The Ties that Bind: Religion and Nationalism amongst Polish(-)Canadian Immigrants during the Interwar Period

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of St. Michael's College and the History Department of the Toronto School of Theology
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Abstract

Polish immigrants to Canada in the interwar period utilized religion to preserve their national identity. Closely associated with Catholicism, Polish nationalism was continuously being recreated according to the shifting values afforded to language, history, and cultural tradition. The tensions over the rightful definition of the Pole-Catholic identity continued to be debated in the parishes, in the various religious and secular organizations, and the ethnic press, along with affecting the immigrant’s relationship with the Polish government. Religion was at the heart of the debate, perceived either as the defining or irrelevant factor of Polish nationalism.
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Introduction: The Pole in Canada

The history of the Poles in Canada has generally been associated with two images: that of Sir Casimir Gzowski and the Kaszubs. Gzowski arrived in Canada from partitioned Poland in 1841. By the end of the century, he had completely assimilated and risen through the ranks of Canadian society, becoming the Deputy Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and knighted by Queen Victoria. Late in life, he lamented over not being able to speak in his native tongue. The Kaszubs, who settled in the Renfrew area of eastern Ontario, comprised the first Polish mass migration of approximately 500 families to Canada in the mid-1850s from the Prussian controlled region of partitioned Poland. Beyond the history of the Kaszubs and Gzowski, the story of the Canadian Polonia goes through a lengthy interregnum only to reappear in the 1980s with the advent of the Solidarity movement. Yet, the evolution of the Polish community in Canada cannot be defined solely by the Poles who came in the mid-19th century or the 1980s.

Canada has experienced a continuous flow of Polish migrants from the mid-nineteenth century to the early 1990s, with the exception of the two World Wars and the latter half of the 1930s, during the Great Depression years. Chronologically, Polish chain migration to Canada can be divided into five distinct periods: i) latter half of the 19th century (1850-80s); ii) pre-First World War (1890s-1914); iii) interwar (1919-1939); iv) post-Second World War (1940s-1970s); and v) post-Solidarity (1980s-1993). In broadest strokes, the migration experience has been shaped by a variety of factors: reasons for migration (economic vs. political); length of migration (temporary vs. permanent); socio-economic standing of the incoming group; and place of settlement (rural vs. urban). These factors have fluctuated considerably depending on the period of any given group’s arrival in Canada.

I have selected 1993 as the cut-off point for Polish migration because the post-1993 period experiences a significant decline in the migration as better opportunities present themselves in a new Poland, and later, in the European Union. This, however, does not mean that Polish migration to Canada had come to a conclusive end.
In the entire historical narrative of the Canadian Polonia, the interwar period has received least attention. The existing scholarship argues that prior to the Second World War, Polish migration was predominantly comprised of male migrants whose sole intention was to earn enough income to return to their homeland in order to purchase land or pay off debts.¹ These men took on employment that was physically intensive, including mining, lumbering, railroad construction and/or commercial agriculture. If permanent settlement did occur, it usually happened in western parts of Canada, such as Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. For the most part, those that arrived prior to the Second World War belonged to the peasantry, lacked a formal education, were not nationally aware, and had migrated for economic reasons. This early immigrant community is often juxtaposed against the new wave that arrived after 1945.

After the Second World War, Polish migrants who made their way to Canada tended to be better educated, especially in the professional and technical fields.² Many were former soldiers serving in the Polish Armed forces and were now considered displaced persons with no desire to return to a Communist Poland. Migration in the post-war period tended to be political in nature, and comprised of both men and women. They quickly became organized, creating a framework for the community’s institutional life. According to this interpretation, the Second World War became the catalyst for the emergence of a more organized Polonia. However, this is not an accurate reflection of the evolution of the Polish community in Canada. The existing literature has neglected to adequately explain the importance of the interwar period. The two decades between the two World Wars witnessed the key transformation of the Polish community, which have been ascribed to the post-1945 years.

¹ Anna Reczyńska, For Bread and a Better Future: Emigration from Poland to Canada 1918-1939 (North York: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1996), 82-5.
The history of the interwar Polish immigration begins at the end of the Great War. In 1918, Poland regained her independence, but the young country that emerged from over a century of foreign oppression—being divided between three empires—faced a daunting battle to amalgamate three regions (Prussian Poland, Russian Poland and Austrian Poland) that were at different stages of development. Consequently, the delayed agrarian reforms and slow industrialization created a situation whereby even into the 1930s, three-quarters of Poland’s population still lived in villages and sixty-four per cent of its population was employed in agriculture. These factors led to a post-war population boom, which was exacerbated, by repatriation and decreasing land holdings, leading to a surplus labour force that could not be absorbed. Some of them departed for Canadian shores.

This study shows that although the majority of the Poles migrating to Canada during this period were men from the lower classes, unlike previous periods, these men arrived with some formal education, even if it was just elementary schooling. They also came with a sense of national identity and organizational experience. The latter was especially important in the process of creating and nurturing the organizational life of the community. Initially, many came as temporary sojourners—much like their predecessors who came before 1914—but the Great Depression would change their plans.

First, many were financially unable to return to the homeland, so they did the next best thing—they brought their wives, fiancés and children over to Canada. Interestingly, though this migration went from temporary to permanent, in the minds and hearts of the majority, it remained a temporary situation. Second, the economic situation encouraged a shift in their settlement from rural areas to urban centres and from western Canada (i.e., Prairies, Winnipeg, Manitoba) to eastern Canada (i.e., Ontario). There were greater opportunities for Poles in

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3 Kołodziej, Wychódźstwo zarobkowe z Polski 1918-1939, 273.
unskilled labour within the cities than in rural settlements. Besides, given that this was a temporary migration, Poles did not have a desire to invest in farming, which was perceived to require more long-term planning.

Focusing on the Polish immigrants to Canada between 1919 and 1939, this study argues that given the temporary nature of the migration and the preconceived notions of nationalism and national identity, the Polish immigrant actively sought out to maintain his identity within the Canadian context. To ensure that his “Polishness” remained intact and continued to thrive, he turned to religion—to Catholicism in particular—as a system, network and means by which he could maintain this identity. The first step that Poles took was to create Polish parishes, believing that without ethnic parishes, religious loss would soon be followed by assimilation and loss of lingual and ethnic affiliation. In their drive for ethnic preservation, religion was the obvious choice since it was something familiar. Moreover, it offered an ethno-religious system that transcended boundaries. The mass, for instance, was effectively the same whether it was said in Poland or in Canada. It was “Polonized”—imbued with Polish traditions. The relationship between Polishness and Catholicism did not deteriorate after migration (and settlement). The opposite effect took place, as it was strengthened, becoming a prism through which the community could access and reassert its history, identity, culture and even begin to engage with the Canadian context but without ever having to feel forsaken. The religious-nationalism dialogue began to permeate all aspects of the emerging Polish community.

What began with the building of Polish parishes and calls for Polish clergy before 1914, was followed throughout the interwar period by the establishment of organizations and later of federations, the development of print media, and the creation of ties with the home country via the Polish consuls. Central to this evolution of the Polonia was the dialogue between Catholicism

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4 I use the male gender as a matter of convenience and, within the context of this study it should always be read as an all-inclusive term referring to both men and women.
and nationalism. Immigration triggered an important debate amongst immigrants about their identity. The context of the Canadian environment where everything was new and foreign, forced the Poles into an encounter with themselves, and what it meant to be Polish. As a result, the immigrants keyed in on a few factors that they saw as defining Polishness. These included history, language, culture and tradition, as well as religion. Here, religion played a dual role. It was an overt marker of identity, such as when the community argued that a true Pole was a true Catholic. This was often juxtaposed against the “religious other”, especially the Protestant Prussian or the Orthodox Russian. In addition, it also played a more subtle role, defining all other aspects of the national life, especially its history and traditions.

Religion has been an important ingredient in the shaping of the country’s history, traditions and language. Poland’s history is filled with the commemoration of both secular and religious events, with the lines between them being blurry. Quite often, a religious interpretation has been offered to explain secular events. For example, the Polish repelling of the Swedish invasion in the mid-17th century came to be depicted as having miraculous qualities. The Polish nation had been saved by God and became intrinsically tied to the shrine of the Black Madonna in Częstochowa, with Mary becoming the Queen of Poland. Cultural traditions also became defined by religious intonations. Conversely, the Polish language was seen as the only means of experiencing Catholicism. So, even when religion was not at the front and centre of the debate over the national identity, its influence continued to resonate. Catholicism’s role within the national tradition and identity was being constantly defined and redefined. Even though the role of religion was debated, it is important to keep in mind that religion was never on the periphery.

The current study will explore the ways in which this national identity evolved within the Canadian Polonia of the interwar period. Such an exploration has received negligible attention in scholarship. The existing historiography on the Polish community in Canada remains highly
underdeveloped. This is so for several reasons. Despite its positive contributions, the literature has been marked by amateur, non-scholarly, filiopietistic and interest group-based works produced for a limited audience. This historiography can be divided into three periods: i) 1940s-1960s; ii) the 1970s-1980s; iii) post 1990s. Each of these periods has been marked by several key characteristics: a) type of scholarship (e.g., memoir); b) the subject matter (e.g., organizational life); c) quality of scholarship (e.g., academic, non-academic); and d) limited audience (e.g., language of publication).

The first period is filled with scholarship that pursued a more filiopietistic perspective while focusing on the Polish migration from the eighteenth century until the Great War (with only some works dealing with the interwar period). One of the main issues related to these initial publications is their lack of citations, making it nearly impossible to confirm the claims made by the authors. As well, most of these maintained a primordialist position and consequently, their works attempted to create connections between current Polish immigrants and those from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Moreover, there was a political agenda attached to the writing. The intention was to highlight the Polish immigrants’ contributions to Canada. Authors such as B. Zubrzycki (1947), V.J. Kaye-Kysilev’skj (1951), and Ludwik Kos-Rabczewicz-Zubkowski (1968) represent this approach. Zubrzycki and Zubkowski, for example, both laid claim that the first individual to discover New Brunswick was a Pole by the name of Johannes Scollonus, citing sources from the sixteenth century.\(^5\) Zubrzycki also placed great emphasis on the contribution of Poles to establishing and protecting Canada in staving off the American invasion of 1812.\(^6\) Kaye-Kysilev’skj concentrated on urban Poles and their propensity for assimilation, along with Polish

\(^6\) Zubrzycki, 23.
migration to Canada from the United States. Like his colleagues, he was concerned with highlighting Polish contributions to Canadian society.

This filiopietistic current has remained fairly powerful, spanning across the 20th century, and continuing into the present. Jadwiga Jarkszus-Tomaszewskaja (1995) and Jacek Kozak (2012) are the more recent representatives of this sort of approach. Jarkszus-Tomaszewskaja concentrates on listing Poles in various professions, such as engineering or politics. Jacek Kozak focuses on a broader Polish Canadian history, but with a similar goal in mind. He explores Polish involvement in the establishment of the public medical system and contributions that Poles made to multiculturalism. Though such scholarship cannot be disregarded, it points to a larger problem where it is difficult to find publications that take a more critical approach to the history of Polish Canadians. Problematic, for example, is the assumption by the authors that these “contributors” to Canadian society self-identified as “Poles”. Such studies point to the unresolved issue of how Polishness continues to be defined and regulated.

William Makowski’s work in the 1960s and 1970s, though facing similar pitfalls (e.g., discussing contributions of the first Polish families to Ontario, like that of Casimir Gzowski) began to take a more comprehensive approach to Polish immigrant history. His work centred on the development of the community within the parameters of organizational and religious life. As well, he attempted to be more inclusive in the settlements he covered, examining the Polish communities in southwestern Ontario. Makowski’s other work, Polska Emigracja w Kanadzie, provided statistical information related to the number of employed Poles in specific sectors, such

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11 For example, see Makowski, *History and Integration of Poles*, 102-9.
as farming, mining, the textile industry, paper industry, construction, etc. in western Canada and Toronto. However, unclear are the author’s source(s) for making these statistical claims.

The first period also witnessed the first regional studies. Makowski, Zubrzycki and Zubkowski all wrote about the first Polish settlers in Canada, the Kaszubs. Much of their work focused on the Kaszubs’ political motivations for leaving, especially the troubling policies in Germany such as the Kulturkampf. Victor Turek’s *Poles in Manitoba* (1967), focused on the interwar history of Poles in Manitoba. According to Turek, there was little difference between the nineteenth century migration and the interwar migration with the exception of identity awareness and increased level of education, with only a small number of interwar immigrants being interested in returning to Poland. Even more troubling was his discussion of the role of religion within the community. Turek argued that the community leadership was held in the hands of clergy, and was not challenged by the community; that the clergy were not concerned about national identity; that they opposed the influence of secular organizations; and that they did not take part in the social activities of the community. First, Turek’s discussion lacked a nuanced understanding of the changes that take place over time. Instead, the entire history of the Canadian Polonia until the end of the Second World War is treated as a single undivided and uninterrupted narrative. (Much of the trouble stems from the lack of proper identification of sources.) Second, there are contradictions in the narrative as Turek was unclear of which group of clergy were unaccommodating, pointing out that the Oblates of Mary Immaculate held a moderate approach. Given that the Oblates were the major religious force in western Canada, Turek’s statements in regards to clergy are unclear and confusing. Such studies offered insights

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about the history of Poles in Canada, but do so in broad and cursory strokes, ignoring significant transformations and events.

