

Editorial

Brazil-Poland: historical-cultural dialogues

The wonderful landscape of Guanabara's Bay is revealed to the sensitive and attentive eyes of the poets. Indeed, poetry, like music, serves as a language to describe the indescribable. We have a paradox here. The written and spoken language that we commonly use to express ourselves also imposes limitations on clearly describe our feelings, perceptions and emotions.

Perhaps that is why Tomasz Łychowski used poetry as a way of recording his impressions when he arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1949. The path taken by the immigrant poet was the same as that of most Poles who landed on the Brazilian coast in large contingents from the 19th century. For many, the maritime stage of the voyage began at the ports of Bremen or Hamburg, and from there they sailed the Atlantic towards Brazil. Despite not being the final destination of most immigrants, the arrival in Rio de Janeiro certainly occupied a prominent place in the families' imagination, as it represented a milestone in this journey towards the unknown. It was the beginning of a new stage in their lives. Most of them would never return to their homeland or see their family members again. The *tesknota za domem*¹ has become a constant.

In the years 1772, 1793 and 1795 Poland had its territory occupied and shared by the Kingdom of Prussia, the Russian Empire and the Austrian Empire². Poland then stopped being a sovereign nation and its population was subdued. In the 19th century, armed revolts and articulations broke out that aimed at recovering their autonomy. The difficulties imposed by foreign domination were heightened by the recruitment for military service from the occupying nations and severe impositions that restricted the use of the Polish language. It was at this juncture that a large part of Polish immigrants arrived in Brazil, among them, participants in the two great uprisings of the 19th century (*Powstanie listopadowe* and *Powstanie styczniowe*). For many families, emigration was

¹ Homesick.

² Habsburg Monarchy or Habsburg Empire (1526-1867); Austrian Empire (1804 - 1867), Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867 - 1918).

seen as the only possibility to offer their children the expectation of a life with less deprivation. Impelled by the imprecise advertisements of the shipping companies, Brazil was seen as the “Promised Land” (*Ziemia Obiecana*). A place of abundance and opportunities. The reality, however, was less romantic. The challenge was overwhelming. They found a nation in a formative process, to which they would make their contribution.

Thanks to the work of Rui Barbosa, a prominent Brazilian statesman who defended the Polish cause, Brazil was the first Latin American country to formally recognize the recovery of Poland's independence after the First World War in 1918. In 1920, Count Franciszek Ksawery Orłowski was appointed to serve as the Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister of the Republic of Poland in Brazil. Therefore, the publication of the dossier in 2020 is also presented as a **celebration of the centenary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries**.

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, the migratory period intensified again. The greatest flow, however, was registered in the period when Poland was occupied, a factor that generated a high underreporting of statistical data referring to Polish immigration in Brazil, since immigrants carried documents issued by the occupying nations. The data used by various organizations and even by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and Poland are inaccurate and uneven.

Its correction and updating is a task that is imposed on historians. Recent surveys have raised Poles to the position of **the third largest immigration contingent in Brazil**, accounting for more than 600 thousand people, which corresponds to a percentage of 11.50% of the total immigrants, supplanted only by Italians (32.22%) and Portuguese (29.20%), followed by the Spanish (11.03%), Germans (5.05%) and Japanese (3.75%). Based on demographic and statistical calculations, it is estimated that Brazilians with Polish ancestry currently number around **five million people**.³

Expressive numbers translate into contributions in the most varied aspects of Brazilian society. This publication aims to highlight the historical-cultural dialogues that occur within the scope of academic and scientific production, especially in the historical-cultural field. Such dialogues are also a reflection of the historical trajectories that unite both countries. The disclosure and enhancement of these relationships is one of the objectives of the **Center for Historical and Archaeological Studies Brazil-Poland**, whose creation was formalized in 2019 by the Graduate Program in History of the

³ Such data - largely unpublished - were collected, above all, in the scope of the research carried out by Fr. Jan Pitoń (in memoriam). Its database has been revised and expanded by the historian Ulisses Iarochinski.

University of Passo Fundo (PPGH / UPF). The dossier is elaborated in the context of academic cooperation between the University of Passo Fundo and *Uniwersytet Wrocławski*.

Some articles published here explore themes that, to a greater or lesser extent, oscillate around the history of Polish immigration, while others show the scientific exchange and its interfaces between the two countries. We are pleased to gather contributions from the Brazilian states of Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná, São Paulo and Espírito Santo, in addition to texts from the Polish cities of Warsaw, Wrocław and Katowice. Thus, we established a connection between the different researchers that is now shared and extended to readers.

