dislikes other interests, especially the European Union, interfering in the Polish government.



Mayor Trzaskowski called this election a fight for the soul of Poland. He opposed Duda’s policies that used the media to present his views and ignore other sides, manipulation of the judiciary and the denial of L.G.B.T. rights. He promised to uphold democratic values and institutions, unlike Duda’s government. This candidate had the support of voters under 50 and city dwellers.

UNITED STATES President Duda Visits Washington, DC on June 24

Polish President Andrzej Duda met with President Donald J. Trump at the White House. Just a few days before Polish elections. They discussed efforts to end coronavirus and to open their countries. Trump praised Poland’s commitment to NATO by sharing in its costs. The Defense Cooperation Agreement aims to strengthen military cooperation, build up NATO deterrents and increase Eastern European security. Duda and Trump shared concerns about economic progress, infrastructure protection, supply chains diversity, nuclear power development and global communications.

Polish polls showed Duda with 40 percent of the vote; Polish elections require a majority to win. Trump said, “He’s doing a terrific job. The people of Poland think the world of him. I don’t think he needs my help.” However, Representative Marcy Kaptur criticized Trump’s “inappropriate efforts to insert himself into Polish domestic politics and boost President Duda’s re-election with a White House visit.” Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright lamented the visit because “the current governing Polish party has retreated from the values at the heart of the alliance.”

POLAND Coronavirus

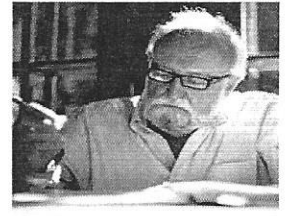
According to Corona Tracker, there were 45,688 cases of coronavirus in Poland, with 233,643 recoveries and 1,714 deaths as of July 31, 2020. The European Union opened borders to EU travelers, but closed its borders to travelers from the United States.

WARSAW Supreme Court of Poland

The Court of Justice of the European Union ordered the suspension of the new disciplinary chamber of the Polish Supreme Court in early April because of its political membership and its powers to prosecute judges who oppose the government. Deputy Justice Minister Sebastian Kaleta declared that the EU court did not have the power to order such a suspension, and that such action violates the sovereignty of Poland. The disciplinary chamber might mean an end to Poland’s participation in the EU community of law because it endangers an independent judicial branch.

KRAKOW Krzysztof Penderecki, Poland's Premier Composer, Dies at 86 on March 20

Poland's pre-eminent composer of the last half of the twentieth century, Krzysztof Penderecki composed modern works including eight symphonies, four operas a requiem, choral works and concertos. During the 1960s, he gained fame as a young man for "Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima," "Polymorphia" and "St. Luke's



Passion." His choral works remind listeners of Poland's Catholicism and foreign subjugation. Penderecki employed tones, and little melody or harmony. Movie directors, such as Scorsese, Weir, Lynch, Kubrick and Friedkin used parts of his works to dramatize mayhem and horror. Later in life, he left behind the tonal works and composed in Neo-romanticism.

Penderecki was born in Debница and lived through World War II and 45 years of communist dictatorship. The Jewish ghetto was behind his family home. Penderecki was the conductor of the Krakow Philharmonic for many years.

UNITED STATES Walentyna Stocker Janta-Polczynska Dies at 97 on April 2

Walentyna Stocker was studying English in London in 1939. The Polish Embassy hired her as the personal secretary and translator to General Wladyslaw Sikorski who served as the commander of the Free Polish Armed Forces and prime minister of the Polish government in exile. Stocker worked with the Polish resistance. She translated the reports of Jan Karski, noted for eyewitness accounts of Nazi atrocities against the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. She assisted in the organization of Dawn, a secret radio station broadcasting to Poland from England.



She and her mother immigrated to New York City in 1947, and she married the poet and journalist Aleksander Janta-Polczynski. The couple established a bookstore in New York City and opened their home to Polish refugees – author Jerzy Kosinski, political activist and critic Jan Kott, poet and playwright Zbigniew Herbert, Nobel Laureate Czeslaw Milosz and more. She was called the "First Lady of Polish Americans." Janta-Polczynska donated manuscripts and documents from the bookstore to the National Library in Warsaw. Poland awarded her the Medal of Merit for Polish Culture and the Jan Karski Eagle Award.

UNITED STATES Jerzy Glówczewski, Fighter Pilot and Architect, Dies at 97 on April 13

Jerzy Glowczewski, the last surviving Polish Royal Air Force fighter pilot, died in New York City from Covid 19. He flew 100 combat missions over France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Major Glówczewski flew the Spitfire, "City of Krakow," in the 308 Polish Fighter Squadron. He was awarded the Polish Cross of Valor thrice.

When the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, he and his stepfather escaped and lived in Bucharest, Romania and Tel Aviv, Israel. He served with the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade on the front lines in Egypt and Libya before joining the RAF. Glówczewski returned to Poland in 1947 and enrolled in the University of Technology School of Architecture in Warsaw. He helped redesign Warsaw's Old Town and planned industrial projects. An immigrant to America, he taught at the Pratt Institute in New York City. He wrote a three-volume Polish memoir, which became the one-volume, "The Accidental Immigrant" in 2007.



Economic Luck Continues

by Denny Kutylowski

In the wake of the corona virus pandemic The World Trade Organization is anticipating global trade will shrink by 13 to 32 percent. But, it appears that Poland may profit from a change in trade routes according to a report from the Polish Economic Institute (PIE) who think a windfall of over \$8 billion annually will be forthcoming due to production being moved out of China.

The institute claims that a shift of manufacturing away from China to other countries will reduce China's Gross Domestic Product by around 2 percent and increase Poland's GDP close to 1.9 percent in relative terms, expressed as an annual growth of value added in Poland.

Overall GDP forecasts for Poland have been revised indicating slightly slower economic growth, but not as much as other EU countries. In 2019, the growth in real gross domestic product in Poland was up 4.1 percent from the year before, continuing a trend of steady positive growth and it is projected that Poland's real GDP will continue to grow in the near future.

According to PIE analyst Jan Strzelecki, "We can expect a fall in the volume of international trade, its regionalization and a growth in protectionism as well as diversification of the supply chain. A natural step will also be increased pressure on supply security in strategic sectors of states' trade policy. China's importance in the global supply chain will also fall."

In the most optimistic conditions, European countries' national production could replace 10 percent of semi or end products from China and a further 10 percent from Poland and other former Eastern Block countries.

In terms of sectors, the most dependent on supplies from China are global computer production, electronics and optical products, textile products and clothing. "The shift from China of parts of production including semi-

products and finished products would mean a loss in added value to that economy will stand at \$ 22.4 billion to \$172 billion a year," according to Lukasz Ambroziak of PIE's foreign trade team.

In PIE's assessment, the most beneficial aspects for EU member states would be a combination of national patriotism and strengthening of the newer member states from Central Europe (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria) in the role of the EU's factory. Apart from Poland (\$8.3 billion) other countries of the region to benefit would be the Czech Republic (\$4.9 billion), Hungary (\$2.7 billion) and Romania (\$2.6 billion).

Deniusz (Denny) Kutylowski
www.polishtoledo.com

"Życie jest za krótkie, żeby było małe." (Life is too short for it to be small)

Andrzej Duda, Polish President

Read all about him in the insert and how he swayed President Trump to send additional thousand troops to the eastern border as the constant movement of the Russians along the borders made the Poles nervous.