A sign that new scholarship on the community was about to emerge was embodied in the work of Victor Turek. This was also the first time that highly specialized study of an aspect of the Polonia’s life emerged. Turek published a seminal work on print ethnic media. The monograph offered a historical analysis of the various small and large publications from the late nineteenth century until the Second World War, revealing the development of the main papers, Czas, Gazeta Katolicka, Związkowiec, and the Communist Budzik. Equally important was Turek’s compilation of all community publications, even those that lasted only one issue. His work provided a ground-breaking history of Polish ethnic newspapers.

The second phase of the historiography on the Polish Canadian community was the most prolific. During the two decades of the 1970s and 1980s, the emerging scholarship began to examine broader issues going beyond the need to solely discuss the contribution of Poles. New studies explored the community’s organizational life and the establishment of print media, and there were more regional studies that focused on western Canada and Ontario. More emphasis was also now given to major urban centres. Alexander and Joanna Matejko presented a general history of Poles in the Canadian prairies, exploring the geographic (e.g., Alberta: Canmore, Bankhead, Skaro, Rabbit Hill, etc.) and demographic dispersion of Poles, arguing that it was only in the late 1920s that Poles played a numerically significant role in Canada. In “Polish Peasants in the Canadian Prairies”, for example, they claimed that economic motives became the

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primary means behind the mass migration of Polish peasants. Krystyna Łukasiewicz described the development of the Polish community in Crow’s Nest Pass, Alberta focusing on the establishment of organizations, while Maria Carlton narrowed her investigation to the history of the Polish-Canadian Association of Edmonton as a social centre for the local community.

Organizational life was another topic that became prevalent in the literature. Despite the significant drawbacks of these works, both Benedykt Heydenkorn and Henryk Radecki provided decisive work on the history of the growth of organizations in the community. Heydenkorn offered a chronicle of the Federation of Polish Societies (ZZPwK), while Radecki wrote a more far-reaching history examining the changes that Polish organizational life underwent in the late nineteenth century, and during the interwar and the post-war periods. Radecki covered both secular and religious organizations, along with the rise of the federations, touching upon Polish schools and parishes. Unfortunately, both studies had shortcomings. Heydenkorn’s work lacked proper evidence that would support his sweeping conclusions. Radecki erroneously argued that the majority of organizational life prior to 1939 took place in rural areas, with parishes neither supporting assimilation nor propagating Polishness and loyalty to the Polish state. Nonetheless, these works were indicative of a new trend in the historiography that attempted to provide a comprehensive history or at the least, a sampling of how the community developed. For all their shortcomings, they did offer a much more sophisticated, balanced and nuanced perspective.

Heydenkorn, Radecki, Kogler and the Polyphony series published by the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, along with Donald Avery and J.K. Fedorowicz presented works that

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18 Maria Carlton, Towarzystwo Polsko-Kanadyjskie (Edmonton), 1927-1987 (Edmonton: Polish Canadian Society, 1987).
19 Benedykt Heydenkorn, Organizational Structure of the Polish-Canadian Community: The Federation of Polish Societies in Canada (Toronto: Canadian Polish Research Institute, 1979).
21 Radecki, Ethnic Organizational Dynamics, 100-9.
attempted to encompass a more complete history of the Poles prior to and after the Great War. Avery and Fedorowicz defined the migration into three waves based on class and education, while examining both internal and external reasons behind migration (e.g., CPR and CNR), and providing an overview of the organizations and print media established by the community. A similar overview was provided by Radecki and Heydenkorn, who discussed the status of the social and economic situation in Poland influencing the exodus of Poles. Additionally, they began to distinguish between the different migratory waves and the type of immigrant that made its way to Canada. A cursory history of the organizational life, newspapers and religious life was also offered. Rudolf Kogler followed a similar approach, arranging Polish history according to the building of churches, Polish schools, youth groups, women’s organizations and fraternal and secular organizations. The *Polyphony Series*, like other works of the time, provided a sampling of how the community developed. The literature covered the role of religion and the Catholic church and some of its leadership, such as Fr. Christopher Puchniak, the Polish press in Canada, the preservation of the Polish language, women and the Toronto-based ZPwK (Polish Friendly Alliance of Canada), and some of the settlements of Poles in Ontario (e.g., Poles in Sudbury). These short articles opened a window to the various aspects of the Polish immigrant community.

This period also saw scholarship focusing on demographics, such as in the case of Elżbieta Budakowska and Rudolf Kogler, who explored the assessment of migration patterns;

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22 Donald Avery and J.K. Fedorowicz, *The Poles in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1982).
26 *Polyphony Series* v.1, no.2 (1978); v.4 (1982); v.5 (1983); v.6 (1984); v.7 (1985); v.11 (1989).
27 Other collections of essays that fulfilled a similar function were: Benedykt Heydenkorn, ed., *A Community in Transition: The Polish Group in Canada* (Toronto: Canadian Polish Research Institute, 1988); Benedykt Heydenkorn, ed., *Past and Present: Selected Topics on the Polish Group in Canada* (Toronto: Polish Alliance Press, 1974); Benedykt Heydenkorn, ed., *From Prairies to Cities: Papers on the Poles in Canada at the VIII World Congress of Sociology* (Toronto: Canadian Polish Research Institute, 1975).
reasons behind the migration; and the influence it had on the development of the Polish community in Canada. Greater emphasis was placed on relating Polish immigration to Canada’s immigration policy rather than examining the political, social and economic factors faced by Poles in the homeland.28 As well, immigrant memoirs became a popular means of relating the story about the lives of the interwar immigrants.29 These were collected through a variety of contests, and published by community organizations. This also led to organizations and parishes publishing anniversary-related works that described the rise of those particular institutions.30 Many of these publications still leaned towards filiopietistic approaches that were self-aggrandizing.

The third period of Polish Canadian historiography was marked by a significant decrease in the scholarship. Yet, the few works that were published in the 1990s were of a high scholarly quality. They are best represented by Anna Reczyńska, who examined the social and economic factors leading to the interwar migration and Zofia Shahrodi, who compared the Polish groups in Toronto and Hamilton, Ontario examining patterns of settlement and the organizational life of the community.31 The historiography expanded to examining the relationship between the

immigrant and Canada. Eva Stachniak explored how both Canada and Poland were presented in
the Polish ethnic press, while Thomas Prymak examined the various studies on the emigration
to Canada from Poland. There was also some focus on the post Second World War migrants by
Martin Thornton and Lynne Taylor.

Through the entire historiography of Polish immigrants, religion has remained one of the
most neglected topics. Radecki and Heydenkorn, for example, simplify the story to the number
of Polish parishes found throughout English Canada. In very general terms, they both argued that
parishes were the first institutions which were established and their limitations led to the creation
of secular organizations. Avery and Fedorowicz also focused on the number of missions and
parishes, and the rivalry between the Polish National Church and the Związek Polaków w
Kanadzie. Similarly, Kogler’s analysis of religious history presented information on the
number of parishes. He only acknowledged the different religious orders that administered to the
Polish community, while emphasizing the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who created the
Association of Poles in Canada (SPwK) as a means of staving off secularization.

There have been some more specialized studies that have explored religion (i.e.,
Catholicism) as playing a key role in maintaining language and cultural traditions, with the
priest taking on a more political and economic role as mediator between immigrants and the
Canadian government. Edward Hubicz—one of the first publications on the topic—provided

Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991, ed. Mark McGowan and Brian Clarke (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical
Association, 1993).
32 Eva Stachniak, “Canadian Reflections—The Images of Canada and Poland in the Polish Ethnic Press, 1908-89,
33 Thomas Prymak, “Recent Scholarship on Polyethnnic Emigration from the Republic of Poland to Canada between
34 Martin Thornton, The Domestic and International Dimensions of the Resettlement of Polish Ex-Servicemen in
35 Lynne Taylor, Polish Orphans of Tengeru: The Dramatic Story of their Long Journey to Canada, 1941-49
(Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2009).
36 Radecki and Heydenkorn, A Member of a Distinguished Family, 63-5.
37 Avery and Fedorowicz, 11-12.
short historical sketches of the different Polish parishes established in Manitoba.\(^{39}\) Yet, most of the literature on the topic is fairly recent, emerging only in the last twenty years. Following in the footsteps of Hubicz, Edward Walewander produced an important lexicon of the history of Polish parishes according to regions.\(^{40}\) This survey is the only work that provides an inventory of Polish Canadian parishes. Though it lacks an analysis, its contribution to the historiography is essential as it offers a jumping off point for further studies in the field and it brings to light obscure information about Polish parishes. Jadwiga Plewko discusses the role of the clergy in the process of the Polish immigrants’ integration into Canadian society.\(^{41}\) She sees the clergy as being the preservers of culture, establishing parochial schools, charity and mutual aid organizations. However, her study has several limitations. For instance, she does not discuss the community’s role and contribution in demanding that such institutions be created. A more recent work by Martha McCarthy explores the history of the Oblates in St. Mary’s Province.\(^{42}\) The work’s primary concern was to explore the relationship between immigration to Western Canada and the need for the Oblates as a missionizing order, rather than the Oblates’ multifaceted role within the Polish community. It places emphasis on the German rather than the Polish faction.\(^{43}\)

In general, the Polish Canadian historiography has made some headway in its attempts at providing a comprehensive history of the Poles in Canada. The current works, despite their shortcomings, have providing a foundation for further study. They have offered cursory information on the rise of organizational life, parishes, schools and the role of religion. They have revealed several important limitations. Many of these works were sociological, and not

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\(^{42}\) Martha McCarthy, *The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate: St. Mary's Province* (Saskatoon: Missionary Oblates St. Mary's Province, 2004).

\(^{43}\) Another work related to St. Mary’s Province is *St. Mary’s Province 1926-1986: Oblates of Mary Immaculate* (Battleford, Sask.: Oblates of Mary Immaculate, St. Mary’s Province of Canada, 1987).
historical, in nature, offering statistical information or compilations of data. Those studies that
provided a more historical perspective, narrowed their work to a chronology of events with little
critical and in-depth analysis. Much of the work remains underdeveloped and incomplete. Third,
much of the literature was created in Polish for a fairly limited audience. Most studies were
published by Polish ethnic organizations for local consumption and with a specific political
agenda. A good case in point is the study of various Polish organizations.

The books published on the Związek Polaków w Kanadzie (Polish Alliance Friendly
Society of Canada, ZPwK), for example, were published by the organization itself.\textsuperscript{44} Hence, the
organization could shape the depiction of its own history. Information that was “embarrassing”
was glossed over. Its interwar leftist leanings could be conveniently “forgotten” or “erased”.
Furthermore, it could brand itself as the first truly independent Polish organization (i.e., not
influenced by religious or political institutions). Other federations, such as the Zjednoczenie
Zrzeszeń Polaków w Kanadzie (Federation of Polish Societies, ZZPwK), and especially the
Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Kanadzie (Association of Poles in Canada, SPwK), did not fare
better, receiving only cursory mention across the pages of broader s
The same can be said
for the four main newspapers. Literature on the Polish ethnic press never examined the content of
the papers. Besides Victor Turek’s \emph{The Polish Language Press in Canada}, \emph{Gazeta Katolicka} was
the only paper that was discussed (i.e., in \emph{Polyphony}). Overall, these works tended to have a very
narrow geographic focus—regional (e.g., western Canada) or even local (e.g., Toronto). No
attempt has been made to try to provide a comprehensive cross-country analysis of the Polish
community, or to examine various components of the community’s development, such as
exploring the intellectual life of the community.

\textsuperscript{44} See, for example, Benedykt Heydenkorn, \emph{Pionierska droga Związku Polaków w Kanadzie: przyczynek do dziejów
This study brings to the forefront a number of key issues related to the history of the Polish Canadian community. It begins to fill a much-needed gap on the discussion of religion’s role amongst the Polish immigrants, and it is the first study to directly examine how the Pole-Catholic identity was defined and experienced on a daily basis in the interwar period. Moreover, this study takes a comprehensive approach to the Polish immigrant community, exploring parish life, the rise and transformation of organizations and the workings of print media in Western and Eastern Canada. On a broader scale, the study demonstrates the importance of religion within the immigrant community as a tie that bound the community members to each other, while providing a bridge between the old and new worlds. Religion was not relegated to the private sphere but had broad implications for the entire social fabric of the Polish community. For the Polish immigrants, it became a way of engaging with multiple identities—national, ethnic, gender, economic and class. Accordingly, this study analyzes the relationship between religion and national identity as the community expanded and developed its own institutions, including the establishment of parishes, organizations, and print media in the interwar period. The study also places the Polish Canadian immigration within a broader context of Polish immigration to North America, and it examines the role of the Polish government in utilizing this relationship to further solidify the connection between immigrant and the homeland. The methodology centres on social history.