The opening article entitled *On the Brazil - Poland border: academic cooperation in Forensic Anthropology at the service of Human Rights* summarizes the dossier proposal, as it explores the current possibilities and perspectives for scientific cooperation between the two countries. Researchers Katarzyna Górka and Cláudia Regina Plens introduce us to the context of Forensic Anthropology and its role in Human Rights in Brazil. The text describes the academic and professional reality, as well as highlights the limitations that are imposed on the exercise of the profession, such as the lack of specialized training, insufficient infrastructure and investments, overload of human resources, absence of protocols at the federal level, among other challenges. Faced with this scenario, international scientific cooperation presents itself as indispensable for the maturation and strengthening of the area in the country. The text is presented in its bilingual version (Portuguese and Polish).

Following, the article *Extradition Requests by Poland Against Nazi Criminals Residing in Brazil*, written by Felipe Cittolin Abal, traces a history of the extradition processes of Franz Stangl and Gustav Wagner, Nazi criminals who after practicing their atrocities in Sobibor and Treblinka started to live with impunity in Brazil. Poland's requests were tried by the Federal Supreme Court in 1967 and 1979, both being dismissed by prescription. In his historical-legal approach, the researcher builds a critical and reasoned analysis about the progress and developments of the processes.

In *Polonity in Brazil: the role of social actors and institutions in the maintenance and / or extinction of cultural heritage*, Schirlei Mari Freder highlights the social importance of ethnic cultural activists in the exercise of polonity and, above all, their role in the maintenance or extinction of Polish and Polono-Brazilian institutions over the past few decades in Brazil. Based on bibliographic research and field observations, the

researcher investigates the subjective motivations of social actors - and their transformations - that impel their performance in the actions of perpetuation and forgetting of cultural symbols and codes inherent to the material and immaterial cultural heritage of the Polish ethnic group.

Occasionally, we have a thematic block composed of three texts that orbit around the subject of education in Polish colonies and their interfaces with the cultural processes of identity construction. In the emergence of the dynamics of construction of national identities in the first half of the 20th century, the article *Polish School Initiatives - Polskie szkoły in Brazil and the role of the consulate in Polish post-reunification: speeches and cultural and identity negotiations*, by researcher Fabiana Regina da Silva, explores in a masterful way the cultural, political and religious connections that permeated educational initiatives in the ethnic communities of the Polish diaspora in Brazil, highlighting, mainly, the role of consular agents in the design and construction of discourses and actions for the construction of the national spirit as imagined community.

Continuing the theme of ethnic identity, Adriano Malikoski addresses the maintenance of Polish nationality through cultural promotion in ethnic groups. In his text entitled *The Central Union of Poles in Brazil and the national cultural imposition (1930 - 1938)*, the researcher unveils the role of the Central Union of Poles in Brazil in this process, as well as the impact of nationalization policies implemented by the Estado Novo in Brazil, whose effects have repercussions today, in particular the loss of knowledge of the Polish language by most descendants of immigrants. For the development of his research, Malikoski analyzed articles from ethnic journals and consular documents from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych*).

The theme that permeates Polish nationalization policies and ethnic schools is approached through a regional oncoming by researchers Isabel Rosa Gritti and Silvana Maria Gritti. The article entitled *Polish education in Colonia Erechim: the school as an instrument of organization and resistance* emphasizes the role of the Polish immigrant as a social subject who seeks to build his space of existence in a context of confrontations and adversities arising from the nationalization policies of the Brazilian education. Faced with this situation, the school began to radiate processes of resistance, conflicts and tension.

Themes such as identity and memory are also at the heart of researcher Thaís Janaina Wenczenovicz's article. Its focus, however, is centered on the memory guard spaces of immigrants or descendants of Poles. His text entitled *Culture, identity(s) and memory in Polish immigration in Rio Grande do Sul* presents us with a recent survey of

data about institutions and places of custody of information and collections with informative potential on the history of immigration. Among the related spaces are personal archives, public archives, associations, registries, churches and museums.

The writing of Polish immigration history in Brazil is usually centered in southern Brazil, a region that received the largest contingents of immigrants. However, the monopoly of the narrative sometimes stifles the historiography of the other regions that are equally fundamental for the understanding of the theme in question. From this perspective, the article *Poles in Espírito Santo: two trajectories of a people between the valleys of the Sierra and the hinterlands of the North* is inserted. In it, researchers Renata Siuda-Ambroziak and Maria Cristina Dadalto develop a comparative perspective of two Polish immigration phases in the state of Espírito Santo, both marked by different socio-political and historical contexts, thus highlighting the importance of the action of society and institutions in the settlement and reception process for immigrants.