The first chapter provides a historical context of the history of the Poles in Canada. It offers statistical information about the size of the group and its distinguishing characteristics. The chapter also lays out the importance in studying the group and how it should be differentiated from its Polish American counterpart.

Chapter two examines the parish life in three Polish parishes: Winnipeg’s Holy Ghost Parish, and Toronto’s St. Stanislaus Kostka and St. Mary’s Polish Parishes. These three parishes
were chosen because Toronto and Winnipeg represent the two main urban centres where Poles congregated in the 1920s and the 1930s. They also reflect the shift in internal migration from the West (the Prairies) to the East (Ontario). The three parishes are case studies—a microcosm—of parish life in the interwar period. They reveal some of the challenges faced by the churches and the communities they served.

The key is to show how the parish served a myriad of functions in the community. It was a religious space where the Catholic faith of the people could be experienced and lived. The religious space of the parish was open to and promoted matters pertaining to the commemoration of the community’s national identity and Polish Catholic traditions. The parish also functioned as a community centre. It was a place for socialization in the form of banquets and picnics; a place for education in the form of English classes for adults and Polish-language and history classes for the next generation; and a place for the promotion of culture via theatre productions. In many ways, these activities were demanded by the community and placed under the local religious leadership, revealing how the Polish culture of the homeland was being recreated on Canadian soil in the “mini-Poland” of the parish church.

Chapter three explores the impact of the reestablishment of Poland—as the Second Republic—after the conclusion of the Great War. As the Polish government established diplomatic relations with Canada, Polish consuls came to represent the Second Republic’s interests and to establish ties with the local Polish immigrant community. The chapter shows how the various Polish consuls, concerned about maintaining Polishness amongst the immigrants, worked within the community to strengthen its ties to the homeland.

To achieve their goals and to avoid conflicts with the Canadian government, the consuls placed emphasis on religion as a means of maintaining Polish identity. They saw the parish system and its clergy as the best means by which national identity could be preserved and
whereby Poles would be saved from assimilation into Canadian society. To achieve this aim, the consuls showed support for clergy who emphasized the Pole-Catholic identity. They also called on the Catholic hierarchy to support the establishment of ethnic parishes, urging them, for example, to create a Polish province of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, so that they could more effectively speak to the national question. The consuls became very involved and important members within the Catholic community and the debates on the Pole-Catholic identity.

Chapter four delves into the organizational history of the Polish community. As the Canadian Polonia grew and developed, the immigrants began to establish associations and organizations. At first, these tended to be connected with the parish, but by the late 1920s, the demands of the community were outgrowing the services provided by the parish-based organizations, so new organizations were founded outside of the parish. Yet, the supply of organizations outpaced the supply of immigrants. By the 1930s though, these numerous small organizations faced extinction due to lack of funds, limited ability to expand and the growing economic problems in Canada. To strengthen and consolidate the organizational life three federations emerged to compete for the loyalty of the Polish community: Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polaków w Kanadzie (Federation of Polish Societies, ZZPwK), Związek Polaków w Kanadzie (Polish Alliance Friendly Society of Canada, ZPwK), and Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Kanadzie (Association of Poles in Canada, SPwK).

The ZZPwK was created under the initiative of the Polish consuls with the goal of preserving Polishness and ensuring that immigrants gave priority to the interests of the homeland. They hoped to achieve this by exploiting the Polish-Catholic identity. The ZPwK was concerned with the state of the immigrant in Canada, and as a result, it wanted the immigrant to reorient his loyalty towards the newly adopted homeland and assimilate into the larger Canadian society. As well, the federation became interested in labour issues and socialist ideology, and
consequently, was very critical of the Catholic Church and its clergy. The last federation, the SPwK, was established in response to the ZPwK and its rising leftist tendencies. Its primary focus was on ensuring that Poles did not lose their faith. In trying to create an ideological platform, all three federations debated religion’s role within the construction and maintenance of the Polish identity. Much of the chapter is devoted to how each of the federations defined and approached the national identity and the role of religion within it.

The fifth chapter examines the content of the three main ethnic newspapers, the Gazeta Katolicka [Catholic Gazette], Czas [The Times], and Związkowiec [The Alliancer]—the mouthpieces of the three federations (respectively of the SPwK, the ZZPwK and the ZPwK)—to reveal the diverse interpretations of Polishness and its relationship to Catholicism. Gazeta Katolicka maintained the strongest and most overt connection between the two, focusing on, for example, reiterating a religious interpretation of historical events. Czas was less overt in its promotion of the Polish-Catholic identity, emphasizing the political and economic situation in Poland along with the “living out” of that identity—the daily choices made by Poles, which could either, reinforce or weaken their Polishness. However, by speaking to the same individuals, historical events and commemorations as Gazeta Katolicka, Czas was not undermining the implicit religious associations that were made by people. It just opted for most subtle undertones with the aim of bringing Catholics into its fold without alienating others. Związkowiec stood apart from the other two papers, being critical of religion and the homeland, and placing more emphasis on class and labour issues.

This is the first study to explore how the Poles attempted to define themselves within Canada in the interwar period, which was a defining moment for the Polish community. It was the first time that Poles became invested in shaping and developing their community in Canada. They did this by expanding their organizational life, parish life, and the press. Central to the
evolution of the community—and is at the heart of this study—is the exploration of the interplay between the national and the religious in the construction (and reconstruction) of the Polish immigrant identity. The migrating masses turned to religion as a basis for national identity, which was then highlighted in civic and religious spheres. This struggle for (re)definition was expressed through various institutions found in the community, such as the parish and the organizational life. Moreover, the same discussions spilled on to the pages of the various ethnic newspapers, which became the public forum where such ideas could be debated and propagated. The study also reveals the extent to which that immigrant identity in English-speaking Canada remained fluid. Polish immigrants continuously redefined themselves depending on their economic standing, social position in the Polish community, their loyalty to the homeland, and their religious beliefs. In order to provide a comprehensive portrayal of the community’s evolution, the study discusses many of the different aspects of the community’s life—the religious, the political, the cultural, and the intellectual. Moreover, it does not limit its perspective to Canada, reaching across the ocean to show the tremendous impact of the Polish government on the Canadian Polonia. The Second Republic was not an inactive player. Rather, the consuls became intimately involved in the shaping of the life of the community. The nexus of all of these dynamic interactions was religion and the Catholic-Pole identity.
Chapter 1: The Plight of the Polish Immigrant: Background and Context

The study of Polish immigrant life in Canada encompasses a coalescence of various factors—immigration, the Polish government, religion, Canadian Catholic Church, nationalism, the immigrants themselves—which came together at different times and in different ways to affect the development of the Polish Canadian settlement. These factors embodied the strongest currents in the life of the Polish community. Central to this process was the relationship between nationalism (and national identity) and religion—Catholicism in particular—amongst Poles immigrating to Canada between 1919 and 1939. The interaction of these elements produced an environment that permitted for a dialectic between religion and nationalism, whereby Catholicism became a vehicle by which Poles were able to sustain their nationalist identity. Yet, the agency behind the encounter between religion and nationalism rested neither with the institutions of the Polish state nor with the Canadian Catholic Church, but rather with the moderately educated, young to middle-aged Polish male labourers. These peasant-turned-labourers appealed for Polish parishes, arguing that language would preserve religious loyalty and convincing diocese after diocese to support the establishment of national parishes. Religion and its accompanying institutions became a means through which national identity could be maintained, sanctioning a space within which language, culture and history could be celebrated, preserved and related in the banality of the everyday. Religion also became a means by which other institutions, such as consulates, accessed the Poles, and it was to function as a means of uniting all Poles across Canada. Religion was therefore associated with loyalty to the Polish state and keeping Polish interests at the forefront.

Within the context of the temporary nature of their migration, with an overextended Polish government promoting the notion of the *Pole-Catholic*, and with a relatively open and accommodating Canadian Catholic Church meeting the needs of these immigrants, the parish
stood at the heart of Polish immigrant organizational life. It not only provided immigrants with religious associations, but also served their economic needs. It functioned as a community centre, a school, a library, a theatre, and as a centre for celebrating national commemorations. Its role as a social centre exceeded its religious calling, extending to the popular media of that time and to the establishment of Polish (organizational) Federations in the 1930s. The Polish Catholic periodical, Gazeta Katolicka, became a vehicle through which Poles (who did not have access to their own parish) defied loss. The establishment of two competing Federations, the Polish Government sponsored Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie (Federation of Polish Societies, ZZPwK) and the Ontario-based (Left-leaning) Zjednoczenie Polaków w Kanadzie (Polish Alliance Friendly Society of Canada, ZPWK) in the 1930s, was in part a response to the perceived limitations of the Polish parish—they were either too lax in their stance on nationalism and on Polish interests, or they had too strongly emphasized these very matters and should instead refocus on the adopted homeland. Religion would remain a significant factor in the debates between the two main federations. Arguments centred on the proper approach to nationalism and the Polish state, and over the community’s relationship to its adopted homeland. Consequently, both the private (familial, religious/devotional life) and public (organizational, parish) aspects of Polish life became platforms for (re)negotiating identity. Neglecting one aspect of this identity—whether it be Polishness or Catholicism—would exclude one from accessing and participating in the other. At the centre of this process lay one critical question: What did it mean to be Polish?

Regardless of whether a definition was provided by the Polish State, the Polish Episcopacy, Polish Canadian clergy, or the immigrant community itself, Polishness was equated with Catholicism, with Polish language, history, culture, and with an attachment to the Polish state. The identity of a “Pole-Catholic” was not formed within Canada, but had been carried over
from Poland. However, this notion was utilized and adapted to the Canadian context in order to meet the needs of the Polish immigrants. A Montreal paper, Polonia, depicted the expected behaviour of a Polish immigrant in the mid 1930s:

Attachment to the fatherland forms the basis of moral strength for the Pole. The Pole abroad maintains continuous relations with this fatherland through the family he left behind, and through Polish organizations and associations. The Pole abroad looks after preserving his language in its purest form, and above all, he seeks to pass it on to his children, educating them in Polish schools and speaking to them in Polish. The Pole abroad preserves his Polish customs within the family, and in his religious and social life. The Pole abroad visits Poland with his family, and if he is from afar, does so at least once in his life.¹

The issue of nationalism and its relationship to identity and the latter’s fluid nature was at the crux of the Polish immigrant narrative. Identity permeated the daily lives of the people, and was most fully realized within a context that married the religious with the national. The parish ended up being the optimal surrogate for nationalism. It was not only a bridge to the homeland, but also a miniature replica of the motherland. It created a space—physical and psychological—within which Polish nationalism and identity would thrive, creating a forum of Polish belongingness: “Here for a moment [at mass] they feel as in their abandoned ancestral lands,” as one report recounted, “The priest is their friend and advisor, one could talk to him, ask him for advice and even often borrow something to read.”² Turning to religion as a means of achieving their cultural and national aspirations was not a foreign concept to the Pole.

The experience of the partitions and the achievement of state independence had set the foundations for this form of interaction between culture, religion and nationalism. The partitions lasted from the late 18th century until the conclusion of the First World War and a collapse of the three empires, Russian, Prussian and Austro-Hungarian that had divided and occupied the Polish

¹ Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario (thereafter MHSO), Ethnic Group POL Box 5, “Polak Zagranicą i Polska,” Polonia, 19 January 1935, p.2. All translations, unless otherwise stated, are my own.
² MHSO, Ethnic Group POL Box 21, Federation of Polish Societies, “Polskie Duchowieństwo w Kanadzie,” in Poles in Canada: Their Contribution to Canadian Development (Montreal: n.p.), 47.
territory. The last partition of 1795 had removed the state from the map of Europe, and the ensuing period was fraught with failed insurrections, rise of Messianism, and mass migration. This ideological movement of the 19th century associated the “martyrdom” of Poland with a crucified Christ, “gave” Poland the ability to redeem other European nations. The rise of nationalism sweeping throughout Europe turned the Polish elites firstly towards armed rebellion and later towards Organic Work. The latter entailed a critical attempt at the cultural preservation of Polish identity, history and language until such time when a new Polish state could once again arise. Consequently, the concept of the nation arose before statehood could be achieved, unlike in Western Europe (e.g. France, Britain, Germany, Italy), where a state was established before nationhood. This process of national formation had peculiar effects on the emergent Polish national identity.

During the partition period, the Polish episcopacy at the grass-roots (parish) levels had taken part in the social life of the people and experienced the politics of oppression. For the most part, the partitioning states wanted to place the Catholic Church under their influence and to reduce its power by favouring those of a different faith or language. More importantly, with the loss of official Polish political organs of power, the Church was the only institution that provided an alternative source of authority. In effect, the Church became a surrogate for the Polish state. In the struggle for maintaining its rights, and increasing its support amongst the people, the Polish Catholic Church began to associate that which was Catholic with that which was Polish. This association was further reinforced by emphasizing the Protestant and Orthodox persuasions.

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of two of the partitioning powers (Prussia and Russia), and presenting Poland as a protector of the Latin Church and Western Culture. Amongst the political exiles hoping to gain support for Polish independence from Rome, Catholicism was distinguished as the most important of political goals, and significant prominence was asserted regarding the Catholic aspect of Polish identity. Subsequently, the Church came to be seen as a pillar of Polishness, and the amalgamation of Pole and Catholic asserted itself not only culturally, but also politically. Since a Polish civil state was non-existent, nationalist sentiment was embodied in culture, language and religion. Polish-Catholic symbiosis was reinforced in political programs, literature and even economic activity.

With the period following Poland’s independence in 1918, the Catholic Church rose to a position of popularity and dominance as a representative of the religious majority. During this era, the Catholic Church was also able to procure influence on the political front as an interest group. The majority of the Polish elite continued to endorse the marriage of nationalism with Catholicism. Quite often politicians would draw on the rhetoric of the Pole-Catholic to shore up support amongst the masses. Even specific national responsibilities, such as furthering the development of national culture and fighting for one’s national rights, became associated with Catholicism. Concern was especially strong about the uses of the Catholic ethos within contemporary nationalist rhetoric. Nevertheless, Józef Piłsudski’s Sanacja (Non-Partisan Block) and, in particular, Roman Dmowski’s Endencja (National Democrats)—the two principal

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8 Dźidek, 86.
9 Misgivings did appear within the circles of both government and clerical elites concerning the rise of nationalism and its relationship to Catholicism. Not everyone was convinced of a symbiotic relationship between nationalism and Catholicism. Among the politicians, some saw religion as the handmaid of nationalism; whereas others tended towards a civic nationalism. Amongst Churchmen, the opposite held true—nationalism was considered as a doorway to Catholicism, serving religion, or it evoked apprehension about the possibility of religion’s reductive role in the process.
10 Jarosław Macała, Polska katolicka w myśli politycznej II RP (Toruń: Wyd. Adam Marszałek, 2005), 54.
11 Macała, 68.
political currents\textsuperscript{12} in interwar Poland—comfortably utilized the growing affiliation between Catholicism and nationalism, asserting that religion was a strong unifying force in the national consciousness of the masses, and distinguished Poles from other nations.\textsuperscript{13} Accessing this particular definition of national identity was useful and natural, as it was already familiar to the people.\textsuperscript{14} The interwar period solidified Catholicism as the main criterion of Polishness.\textsuperscript{15}

The government’s promotion of the \textit{Pole-Catholic} framework was also strongly reflected in its attitude towards immigrants. This “attitude” was meant to reinforce the glory of the nation within political and economic spheres. Since hundreds of thousands of Poles had left their homeland prior to 1918, it was important that they be brought back into the fold of the emerging national discourse and reconnected with the Polish state. Their role as Polish nationals in foreign lands was to benefit the economic situation in Poland, while enhancing the country’s prestige in Europe and abroad. This would not be an easy task as many Poles had found a new home, and oftentimes found it difficult to reconnect with a new state and ideology. This problem was especially evident amongst Poles living in the United States. In the 1930s, the Polish Vice Consul to Canada, Roman Mazurkiewicz while writing \textit{Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w Kanadzie} [Polish Emigration and Settlement in Canada], commented on the differences between Poles in Canada and America, raising a red flag about the loss of identity amongst immigrants.

\textsuperscript{12} Though both parties were on the right of centre, \textit{Sanacja} maintained a Socialist orientation, while \textit{Endencja} held an integral orientation. According to Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, \textit{Sanacja} was concerned with the idea of restoring “health” to the body politic by emphasizing discipline, anti-corruption and loyalty to the state. Piłsudski’s coup was carried out in this name and this was also the name that was given to the regime until 1939. Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, \textit{A Concise History of Poland} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 213.

\textsuperscript{13} Given that Poland was 60% ethnically Polish and 40% minority (e.g. German, Jewish, Ukrainian), the political currents regarding national identity did to a certain degree marginalize the minority groups. However, in the 1920s, the Polish government was not actively interested in interfering with the German and Jewish minorities. Instead, the Ukrainian group was on the government’s radar, with the latter promising territorial autonomy that was never realized. It was not until the economic crash of the 1930s when radical right wing views began to take hold and minorities began to be unwelcome. Maćała, 78.

\textsuperscript{14} It would also make it that much easier to unite the people under one idea, as this construct was an established “network”, saving the government from having to create a new nationalist identity.

\textsuperscript{15} Wrzesiński, 116.
According to his assessment, by the mid-1930s, Poles in America were referring to themselves already as “Americans of Polish heritage,” in contrast to those north of the 49th parallel who identified themselves as “Poles in Canada.”\(^\text{16}\) Subsequently, Mazurkiewicz indicated that there was still hope for the Pole in Canada, as he had not yet been assimilated. The loss of Polish identity amongst the American immigrants was associated with a loss to the economic and political interests of the Polish State.\(^\text{17}\) Consequently, action to prevent further losses was quickly required.

Accordingly, the government desired to establish a bridge between the emigrants and the Polish state. To achieve this goal, it turned to the Polish consuls and clergy. The latter were seen as the best bulwark against denationalization. Within the Polish community, clergy had held a position of authority that was traced to their position within the Polish village. This status of importance was further reiterated within Canada because the function of the priest went beyond his religious duties. The priest, who tended to have a higher education, was an employment agency, translator, mediator between old and new worlds, and educator.

The Polish consuls in collaboration with Polish clergy were to take responsibility and ensure that the loss of national identity did not occur. Combining religion with nationalism was perceived as the most effective way by which ethnicity would be maintained, optimistically leading to what the consuls saw as the creation of a unique Polish colony within Canada. Quebec was a model to be emulated. It illustrated the successful preservation of religious and national identities in a sea of the “Other”. The fact that Quebec, a Catholic province within an English Protestant country, had managed to secure its culture and faith was an indication to the Polish

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\(^\text{16}\) Archiwum Akt Nowych (thereafter AAN), Akta Janiny i Kazimierza Warchałowskich, s.244, Roman Mazurkiewicz, *Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w kanadzie* (Warszawa: Nakład Naukowy Instytut Emigracyj, n.d.), 105.

government that similar rights would be afforded to an established Polish colony on Canadian soil. This colony was to function along the lines of Quebec—a nation within a nation. For the consuls, the symbiosis of religion and nationalism was a good fit. These two concepts had been fused in the Polish political rhetoric, and were used in the building of the Polish nation. The clergy also did not see these two concepts at odds. To be a good Catholic meant in part to support Polish culture, and a true Pole fulfilled his Catholic duties. Moreover, culture, language and traditions were a means by which the faith could be promulgated.

Similar concern for the preservation of national identity was felt by the Polish government’s partner, the Polish Episcopacy. The representative of the Polish Primate Cardinal August Hlond, Rev. Ludwik Gostylla, described his shock upon a visit to Chipman, one of northern Alberta’s Polish communities. There, he encountered 48 Polish families attending mass in English. Fearing a rapid loss of their Polishness, Gostylla vocalized the need for permanent Polish priests for these communities, as without them, he asserted, religion and Polish culture would be lost. This would be no easy task given the economic and geographic constraints. Even though Hlond was appointed the protector of all Polish immigrants by the Vatican, government limitations dictated that emphasis be placed primarily on the seasonal labourers to France and Germany, which consisted of the largest emigrating group from Poland, and the easiest to access because of their proximity. Those who lived abroad were only of secondary concern. Attempts were made under the auspices of the newly created Opieka Polska nad

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18 The creation of such a colony left much to be desired as the subsequent Depression and War changed the trajectory of Polish immigrant development.
19 AAN, Opieka Polska nad Rodakami na Obczyźnie (thereafter OPnRnO), sign.135/82, s.1, Newspaper article, “Z pobytu Wiel. Ks. L. Gostylli w Północnej Albercie” (1929).
20 AAN, OPnRnO, sign.135/82, s.2-3, Newspaper article, “Ks. Dr. L. Gostylla wraca do Polski” (April 1929, n.p.).
21 Between 1919 and 1925, 209,064 Poles migrated to France and 162,694 migrated to Germany. Within this same period, 218,478 Poles emigrated to the United States; 30,131 to Palestine; 30,066 to Argentina; and 26,927 to Canada. Generally speaking, between 1918 and 1938 overseas migration totalled 795,739, while continental migration numbered at 1,414,962. France was a good destination for immigrants as the devastation of war required male labourers to rebuild what was lost. Wychodźtwo zarobkowe, 88-9, 98-99, 275; Piotr Kraszewski, “Polska Grupa Etniczna w Kanadzie,” Przegląd Zachodni 31, no.5-6, (1975): 130.
Rodakami na Obczyźnie (Association of Poles Abroad, Opieka) to support growing Polish communities, but the rising economic problems in Poland and the crash of the 1930s greatly inhibited their effectiveness. Though a Catholic institution, it was financially supported by the government and was to collaborate with the branch responsible for overseeing emigration.

The Polish episcopacy would not be alone in approaching the Polish immigrants in Canada. Though less concerned with the immigrants’ national identity, the Canadian Catholic Church, represented for the most part by Archbishop Alfred Sinnott (1915-52) of Winnipeg, and Toronto’s Archbishop Neil McNeil (1912-34), faced a growing need to accommodate this group of Catholics to prevent losses to Protestant proselytization and a mounting affinity for political radicalism. McNeil, for example, did not follow procedure in first seeking permission from Rome before establishing national parishes. The situation of the Catholic Church in Canada greatly affected the Church’s response to immigrant needs. Unlike in the American Catholic Church, within Canada, there effectively existed two such Churches—the French and the English-speaking branches. The relationship between the two sides—which at times was strained—significantly affected the Church’s influence on the development of ethnic communities. The French domain centred in Quebec, whereas the English-speaking (for the most part Irish) influence was strongly felt in Ontario. This, for the most part, left Western Canada, ranging from Manitoba to British Columbia, up for grabs especially with the arrival of immigrants, despite the fact that the French had a history and tradition in this region. Given that

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24 The Maritimes had also experienced conflicts between Irish and Scottish, and French and Acadian Catholics. Since this region was not a destination of Polish immigrant settlement, it will not be discussed. As well, Catholic non-French immigrants to Quebec had also undergone a different evolution. Poles, for example, had developed a more extensive Polish Catholic network, tending to establish, for example, parochial schools which serviced a larger group at a much faster rate than their counterparts in Ontario.
most migrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries flocked to the West, administration over these peoples could shift the balance of power in favour of either of the two groups. Moreover, Western Canada was under the mandate of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who were more concerned with a pastoral rather than a managerial approach to their missions, and were inclined to serve immigrants in their own language.25

The French bishops of Western Canada recognized that if immigrants were able to preserve their ethnic-religious life, this would also safeguard French culture from Anglicization. Consequently, the French were strong supporters of the ethnic parish since language was perceived as the preserver of the faith. However, the calls by immigrants for their own ethnic priests and parishes resulted in such tensions (from both the people and the English clergy) that Rome’s Second Apostolic delegate to Ottawa, Donato Sbarretti, argued that anglicizing all dioceses with immigrants was the best solution.26 Not all bishops saw feasibility in such a plan. Adelard Langevin (1895-1915), the Archbishop of Saint-Boniface, contended that in his diocese of 50,000 Francophones, 30,000 Slavs, 10,000 Germans and 7,000 Anglophones, not one would renounce his language.27 Instead, priority had to be given to preserving the faith of new arrivals, followed by a more distant goal of Canadianization. Furthermore, in the case of Poles, consideration about the danger of spreading the American Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC) to Canada had to be taken into account. There was the potential that Poles—like their American counterparts—dissatisfied by the lack of response of the Catholic Church to their national needs, would turn towards the schismatic church. National identity was not a peripheral matter for Polish Americans, and the same could be said of Polish immigrants to Canada. Ethnic identity was central to the survival of the Polish community. In order to clearly understand the

27 Sanfilippo, 95-6.
relationship between religion and nationalism amongst Polish interwar immigrants and the uniqueness of this group, it is necessary to situate it within the broader scope of Polish migration to Canada.

Broadly speaking, Polish migration to Canada can be divided into five phases: a) latter half of the 19th century (1850s-80s); b) pre-World War I (1890s-1914); c) interwar (1919-1939); d) post-World War II (1940s-70s); and e) post-Solidarity (1980s-93). As mentioned earlier, the immigrant experience was informed by four decisive issues: motives for migration (economic vs. political); length of migration (temporary vs. permanent); socio-economic status of migrating group; and location of settlement (rural vs. urban). Determining the number of migrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, during the first two phases, is a difficult and complex process. Canadian immigration officials were not concerned with recording the ethnic identity of incoming migrants, attributing it to place of originating residence or birth. Hence, Poles were recorded as Prussians, Austrians or Russians. At times, even the name of a region was listed as a national identity, such as in the case of “Galicians”. Communication between immigrant and host country was also problematic, as in most cases the entrant was unable to express his or her nationality in English. This was further compounded by a lack of national awareness amongst the earlier migrants, and a non-existent Polish bureaucracy to record those leaving its borders. Prior to the First World War, one has to examine the Census information for 1901, 1911 and 1921 to reach an estimate of Poles in Canada. Accordingly, 6,255, 33,652, and 53,403 Poles respectively were self-identified as living in Canada. However, between 1896 and 1919, another estimate indicates that roughly 115,000 migrants of Polish origin settled in Canada.