In the epilogue of the articles section, researcher Magdalena Bąk provides us with a light and reflective reading. The text entitled *Brazylia Tomasza Łychowskiego*⁴, written in Polish, presents Brazil to the eyes of immigrant Tomasz Łychowski. Poet, painter, teacher and writer, Łychowski recorded his impressions and the specifics of Brazil in verse. In his poems there are also several reflections inherent to the condition of immigrant, especially the mechanisms of acquisition and construction of a hybrid identity, a valued and recurring theme in the current Polish colonies in Brazil.

Finally, in the **Translations** section we publish an essay by the renowned Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk. The text entitled *The Tender Narrator* was presented by the writer during the Nobel Prize for Literature in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2019. Her translation was presented to us by Alcione Nawroski, a researcher who transits through academic dialogues between Brazil and Poland. The publication of the essay occurs with the due consent of ©The Nobel Foundation.

The articles are further preceded by a contribution we received from the Brazilian Embassy in Warsaw, presented in the sequence. Ambassador Hadil da Rocha Vianna's text praises the cordial and cooperative relations between the two countries.

We ended this editorial with the satisfaction and the certainty that the thematic dossier went beyond the possibilities of historical-cultural dialogues in the scope of research and academic exchange between the two countries. We would like to thank our

⁴ "Brazil by Tomasz Łychowski".

collaborators here, with a special emphasis on the women researchers who account for 85% of the publication.

We wish you all a pleasant reading.

Serdecznie pozdrawiamy.

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Passo Fundo / Wrocław, September 2020.

100 years of friendship between Brazil and Poland

Hadil da Rocha Viannaⁱ

On 27 May 2020, we celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Brazil and Poland. As Brazil's ambassador in this beautiful country and on behalf of all Brazilians, I would like to extend best wishes to our Polish friends on this special occasion that means a lot to both our nations.

On 27 May 1920, the first Polish diplomatic representative in Brazil, Ksawery Orłowski, presented his credentials to the President of the United States of Brazil, Epitácio Pessoa. This was the beginning of official diplomatic relations between our countries.

Later, on 3 June 1921, the Brazilian government sent its diplomatic representative, Rinaldo de Lima e Silva, to Poland. He presented his credentials to Józef Piłsudski, the Prime Minister of newly independent Poland. At that time Brazil, which declared its independence in 1822, was a young country that was about to celebrate its centennial. That is why it recognised and appreciated the absolute freedom and right of a nation to shape its own destiny. During the time of Brazilian monarchy, from 1822 to 1889, Brazilian emperors – Dom Pedro I and Dom Pedro II – recognised and valued Poland's right to sovereignty. One must mention the significant gesture of Dom Pedro I when during a theatrical performance in Paris held in connection with the Polish uprising of 1830, he stood up and shouted loudly: *Vive la Pologne libre!* Aware of the importance of his act, the Brazilian ruler did not hesitate for a moment to express the support of his entire nation for Poland's independence.

During the time of the republic, Brazilian support for the Polish cause was conveyed by historical figures, in particular by the eminent lawyer Ruy Barbosa. In his passionate speeches at international forums, including at the Second International Peace Conference in The Hague in 1907, Ruy Barbosa called on the world to recognise the unquestioned right of the Polish nation to independence.

On 17 August 1918, the Brazilian government, under the leadership of President Wenceslau Braz, formally recognised Poland's right to establish a united and independent state. In an official note issued by the Brazilian government, Foreign Minister Nilo Peçanha expressed his solidarity with the idea of the liberation of Poland, the subordination of which he called "one of the greatest injustices in history".

We were the first country in Latin America to recognise Poland's independence and we are very proud of it. The invincible spirit of the nation, the unwavering resistance and the unquestionable striving of the Polish nation for freedom have always been a source of inspiration for Brazilians.

Recognition of freedom is the basis of our diplomatic and political relations and further strengthens the powerful historical bonds of friendship between our nations. Last year, 150 years have passed since numerous groups of Polish immigrants came to Brazil in search of better life and freedom, and thus intertwined our fates. Poles repaid the Brazilians for their hospitality, friendship and affection with kindness, responsibility, loyalty, honesty and hard work.