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29 Reczyńska, *For Bread*, 32.
The first phase of migration consisted mostly of individuals who left Poland for political reasons amidst the failed insurrections. These individuals tended to be highly educated, belonging to the gentry. They quickly assimilated into Canadian society participating in the development of the colony. The first group of migrants, numbering at about 500 families, was the Kaszubs from the Prussian partition. Their migration was also driven by political forces—in particular, the Germanization campaign of the Prussian state—and intended to be permanent. They settled in Ontario’s Renfrew County in the mid-1850s. Other clusters of Polish settlement appeared throughout Canada with the group eventually comprising between 2,500 and 3,500 immigrants. The group of immigrants directly preceding the First World War possessed a predominantly agrarian character. They came from the Russian and Austrian sectors of Poland and headed towards Western Canada: Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Between 1921 and 1931, the Polish group rose by 172.5%. In 1911, 55.1% of Poles living in Canada were centred on the Prairie Provinces (with 36.6% in Manitoba, 11.7% in Saskatchewan and 6.8% in Alberta), 31.6% were found in Ontario. In the interwar period, we see a shift of Poles away from the Prairies to Ontario. Between 1921 and 1931, Ontario’s Polish community almost tripled from 15,878 to 42,384. By 1941 that number increased to 54,893, making Ontario the home of the

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30 These included 1830, 1846-48, and 1863.
31 For more information on the Kaszubs, please see the latest work by Józef Borzyszkowski, *O Kaszubach w Kanadzie* (Gdańsk-Elblag: Uniw. Gdański and Elbląska Uczelnia Humanistyczno-Ekonomiczna, 2004).
33 In Manitoba, some of the Polish settlements could be found at Sifton, Winnipeg, Gimli, Neepawa, St. Boniface, Cook’s Creek, East Selkirk, Ladywood, Tolstoi; in Saskatchewan, Poles settled in Rama, Oakburn, Rossburn, Shoal Lake, Wisla, Polonia, Candiac, Cedoux, Neudorf and Dborowdy; in Alberta, they were found in Regina, Skaro, Rabbit Hill, Vostok, Krakow, Roundhill, Kopernik, Chipman, Waugh, Mundare, Hay Lakes, Flat Lake, and Tide Lake. Matejko and Matejko, *Polish Pioneers*, 354.
largest conglomeration of Poles in Canada. The Depression was the main catalyst for this shift.

The pre-Great War group consisted mostly of single male peasants or farmers who often were uneducated and illiterate, lacking a sense of national identity. (National identity was achieved post migration.) Following a pattern of chain migration with no particular interest in permanent settlement, the migrants engaged in physical labour such as mining, lumbering, railroad construction and/or commercial agriculture. Their desire to leave partitioned Poland for economic reasons—overpopulation and lack of access to land in Russian Poland, and industrial underdevelopment along with subdivisions of small family plots of land in Austrian Poland—coincided well with changes to Canada’s immigration policy. In 1896, Clifford Sifton became the Minister of the Interior and accountable for immigration. Under his tenure, and with decreasing migration from Britain, Canada opened its doors to "stalwart peasant[s] in...sheepskin coat[s]" from Central and Eastern Europe to settle new land in Western Canada meeting the growing economic needs of the country and strengthening it against potential American expansion. The war would turn these temporary sojourners into permanent settlers, with the largest numbers remaining on the prairies.

This group attempted to recreate the community life that they had left behind, but in most cases, this was limited to the establishment of parishes and Polish halls. Poles of the earlier period faced a lack of leadership and small numbers, which made organizational life challenging. As a result, these first organizations tended to adopt the Polish-American models and

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35 Kraszewski, 150.
36 The interwar period found the Poles settling in Toronto, Hamilton, St. Catharines, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Fort Williams, Brantford, Kirkland Lake, Welland, Kitchener, London, Oshawa, Preston, Windsor.
37 Some left for political reasons trying to escape conscription from one of the three partitioning armies.
38 Valerie Knowles, Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-1997 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), 68
constitutions of lay organizations. Challenges stemming from a lack of experience and a strong sense of belonging affected the evolution of organizational life. These were further compounded by the large distances and continuous mobility separating migrants, by poverty, and by an absence of overseeing authority, such as the consulates, which could assist in the consolidation of the community life. Lastly, different regions assumed distinct prerogatives: rural regions saw an emphasis on religious affairs, whereas urban centres tended to first see the establishment of mutual aid societies.

The interwar group presented a shift in the type of immigrant arriving to Canada from Poland. Whereas prior groups had come from the farms of partitioned territories, these Poles came from the villages and towns of a reconstituted Poland. For that reason, they came with a sense of national identity as Poles and their wartime experience had provided them with voluntary and organizational skills. Furthermore, these immigrants also possessed a basic (elementary) level of education. Their motives for leaving were economic in nature as the post-war economy of Poland faced delayed agrarian reform, slow industrialization, regionalism and financial instability. This, coupled with a post-war population boom—a 15% increase on a yearly basis amounting to an additional 450,000 people per year exacerbated by repatriation (especially after the Polish-Soviet War of 1920-21) and decreasing land holdings, resulted in a surplus labour force that could not be sustained. By the 1930s, three quarters of Poland’s population still lived in villages and 64% of the populace was employed in agriculture. The primary focus of these mostly male immigrants was to earn enough income to pay off old debts and/or to purchase (larger) tracts of land back home. The rise of inflation had also turned to dust

40 Radecki, *Ethnic Organizational Dynamics*, 64.
the money brought back by Polish re-emigrants from the United States. This would spurn their (or their children’s) return abroad to regain lost savings.\textsuperscript{43} Canada was perceived to be a source of quick riches. Upon their arrival, and according to the Railway Agreement, Poles were transported to Western Canada where they were to pursue the farming profession. Given that this migration was to be temporary and centred on making quick money, Poles were not interested in investing either time or capital into the procurement of farm land in Canada.\textsuperscript{44} Instead, this group was the first to head towards (and later settling in) urban centres, where they pursued employment as factory labourers, tailors, shoemakers, mechanics, barbers, cooks and/or butchers.\textsuperscript{45} There, factory-based jobs provided greater stability and income as opposed to the limits of seasonal labour and working the land; however, some did temporarily venture into railroading and mining.\textsuperscript{46}

An economic boom in the 1920s resulted in the government turning to the Canadian National Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1925 to promote immigration to Canada. The increase in immigration that followed coincided with changes to American immigration policy, which had effectively closed the country's borders to Poles. Many Poles who decided to come to Canada did so simply because Canada was taking in immigrants. Under the Railway Agreement, nearly 370,000 European immigrants entered Canada between 1925 and 1931, with approximately 27.1\% from the Polish territory.\textsuperscript{47} The continued lack of familiarity with English and at times a lack of national self-awareness continued to plague the miscommunication between host and the incoming immigrant, as ethnic Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Jews were

\textsuperscript{44} Ukrainian migration to Canada further underscores the temporary nature of Polish migration. In the mid-1920s most Ukrainians that came over quickly acquired Canadian citizenship and many more worked in farming. This indicates a stronger degree of permanent settlement which was reinforced by the closing of Polish borders to Ukrainian re-emigration. Edward Kołodziej, \textit{Dzieje Polonii w XIX and XX wieku} (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1991), 237.
\textsuperscript{45} Gucka, 247.
\textsuperscript{46} Donald Avery and J.K. Fedorowicz, \textit{The Poles in Canada} (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1982), 10.
\textsuperscript{47} Reczyńska, \textit{For Bread and a Better Future}, 72.
included with Poles when recorded by Canadian authorities. Furthermore, upon entering the 
country as Poles, some of them went on to re-identify or re-invent themselves with their ethnic 
group. Consequently, there is a discrepancy in numbers between ethnic and non-ethnic Poles.

According to Canadian figures, “Polish” migration during the period from 1918 to 1939 
was estimated at ranging from 147,348 to 153,291. Fortunately, these figures can be compared 
with those of the Polish government and a more accurate picture arises. Based on Polish sources, 
between 1920 and 1939, approximately 136,558 to 143,543 (150,196 for 1918 to 1939) “Polish” 
immigrants made their way to Canada, the second largest overseas destination following that of 
the United States and ahead of Argentina. By 1928, over 40% of the trans-Atlantic Polish 
migration was directed toward Canada. Within this group, an estimated 40.4% were Ukrainians, 
14% were Jews and 7.4% were Byelorussians. Between 1919 and 1939, ethnic Poles comprised 
approximately 43,400 of the total migration from Poland. Most interwar migrants originated 
from the poorest areas of reconstituted Poland, mainly Galicia and the Eastern Borderlands, in 
particular, from the voivoidships of Tarnopol (Ternopil), Lwów (Lviv), Wołyń (Volhynia), 
Stanisławów (Stanislavsky), Kielce, Kraków, Podlesie, and Lublin.

The majority of Poles arrived via Halifax or Montreal, and were directed by CNR/CPR 
agents towards trains that would ship them to the Prairies via Winnipeg. Upon arrival in 
Winnipeg, immigration agents would further direct the migrants to small towns where they were 
left to search for employment. Many of these immigrants would not even arrive at their 
destination of Winnipeg; instead, they preferred to jump off trains in urban centres, such as

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48 Anna Reczyńska, *For Bread and a Better Future*, 44.  
49 Since Canadian data was based on the fiscal year, whereas data from Polish sources was based on the calendar 
year, it is difficult to achieve an accurate year-by-year comparative. Reczyńska, *For Bread and a Better Future*, 44.  
50 Reczyńska, *For Bread and a Better Future*, 79.  
51 Elżbieta Budakowska, “Struktura Demograficzna Polonii Kanadyjskiej,” *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 20, no.1, 
Toronto, North Bay or Sudbury. Others, on the other hand, would make it no further than Winnipeg. Those who decided against the “West” option did so because they were informed by other Poles that jobs did not exist in the West or that the conditions of employment there were very difficult: “because there you only worked to live.” Those who were not privy to such information, or had decided to try their luck in the West, would quickly make their way back to towns and cities that offered greater opportunity to generate some income.

One such immigrant, Czeslaw Borczon, described his first few years in Canada as a tale of multiple jobs and constant movement. When he had arrived in Winnipeg in 1927, he was directed to a farm. Instead of a farm, he encountered a priest, who did not need his help. He returned to Winnipeg, and was sent by an agent to Saskatchewan, where another agent sent him to work on the railway system. After three months, he worked on a wheat farm for approximately six weeks, and then returned to Winnipeg in search of more employment. During the winter months, he worked as a lumberjack, and in the summer, in a gold mine, and on another farm. He then moved to Kapuskasing, Ontario, where he continued working in lumber and railway building. Finally, in 1942, he made his way to Toronto. Others, like Jan Władysław Dyl, would move to the city within a shorter period of their arrival date. Dyl migrated to Alberta in 1926, and left for Toronto two years later. In most cases, farming was not the end-goal of these migrants. Instead, there was greater participation in industry and mining, with migrants assuming jobs in road construction and transportation networks.

Though the majority of Poles coming to Canada were men in their twenties—they comprised 62.5% of Polish migrants—after 1932, women outnumbered men, coming to join

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52 MHSO, POL-8284-BAR, Josef Baran, interviewed by Roman Bielski, Oshawa, ON, June 1981.
53 MHSO, POL-8318-BLA, Michal Blasiak, interviewed by Irena Dembek, Sudbury, ON, February, 1980.
54 MHSO, POL-8862-BOR, Czeslaw and Genowefa Borczon, interviewed by Roman Bielski, Toronto, ON, January 1982.
55 MHSO, POL-8817-DYL, Jan Władysław Dyl, interviewed by Jozef Sieramski, May 1981.
56 Bobiński and Pilch, 131.
their spouses, fiancés, relatives or friends. Unlike the migration of Italian women, Polish women were not confined to travelling with a companion. Instead, many had undertaken the trip by themselves, making acquaintances of other women along the way. Also, women’s migration was urban-oriented, by-passing the prairie experience. Once in the cities, women would seek out employment in various industries, working as waitresses, seamstress, cafeteria servers, taking on boarders, in paper mills, domestic servants, in hotel kitchens, even in rare cases, opening their own shops. In most cases, their employment took place outside the confines of the home, but it also came to an end with the arrival of children, as families were unable to afford outside care. Even if a woman wanted to continue her employment outside of the home, the fact that she could not afford a caretaker for her children meant that she had to withdraw from the workforce. However, women did serve as surrogate unemployment insurance, returning to the labour force and becoming the sole providers when husbands were unable to find employment. In these instances, the gender roles were reversed and men took on the responsibility of raising the children—at least temporarily.

Even though those migrating from Poland did not consist of the poorest elements of society, they also did not succeed at making a good first impression. On their voyage, immigrants were told that everything they owned would be thrown in the water and that they would be disinfected. This led many people to put on their worst attire, in the event that the clothing they were wearing would be discarded. Consequently, their appearance left much to be desired and had resulted in a negative opinion of the Poles, leading people to assume that Poles

59 MHSO, POL-8811-BRY, Maria Bryk, interviewed by Jozef Sieramski, Toronto, ON, June 1981.
60 MHSO, POL-8811-BRY, Maria Bryk, interviewed by Jozef Sieramski, Toronto, ON, June 1981.
were dirty and unkempt.\textsuperscript{61} As well, the government did not provide for the welfare of immigrants or their integration into the larger society. Within public life, Poles had to renounce their Polishness or face discrimination. Anna Swistara, one of such immigrants, related the following encounter: a Pole who had his own barbershop was waiting to serve five English-speaking clients when another Pole arrived and began speaking to him in Polish; upon hearing the dialogue, the five English-speaking clients left the barbershop.\textsuperscript{62} Even her husband would speak only in English to his Polish customers, fearful that if others heard Polish, they would avoid his place of business. In another instance, Maria Bryk, working as a cafeteria server on the meat station at Canada Packers, was reprimanded for giving more meat to Poles because “those people, they want the whole of Canada.”\textsuperscript{63} Miscommunication and discrimination were a common part of the everyday. Since Poles lacked the necessary language skills, workers would often mistaken colloquial language for insults, furthering the divide.\textsuperscript{64} The issue of the immigrant’s place within Canadian society was complicated by the economic situation of the 1930s.\textsuperscript{65} The conditions of the depression pushed more Poles towards cities, but their lack of skills and training coupled with a poor knowledge of English limited these workers to the most menial and difficult jobs. Temporary employment was most common amongst this group, precluding them from accumulating a nest egg.\textsuperscript{66}

The 1930s also presented a shift in the mentality of the immigrant. The years of depression, followed by speculations of an approaching war in Europe resulted in a resignation about the permanency of their migration. Poles realized that perhaps Canada was to be their new

\textsuperscript{61} MHSO, POL-8084-HUL, Jan Hul, interviewed by Jozef Sieramski, Toronto, ON, March 1981; MHSO, POL-8826-SWI, Anna Swistara, interviewed by Jozef Sieramski, Toronto, ON, April 1981.
\textsuperscript{63} MHSO, POL-8811-BRY, Maria Bryk, interviewed by Jozef Sieramski, Toronto, ON, June 1981.
\textsuperscript{64} MHSO, POL-08907-NED, Michal Nedza, interviewed by A. Pietrus, Toronto, ON, DATE.
\textsuperscript{66} Radecki and Heydenkorn, 47.
home. Interestingly, in numerous interviews of Polish Canadians by the Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario, two common themes were prevalent in the majority of cases: when the interviewee was asked to identify him/herself, they responded that they were Polish (and not Polish Canadian or Canadian). When asked whether they had wanted to return to Poland, the majority responded in the affirmative but explained that they were prevented from leaving for economic or familial reasons. Many had consigned themselves to their fate of living out the rest of their lives on Canadian soil. Even though Poles had taken on Canadian citizenship and strong attachment to the country, a Polish-Canadian still saw himself as a Pole.

Upon arriving in Canada, from the late 19th century onward, Polish immigrants were strongly concerned about the establishment of parishes. Poles tended to pursue the following structure of community development. Firstly, they tended to be attracted to areas already populated by Poles. After all, lingual and cultural similarities solidified a sense of belonging. Secondly, once employment was secured, Poles would band together to create a parish committee. This committee would begin the process of collecting funds for the building of a church while simultaneously pursuing the Archbishop for Polish priests. Permission for a parish was not requested but demanded. The archbishop was usually threatened with the loss of faith and the protestantization of the Poles if an ethnic priest was not acquired. Thirdly, once a church was built and a parish established, religious and cultural events and associations were developed around the parish. Finally, from this foundation and with a growing Polish community in a particular area, associations were extended to include other areas of everyday life, including sports, education and self-improvement associations. However, because the Poles tended not to venture into entrepreneurial endeavours and mostly stayed within the unskilled labourer

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occupations, there was no stimulus for creating worker movement associations, business clubs or politically oriented interest groups. This problem was also compounded by a continued belief that their migration was to be short-lived. Given these circumstances, Poles in Canada were trying to recreate the political-social life that they had left behind, including the accepted framework of the Pole-Catholic. It is not surprising that the Polish immigrant community flowed out of parish life.

The creation of parishes was rooted in the initiative of the people and was followed by the establishment of small local organizations that tended to have a strong cultural—as opposed to economic—emphasis. Drama groups, Polish language, history, and culture classes, Scouts, choirs, dance groups and sports clubs were first established in association with the parish. Eventually, they extended beyond the walls of the church as some lay organization emerged around the Great War. The cropping up of small religious and lay regional associations was rampant until the 1930s. To ensure that Poles maintained their identity, three Polish Federations were created to amalgamate all small and independent organizations and associations into one large self-sustaining and self-supporting mass of Polishness: Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Kanadzie (Association of Poles in Canada, SPwK); Związek Polaków w Kanadzie (Polish Alliance Friendly of Canada, ZPwK); and the Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie (Federation of Polish Societies in Canada, ZZPwK). These federations were to provide strength, structure, and above all, unity to Poles across Canada. In their efforts to reach the people, they began to publish their own newspapers (Gazeta Katolicka/The Catholic Gazette; Związkowiec/Alliancer; Czas/Time, respectively), which served as platforms for voicing their specific visions. However, with the exception of the ZPwK, it was not until 1944 that the

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68 This partly explains why Poles did not establish a Credit Union until 1945.
69 Gazeta Katolicka is an exception to this rule as it first was published in 1908—before the rise of the federations.
organizations shifted their attention to the plight of the Pole in Canada, instead of focusing their efforts on Poland.\textsuperscript{70}

All three federations held a distinct perspective on the evolution of the Polish émigré community. The Manitoban SPwK (est.1933) was strictly a religiously-based federation founded by clergy. Their focus lay with preserving the Catholic tradition amongst Poles. This organization was established in response to the creation of the Ontario-based ZPwK (est.1924/1931).\textsuperscript{71} The latter was secular in nature and throughout the 1930s, tended to hold an anti-clerical, pro-Leftist, anti-\textit{Sanacja} position. The ZPwK was strongly concerned with the Polish immigrant in Canada, urging Poles to consider Canada as their new motherland. Like the SPwK, the ZZPwK (est.1931) was created in part as a response to the “subversive” nature and growing popularity (especially in Ontario) of the ZPwK. The ZZPwK was strongly influenced and funded by the Polish consuls.\textsuperscript{72} Though officially a secular organization, it supported the religious component and was even involved in talks with clergy over becoming an exclusive supporter of the Catholic religion.\textsuperscript{73} This federation included a mixture of religious and non-religious organizations. Even though these federations were outside the purview of the parish, they continued to be haunted by the notion of \textit{Pole-Catholic}. Their approach to Catholicism and to the Polish state became defining criteria for membership and their constitutions.

Mention must also be given to a fourth federated organization, Polskie Towarzystwo Robotniczo-Farmerskie (Polish Worker-Farmer Association, est.1931, PTRF), which later changed its name in 1935 to the Polish Towarzystwo Ludowe w Kanadzie (Polish Peoples’ Association in Canada, PTL).\textsuperscript{74} Though not one to emphasize internationalism, the PTL was very

\textsuperscript{70} Radecki, \textit{Ethnic Organizational}, 109.
\textsuperscript{71} Henry Radecki and Benedykt Heydenkorn, 65.
\textsuperscript{72} Radecki and Heydenkorn, 71-2.
\textsuperscript{73} Krystyna Romaniszyn, \textit{Chłopi polscy w Kanadzie (1896-1939)} (Warszawa: Polska Akademia Nauk, Instytut Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa, 1991), 75.
\textsuperscript{74} Makowski, \textit{History and Integration}, 6.

Although this Leftist movement can be traced to the 1920s, it was the Depression that solidified its popularity amongst the (unemployed) workers in the 1930s. Throughout the interwar period, the organization had undergone a number of transformations—having been shut down a number of times by the Canadian government for its radical character. It also had its own press, Budzik [Alarm, 1931-2] and Głos Pracy [Voice of Labour, 1932-1939].\footnote{Kołodziej, Dzieje, 242; Benedykt Heydenkorn, “The Polish Press in Canada,” Polyphony 4, no.1 (Spring/Summer 1982): 36.} By 1938, PTRF/PTL had 38 branches in Ontario, 4 in Montreal, 1 in Nova Scotia and 20 in the Western provinces with a membership of 3,000 to 4,000 members, making this was one of the largest Polish secular federations in Canada.\footnote{Radecki, Ethnic Organizational, 72.} By the 1930s, Poles in Canada had established parishes, built a rich community life (within and outside the Church), and created large federations, not unlike their counterparts south of the border. But how would the Polish community in Canada compare to its American equivalent?

An important distinction must be highlighted between the Poles in Canada and in the United States, as the scholarship of Polish immigration and its development in North America tends to lump both groups together. The first wave of Poles came to the United States from the Prussian sector between 1850 and 1880. This group consisted of educated and skilled individuals, who migrated with their families, becoming the leaders of Polish and church organizations and associations. The second group to arrive from the Russian and Austrian sectors between 1880 and 1914, on the other hand, had little education and few industrial skills.\footnote{Mary Patrice Erdmans, “The Transformation of the Polish National Alliance: From Immigrant to Ethnic Organization,” in Ethnicity. Culture. City: Polish-Americans in the USA. Cultural Aspects of Urban Life, 1870-1950 in Comparative Perspective, ed. Thomas Gladsky, Adam Walaszek, Małgorzata Wawrykiewicz (Warszawa: Oficyna Naukowa: 1998), 124.} Both
groups tended to settle in urban centres. However, the latter group joined the ranks of unskilled labour as they perceived their stay to be temporary and therefore, were not interested in committing to long-term efforts such as farming.\(^{79}\) Polish immigration came to a halt in the early 1920s with the introduction of the Immigration Act of 1921, which reduced the permissible number of Poles to (the number of foreign born in) the 1910 census. This was followed by more stringent efforts in the National Origins Act of 1924, which used the 1890 census as the new limit, effectively closing the American border to Poles.\(^{80}\) Consequently, the Polish migration that was intended for the US could now be diverted to a number of other countries, such as Argentina, Brazil and Canada.

The first group to arrive in the United States centred their community development on the founding of parishes and organizations, in addition to establishing channels for the dissemination of work information.\(^{81}\) Their focus was also on creating associations that would push for Polish independence even within the political circles in Washington. In addition to establishing parishes, the first Polish organizations were self-help societies that behaved like insurance groups, aiding their members in times of illness, death and loss of employment, finding employment, and building churches.\(^{82}\) Already in the late 19\(^{th}\) century, Polish organizations began to shift their focus from the needs of the homeland to the Pole in the United States. The greatest move in this regard was felt after World War I, when Poles began to organize

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\(^{80}\) Given that a Polish immigration was effectively non-existent during the interwar period, an examination of the earlier phase of Polish American migration will provide some interesting similarities and differences between the two groups. Though this analysis will not be extensive—examining all aspects (social, economic) of Polish life—it will provide factors that will highlight the importance and relevance of Polish Canadian immigration.

\(^{81}\) Golab, 77.

themselves under a new motto: “Wychodźstwo dla wychodźstwa” (“Emigrants for Emigrants”) or more aptly, emigrants for themselves. 83

Interestingly, in the United States, regional organizations tended to focus on maintaining culture or ensuring economic protection, whereas nationwide organizations, which were created by the intelligentsia, focused on bringing national awareness to the Poles and aiding Poland, along with bringing unity to the community. 84 Nevertheless, regardless of whether organizations were religious or secular in nature, they were governed by strong mutual aid and benefits principles. This, however, was not the case for the Poles in Canada, who distinguished between mutual aid societies and those offering cultural and/or religious activities. Polish Canadians tended to found cultural associations as opposed to establishing insurance-based fraternal aid societies. 85 This type of organization, though somewhat common in the second phase of Polish migration (but not to the same extent as found within the United States), was replaced by the former in the interwar years. Canadian Poles also found it easier to unite smaller societies and associations into larger umbrella organizations than American Poles, who tended to experience deep-seated divisions between the clerical and the nationalist camps. 86 In the 1880s, clergy defined Polishness on the basis of religious lines, whereas the political leaders defined Polishness...

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83 Some of these organizations included the following: Stowarzyszenie Weteranów Armii Polskiego w USA/Association of Polish Army Veterans in the USA; charity organizations such as Towarzystwo Kupców/Association of Buyers and Syndykat Dziennikarzy Polskich/Syndicate of Polish Journalists. Brożek, 30.