Through the numerous waves of migration, Poles undoubtedly contributed to the development of Brazilian agriculture, industry, science and art. At the beginning, back in the 19th century, farmers introduced technical agricultural innovations imported from Europe. Later, in the 20th century, immigrants included members of the Polish intelligentsia, such as the poet, Julian Tuwim or Jan Lechoń, actress Irena Eichlerówna, and sculptor August Zamoyski. They all contributed greatly to the creation and development of the emerging Brazilian cultural scene. Zbigniew Ziemiński, an actor and director permanently working in the country, deserves a special mention and has become a leading figure in the world of contemporary theatre. Brazil, mainly in the State of Paraná, is home to the second largest community of Polish descendants abroad, estimated at nearly two million people.

These days it is Poland that welcomes Brazilians, many of them descendants of Poles. Nearly three thousand Brazilians study and work in Poland, mostly young people with high qualifications, who have been attracted to the country by the opportunities offered by Poland's economic development in the European Union and around the world. There is no doubt that Brazilians also contribute to Poland's success in the production of goods and the provision of high-quality services, as well as in the investment sector. It is in the present context that the international position of Brazil and Poland has strengthened, and the relationship between our nations has grown even closer through our shared traditional values. Since Jair Bolsonaro was elected President, our two countries have become even friendlier and closer thanks to governments that are described as conservative and share similar views on how to approach various international issues, such as immigration, religious freedom and protecting the family.

This affection and closeness has resulted in even more frequent meetings between

top officials, thus ensuring broad political support for bilateral cooperation. The intensified dialogue between our two countries is particularly evident in areas such as trade, defence, education, science, technology, innovation and culture.

Mutual trade and investments are growing year by year. In the years 2015-2019, trade between our countries increased from USD 1.02 billion to USD 1.51 billion. The list of traded products remains diverse, dominated by agricultural goods, planes, medicines and auto parts.

There is also great potential for cooperation in the area of tourism, as evidenced by the Eco-Estrela project led by Polish businessmen. It involves building a large complex of hotels and residential condominiums in the state of Rio Grande do Norte in Northeast Brazil, known all over the world for its beautiful beaches. This undertaking is not only based on ecologically sustainable solutions, but will also contribute to the socio-economic development of the region by creating jobs.

Due to the growing importance of the defence and security sector for Polish foreign policy, as well as Brazil getting closer to NATO, the possibilities of cooperation between Brazil and Poland are significantly expanding. The Brazilian aviation company EMBRAER, with the support of the Brazilian Embassy, has strengthened its contacts with local partners and assessed the possibilities of cooperation, both at the defence and commercial levels.

When it comes to education, cooperation between Brazil and Poland has a long tradition. Brazilian Portuguese is taught both in secondary schools, such as Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Ruy Barbosa in Warsaw, as well as in higher education institutions, e.g. at the University of Warsaw and the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. In Brazil, in addition to city schools in regions with a large number of Polish descendants, the Federal University of Paraná and the University of Brasilia also offer Polish language courses.

In the field of science and technology, the Brazilian Embassy tries to promote initiatives aimed at disseminating the Brazilian innovation ecosystem, attracting Polish companies with innovative solutions to Brazil, and promoting the IT world of Brazilian start-ups. To this end, we worked on promoting the "Brazil Tech Award" events in São Paulo and the "Wolves Summit" in Warsaw.

Finally, in the field of culture, institutions such as the Polish-Brazilian Ruy Barbosa Society, which will turn 90 in 2020, under the leadership of Ambassador Stanisław Pawliszewski, and the Macunaíma Foundation, chaired by Paweł Kucharczuk,

have been promoting Brazilian culture in Poland for many years.

In terms of cultural exchange, I invite everyone to our Facebook page to watch videos commemorating the centenary of the diplomatic relations between Brazil and Poland, produced by the Embassies of both countries.

I would like to point out that the difficult times we are all dealing with due to the coronavirus pandemic inspire constant reflection on the importance of true friendship and cooperation, not only between individuals but also between nations and countries.

As we have seen, for the past one hundred years Brazil and Poland have maintained strong historical and cultural ties. Strengthened by these relationships and shared values such as faith, freedom, democracy and the market economy, our two countries have proved that they are prepared to play increasingly important roles on the international stage, and thus succeed in facing challenges that can bring prosperity and peace to the world.

Best wishes to Brazil!

Best wishes to Poland!

May there be more centennials to celebrate!

ⁱ Brazilian Ambassador in Poland.