85 Benedykt Heydenkorn, Organizational Structure of the Polish-Canadian Community: The Federation of Polish Societies in Canada (Toronto: Canadian Polish Research Institute, 1979), 22.

86 The two main Polish organizations were the Polish Roman Catholic Union (PRCU) and the Polish National Alliance (PNU), established in 1873 and 1880 respectively. These organizations reflected the division surrounding the definition of Polishness—whether it was along religious lines or seen as a nationalistic identity. The PRCU put forward a political ideology that separated nationhood from statehood, arguing that a Polish nation could exist wherever Polish language and religious life continued. The PNA stressed a secular and nationalistic definition of Polishness, thereby accepting any immigrants from Partitioned Poland regardless of ethnicity. Both organizations accused each other either of Godlessness or inadequate nationalism. Erdmans, 121-2. Pula, 32.
as a civic nationalistic identity. Clear lines were drawn between religious and civil conceptions of Polishness, lines that were much more blurred in the Canadian context.

Polish Americans were also better organized at creating self-sustaining Polish communities that mirrored the services found in mainstream American society. Parochial schools were readily established, eliminating the need to attend public schools, and already in 1869 the Resurrectionists were approached by Father Joseph Dąbrowski to undertake the matter of an ethnic seminary. By the end of the 19th century, Poles already had a “Parish Bank” that served to hold their savings while issuing loans. Polish Canadians, on the other hand, managed to establish their first credit union only in 1945. A centre for educating men into the priesthood was created only in 1946. This was followed by the creation of a Polish branch—Assumption Province—of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1956. American Polonia also had a more extensive press network than their northern neighbours. Between 1863 and 1893, there were 105 periodicals published, with 50 per cent of these making it to 1893, compared with six newspapers during this same period in Canada and twenty periodicals during the interwar years, with only four making it past World War II. The small number of periodicals published within Canada was, for the most part, a result of easy access to Polish papers from other countries. The American newspaper was there to relate information of importance to Polonia, providing news about the old country, and increasing the Poles’ self-awareness. Lastly, the newspaper

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87 Erdmans, 121.
89 Pula, 33.
90 Pula, 30.
93 Pula, 31.
served as a vehicle for assimilation creating a new Polish-American identity.\textsuperscript{94} Interestingly, within a span of one generation, Polish Americans proceeded from a regional and local identity, to a national (Polish) identity and finally to a hybrid identity of a Polish-American.\textsuperscript{95} Polish Canadians of the interwar period, on the other hand, arrived with a relatively well-formed national identity, which they clung to, and even though they took on British citizenship, their national identity did not significantly extend to include becoming Canadian.

The establishment of parishes was a key factor in attempting to replicate the traditional Polish life in the U.S. As a centre for social interaction and stability amongst the new arrivals, the parish was viewed as the heart of the community with Polish neighbourhoods built around the local ethnic parish.\textsuperscript{96} The priest not only fulfilled his religious duties, but he took on new roles as translator, teacher, legal and business advisor, and job bank, bridging the gap between Poles and the surrounding American society. Not only did parishes serve as a symbol of group solidarity, they became venues of assimilation into American society, teaching English and American culture.\textsuperscript{97} Though the American Catholic Church permitted for the creation of ethnic parishes in order to prevent Poles from deserting the Church, not all bishops favoured this approach. The notion of ethnic parishes quickly broached the perpetual question of Catholic


loyalty—were they loyal to the Pope or to America—within a growing Americanist movement that insisted upon the quick assimilation of immigrants.\textsuperscript{98}

Though assimilation was greatly desired within Canada, there was a startling difference with the American case: the country lacked a similar propaganda movement; the 1920s saw an influx of Eastern European immigrants; the expansiveness and underdevelopment of the country made reaching people in remote regions a near impossibility; the economic boom that Canada experienced increased tolerance for cheap immigrant labour; and lastly, Canada was continuously dealing with a constitutionally protected French minority. Canada, unlike the United States, did not have its own form of civic nationalism.\textsuperscript{99} It was part of the larger British Commonwealth. Even when nativism did flare up in Canada, the ethnic parish continued to be a cultural sanctuary.

The tensions over the place of the Catholic Church within American society spilled over into questions of assimilation within the American Catholic Church. This matter was further complicated by two American-specific experiences—denominationalism and voluntarism—which affected the relationship between clergy and laity. Disputes erupted between the parishioners and their priest over trusteeism, between the faithful and the local bishop over the right of electing or dismissing the parish priest, and over lay control of parish life.\textsuperscript{100} Within this particular context, and under the influences of assimilation, denominationalism and voluntarism, voices within the community began to rise deeming Polish parishes as the “exclusive property of the Poles, and every attempt at ‘Americanization’ of these ethnic parishes [would] be interpreted


\textsuperscript{100} Platt, 476.
by the people as a serious attempt against their proprietary rights…" The Poles funded the parishes, and dictating that these parishes lose their Polish character was not an acceptable option. For the Poles, parishes were a source of their ethno-religious identity.

The conflict came to a head when calls for the advancement of Polish clergy were essentially ignored. This lack of equal representation within the American hierarchy became the last straw, and between 1896 and 1900, many of the dissatisfied turned to creating independent churches. These independent churches would come together and form the Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC) under the leadership of Rev. Frantisek Hour. A reasonable expectation was that this similar trend would spread to Canada. This fear was never fully realized since Polish Canadians never flocked to the PNCC in the same numbers as their southern counterparts. The first National Church made its appearance in Toronto in the 1930s, even though attempts were made to establish branches in Winnipeg in the early 20th century. Ironically, the Polish Canadian community tended to assimilate at a much slower pace than Polish Americans. The latter tended to have stronger network systems and organizational experience, promoting quicker integration of mainstream American values, leading people away from affiliation with the Polish state. The Americanization process and a shortage of incoming Polish immigrants in the interwar years prevented the revitalization of Polishness in that country.

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For those Polish Americans that associated national identity with religion and its institutions, being a loyal Catholic was quickly associated with being a loyal American. The attempted removal of national identity within Catholic parishes by the hierarchy, resulted not in the rejection of religion or secularization, but instead it reaffirmed that Polishness was part and parcel of religion. In an extreme reaction, exclusive control over religion (e.g. PNCC) was required in order to prevent the separation of the two. In Canada, Catholicism was not associated with Canadianism in such an overt manner. Instead, religion presented an alternative way of life running alongside mainstream society, and was utilized by immigrants to preserve their identity and culture. Conversely, secularization and anti-clericalism were the two currents that placed emphasis on Canadianization, while religion—within the context of ethnic parishes—directed people towards the maintenance of ethnic identity and even towards the homeland. Religion and national identity continued to exist in symbiosis as long as Polishness remained a part of Catholicism, and Catholicism a part of Polishness. Even in the 1920s, which witnessed a move from religious or clerical-based organization to lay organizations, the role of religion was not extinguished, but revived.¹⁰⁴ The Canadian interwar period illustrates how immigrants utilized religion in order to maintain their language and traditions, and how shifting towards a Canadian identity went hand in hand with a rejection of that which was clerical and even religious. The Polish group in Canada reveals the fluidity of the Polish and Catholic elements.

¹⁰⁴ Kołodziej, Dzieje Polonii, 237.
Chapter 2: “Little Polands”: Poles, Parishes and (Re)creating the Homeland

Writing on the role of religion within the Polish diaspora, Edward Walewander remarked that the establishment of the parish was rooted in the Poles’ desire to construct a support system founded in religious values.¹ Accordingly, the parish and its priest formed a social unit, which Walewander called “little Poland.” This notion of the parish was further reiterated by Józef Pielorz, who, while exploring the work of the Polish Oblates of Mary Immaculate, noted that the parish was considered a “fragment of the abandoned fatherland—a Mini-Poland.”² Though Walewander and Pielorz’s terminology aptly described the symbolic nature of the parish as a miniature Poland, the establishment of a parish went beyond reflecting and meeting the religious needs of its faithful. It represented the heart of the community; it conflated the important aspects of national and social life left behind in Poland; and it became a means of laying claim to the public sphere from which the immigrant Pole was marginalized. Even though the parish as “physical space” was limited to members of a specific religious affiliation, its role as a “social space” exceeded that limitation, extending its membership on the basis of national identity. It served as the surrogate for the national identity, providing the ideological framework and the actual space for the celebration of that identity. In the Polish immigrant community, parishes tended to be the first institutionalized organizations. They also became the first public spaces where religious and national dimensions of the ethnic identity entered into a dialogue. Parishes, therefore, became one of the key spaces where national identity was being continuously defined and redefined.

In a broader sense, the fate of the Polish Catholics in Canada was closely intertwined with the history of the Canadian Catholic Church. With an influx of non-English Catholic

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immigrants to Canada in the interwar years, the Canadian Catholic Church was faced with a serious challenge of preserving the religious faith and identity of peoples in a predominantly Protestant land. Coping with immigrants was not something new for the Canadian Catholic Church, as they had to cope with the influx of Irish Catholic immigrants in the 19th century. However, the arrival of Southern, Central and Eastern Europeans in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century forced the Canadian Catholic Church to deal with a variety of different cultures, languages, and religious customs. This was further compounded by either the transient nature of immigrant life or the ghettoized nature of settlements and the accompanying cultural isolation. By the end of 1920, Canada had a minority (non-English or French-speaking) Catholic population of 450,000 or 12% of the total Catholic population.\(^1\) According to the 1931 Canadian Census, minority Catholics comprised 14.78% of the entire Catholic population.\(^2\) Ten years later, that number was approximately 10.68%.\(^3\) Catholics, in general, comprised 41.30% of the Canadian population in 1931, and 41.77% in 1941. Within this context, Polish Catholics made up 124,252 of the Catholic population or 2.90% in 1931, and 121,860 or 2.54% of the Catholic population in 1941.\(^4\)

Initially, the Canadian Catholic Church directed these immigrants to already existing parishes, which if the immigrants were fortunate, also had access to a priest who spoke or was

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1. Mark McGowan, “Roman Catholics (Anglophone and Allophone),” in Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada, ed. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2008), 56.
3. Statistics Canada, “Population by religious denomination, racial origin and sex, for Canada, 1941” (table 52), in Eighth Census of Canada, 1941, volume I, Statistics Canada Catalogue no.CA1 B598-41F01 (Ottawa, Ontario, Statistics Canada), 730-1. Several issues can account for the drop in the number of Catholics from minorities such as a decrease in immigration to Canada or more individuals being reluctant to provide ethnic affiliation.
familiar with their language. Nevertheless, this was not enough to retain immigrants within the fold of the Church, since many new arrivals were also courted by Protestant missionaries. To counter the Protestant activities, the Church and its archbishops, such as Fergus Patrick McEvay and Neil McNeil among others, responded with the creation of national parishes where the immigrant could practice his faith in his native tongue. The hope was that language and ethno-religious customs would keep immigrants rooted in their faith. However, the promotion of national parishes also had some drawbacks.

They delayed the Canadianization of the immigrant by creating a setting where ethnic culture continued to thrive. They reinforced the relationship between religion and ethnic identity. The parish “emerged as a geographical and psychic core of the immigrant or ethnic neighbourhood.” In the Canadian Polonia, the activities—both religious and non-religious—organized by the parish, and the organizations that were associated with the parish, encouraged the connection between the national and the religious. Even religious events, because they were carried out in Polish and followed specific regional or national customs, strengthened the association between the two. Poles were certainly not alone as many Italian parishes cultivated

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1 Mark McGowan, “Roman Catholics (Anglophone and Allophone),” in *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada*, ed. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2008), 66.
3 This did not mean that Anglicization was put on the backburner. The English-speaking Church also saw as its duty the naturalization of the immigrant, through such organizations as the Canadian Catholic Church Extension Society and Catholic schools. For more information please see Mark McGowan, “Toronto’s English-Speaking Catholics, Immigration, and the Making of a Canadian Catholic Identity, 1900-30,” in *Creed and Culture: The Place of English-Speaking Catholics in Canadian Society, 1750-1930*, ed. Terrence Murphy and Gerald Stortz (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993), 204-45.
the same dynamics. The Catholic bishops wanted ethnic parishes to become hubs of transition so that these Catholic immigrants would retain their religious affiliation while simultaneously assimilate into mainstream society. However, many immigrants’ affiliation with ethnic parishes made assimilation less appealing and necessary. In the walls of the parish, the national and the religious coexisted in a symbiotic relationship.

Matthew Frye Jacobson argues that nationalism and religion were not antithetical. Nationalism was able to merge with religious beliefs, presenting a framework within which the latter could be articulated. In the case of the immigrant Poles, nationalism did not articulate religion but rather the opposite process took place—religion articulated nationalist convictions. It was clear that religion had transcended the borders of the territorial homeland. The parish was the same whether it was found in Poland or in Canada. As Joanna Matejko explains, the “church was the only unchanging element in their [(i.e., the immigrants’)] lives.”

There is no denying the tension between religion and nationalism as the two had their own aspirations—eternal salvation versus political objectives. Yet, as Jacobson points out, the church often served an important function as a repository for nationalist rhetoric. The church placed the immigrant within a redemption narrative that could be tied to the “mythic national histories,” where the nation was seen as a chosen people who were destined to fulfill a divine mission. Religion, therefore, became one of the cultural sources—providing language and symbolism—that nationalist rhetoric would access. Parishes, by extension, were associated with what Daniela Angi calls the “community’s cultural patrimony, and its strong relation with

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10 Jacobson, 64-5.
tradition and history”. Churches thus became connected to elements of the national tradition and were places where the past was commemorated. Additionally, they mobilized the people and encouraged an attachment to the national traditions. In part, this was made possible by the church’s role within civic society as a provider of education.

The Polish immigrants who arrived in the interwar period did not constitute the first influx of Poles who arrived on Canadian soil. Hence, there was already a tradition of building churches and chapels that extended back to the first waves of immigrants who came in the nineteenth century. The building of a religious space was one of the first items on the agenda. This coincided with requests for Polish priests. In the majority of cases, the community came together and began building a church even prior to having contacted the local bishop and retaining a priest. The priest, therefore, was not necessarily an instrumental figure in initiating the building of the parish. However, once a parish had been established, the Poles were aggressive in their search for clergy. In St. Catharine’s, for example, a Polish delegation provided a census of sixty-six families and twenty-five young men who signed an agreement confirming their financial contributions for the support of a Polish priest. The hope was that this would aid in overcoming some of obstacles associated with bringing in new clergy who spoke their native tongue. More than anything else, this approach and insistence on having a priest with a specific language skill suggests that the role of clergy was seminal within the community.

12 Angi, 23.
13 Krystyna Romaniszyn, Chłopi polscy w Kanadzie, 66-7.
14 ARCAT, St. Catharine’s Collection, St. Mary’s Welland, SCAJ08.32, Letter to Neil McNeil from Fr. Bernard Doyle, January 15, 1930.
The role of a priest went beyond religious guidance and leadership. Clergy served as legal representatives, organizers, teachers, and providers of social assistance.\textsuperscript{15} This leadership role within the immigrant community continued well into the 1930s because there was an only a small secular intellectual elite that could challenge the authority of a priest. Conversely, it was also assumed that the clergy would support the various endeavours of the community. They were expected to maintain religious traditions as well as patriotic values.\textsuperscript{16} The community saw the parish and its spiritual leader as being responsible for both the religious and the patriotic wellbeing of the community.

Nationalist sentiment was so prevalent amongst the immigrants that when a parish was built in Chipman, Alberta prior to the Great War to serve a variety of ethnic Catholics, the Polish farmers refused to accept the multi-cultural nature of the parish and they would not assist at mass unless a Polish priest presided.\textsuperscript{17} At the Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church\textsuperscript{18} in Fort William, Ontario, a similar situation was afoot. Since the Poles had purchased the land and built a parish in 1922, they adamantly asserted in their Provisory Rules that “the Holy Rosary church is a polish [sic] parish. No baptisms, marriage or funerals for others then [sic] Poles. English people are welcome to come for the services—but are not members of this parish.”\textsuperscript{19} In Welland, Ontario, when it came to assessing the possibility of building a chapel for Hungarian immigrants in the district of Marshville, Father Baron noted that despite good prospects, neither the Poles

\textsuperscript{15} Henry Radecki, \textit{Ethnic Organizational Dynamics}, 98.
\textsuperscript{16} Radecki, \textit{Ethnic Organizational Dynamics}, 63.
\textsuperscript{17} Father Boniface, \textit{Pioneering in the West: Memories of his Life and Experiences in the West with the Franciscans} (Vancouver: Evergreen Press, Ltd., 1957), 52.
\textsuperscript{18} In 1936, as a result of the Fort William and Port Arthur parishes joining the diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, the parish was renamed St. Casimir’s. Edward Walewander, ed., \textit{Leksykon geograficzno-historyczny parafii i kościołów Polskich w Kanadzie}, vol. 2, 252.
\textsuperscript{19} Archives of Ontario (thereafter AO), Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario Fond (thereafter MHSO), Holy Rosary Church—St Casimir’s Church (Thunder Bay), F1405, POL:0198, MU9065.5, Provisory Rules, October 22, 1922.
nor the Ruthenians were interesting in joining the Poles.\textsuperscript{20} The Polish parishioners even contacted Bishop McNeil asking for a Polish and not a Hungarian priest on the basis of not understanding Hungarian.\textsuperscript{21} Even baptisms were held off until they could be done in Polish, which meant that children were being baptized at the age of two or three, as in the case of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in St. Catharine’s, Ontario.\textsuperscript{22} At St. Mary’s Polish Parish in Toronto, Ontario, a number of the Committee members wrote to their organist, Miss Foy, asking her to resign voluntarily because “realizing…that this is a Polish Church, you [Miss Foy] understand that we must have Polish singing which you are unable to give us.” The members even threatened to make “things uncomfortable for [her] and [would] force [her] removal.”\textsuperscript{23} The parish was not just a religious centre, but also a national centre, where identity, language, and national culture went hand in hand with religion. Consequently, one could not expect to separate national life from religious life, and it also meant that Poles were not keen on sharing their space with other ethnic groups.

The growth of the Polish immigrant community was followed by a rise in the number of parishes and missions. By 1920, there were twenty Polish parishes in Manitoba, fourteen in Alberta, seven in Saskatchewan, five in Ontario, and five in other provinces.\textsuperscript{24} In 1926, there were twenty-nine Polish parishes throughout Canada, which increased to thirty-three parishes and one hundred and fifty-seven missions by 1929, and fifty-two parishes,\textsuperscript{25} and one hundred and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[22] ARCAT, MNEC05.31, Letter to Neil McNeil from Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Catharine’s, Ontario, May 24, 1927.
\item[23] ARCAT, Parish Inventory: St. Mary’s Polish Parish: General Correspondence, Letter to Archbishop McNeil from Rev. S. Mayer, CSSR, December 9, 1930.
\item[24] Henry Radecki and Benedykt Heydenkorn, 63.
\item[25] There appears to be a typographical error when it comes to the figures for 1938. Radecki and Heydenkorn originally claim that there were 52 parishes in 1938, but on the following page, they state that there were 62 parishes for that same year. Unfortunately, Radecki and Heydenkorn do not provide the source(s) for their statistics.
\end{footnotes}
twenty missions by the end of the next decade. There were not enough Polish-speaking priests to serve all the many parishes and missions. In 1929, there were only forty-two Polish priests; by 1938, that number increased to seventy-five.

Rev. Gostylla, the representative of Cardinal August Hlond, on his visit to Canada in 1929, noted that the Polish community had forty-three priests of Polish descent, with thirty-eight of these being active, serving one hundred and ninety-five churches and chapels. Out of this group, only sixteen were born and raised in Poland and only nine had become priests in Poland. Given this state of affairs, Gostylla was worried that there were not enough Polish priests to meet the demands of the community. Moreover, he was also concerned about the clergy’s ability and willingness to promote Polish national traditions. The bigger issue though was the lack of available clergy and the dispersed nature of the Polish settlements. Yet, these challenges did not prevent the community from continuously requesting Polish priests from the Canadian Catholic hierarchy. To convince the Church leaders about the urgency of the situation, Poles warned that the shortage of priests would lead to declining numbers of faithful.

In 1927, parishioners from Our Lady of Perpetual Help in St. Catharine’s complained to Archbishop McNeil that they have had no permanent priest in the last three years and were being courted by Baptists, with two families having already left the Catholic Church. They were particularly worried about their children who could not hear the Word of God in their native tongue. The message was clear: the only way to keep the next generation inside the church was to deliver the spiritual message in their own language. Assimilation was equated with leaving the Church. The Polish parishioners in St. Catharines were not alone in voicing their concerns.

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26 Radecki and Heydenkorn, 145.
27 Radecki and Heydenkorn, 145-6.
A letter from St. Mary’s Parish in Welland echoed the same anxieties. The letter’s author feared that the proselytizing efforts of the “non-Catholic opposition” were succeeding amongst Poles and other immigrants. The community had to contend with the United Church missionaries, who were “getting a lot of work that [would] be difficult to undo.” Such warnings corresponded with reports of Protestant work amongst immigrants. S. Duplantier noted that both the Memorial Institute and the Baptist Mission in Toronto were making strong headway into the Polish community. Within four years of starting their work, the first Baptist Polish Church was organized in 1923 with twenty-six Polish names (twenty-three of whom were baptized during 1921-2). The mission had great success especially amongst the youth, with fifty children attending the Sunday School, and a hundred participating in weekly children’s meetings. In addition, these institutions offered free Polish classes for children, kindergarten, boys and girls clubs, English night classes, Sunday Gospel service, Sunday School, free medical dispensary, music classes, baby clinics and household science classes.

The situation was similar in Western Canada. Protestants were considered to be better organized and better financed. The threat of Protestant missions and the desire for Polish priests was a reality that endangered the Polish parish and its Polish priest—as generators of culture and community life.

In addition to a lack of clergy, there were other difficulties facing Polish communities. Another major challenge confronting the hierarchy was related to the internal migration of Poles from the West to the East, which defined the interwar period. The clergy complained that many

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31 ARCAT, St. Catharine’s Collection, St. Mary’s Welland, SCAJ08.32, Letter to Neil McNeil from Fr. Bernard Doyle, January 15, 1930.
34 ARCAT, MNAS06.110, Memorandum on the Church in Western Provinces of Canada, 1928.
Polish immigrants had gone for years in the Prairies—where the settlements were widely spread—without having access to religious resources, and now had to be re-evangelized.\(^{35}\)

Another problem stemmed from financial troubles. There was rivalry and conflict between churches over parishioners who could financially contribute to their religious community. In one case, the pastor of St. Mary’s Polish Parish in Toronto, Rev. S. Mayer noted that a few English families had come to his church and were helping out financially. According to him, when the priests from St. Cecilia and St. Joan of Arc found this out, they “made a house to house campaign against me [Mayer], forbidding the English speaking people to attend [St. Mary’s] church…they had plenty of money putting up marble Altars, while the little Polish Parish ha[d] to struggle for its existence!”\(^{36}\) Financial issues became more commonplace as the economy slowed to a crawl in the late 1920s. Mayer noted that it was not until 1929 that the parish took on a deficit, having only forty families supporting it, many of whom were out of work.\(^{37}\) Even the Sunday Collection had fallen to half of what it used to be. When Mayer had taken over the parish in September 1926, the parish had only fourteen cents in its chequing account.\(^{38}\) Even St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish was considered to be financially neglected\(^ {39}\), and Holy Ghost Parish still had an outstanding debt of $30,000 in 1923, twenty-four years after the parish was first founded.\(^ {40}\)

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\(^{35}\) ARCAT, St. Catharine’s Collection, St. Peter and Paul, Welland (Crowland), SCAJ09.18, Letter to Neil McNeil from Fr. Baron, September 9, 1925.

\(^{36}\) ARCAT, Parish Inventory, St. Mary’s Polish Parish, Financial/Legal, General Correspondence, Letter from Rev. Stefan Mayer to Rev. Father J.M. Clair, September 17, 1929.

\(^{37}\) ARCAT, Parish Inventory, St. Mary’s Polish Parish, Financial/Legal, General Correspondence, Letter from Rev. Stefan Mayer to Rev. Father J.M. Clair, September 17, 1929.

\(^{38}\) In 1917, the parish carried a deficit of $64.17. ARCAT, Parish Inventory, St. Mary’s Polish Parish, General Correspondence, Letter from Rev. Stefan Mayer to Rev. Chancellor for the Archdiocese, January 22, 1927.

\(^{39}\) In 1932, St. Stanislaus had a balance of $145.97. Two years later, that had changed. ARCAT, Clergy Files, John Jozef Dekowski, Sprawozdanie Finansowe for 1932, St. Stanislaus Parish; ARCAT, MNDS36.39(A), St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, Letter from F.P. Carroll to Abp Andrea Cassulo, Apostolic Delegation of Canada and Newfoundland, December 27, 1934.

\(^{40}\) ARCAT, Stanley Puchniak, OMI, “Catholic Church in Canada” (unpublished manuscript, no date), ch.7, p.8-9.
Financial troubles persisted throughout the interwar years. In most cases, Polish parishes followed a narrow line between surplus and deficit. Pastors consistently noted that parishioners would not and could not give financial support. Fr. Stanislaus Jedruszczak, OSM commented that Welland had not paid him for a period of ten months.\(^{41}\) Parishioners would also sometimes withhold money as a way of trying to influence the pastor or express their dislike of him. It became one of the ways in which parishioners would protest the running of the parish, especially when it came to what people considered a “strict” priest. Leftist attitudes amongst parishioners could also lead to the withholding of payments. For example, Mayer related a story of how “Bolshevik Trustees” told him that there was “too much catechism in [the] church” and they refused to pay the Sisters of Service for their work.\(^{42}\) These financial problems intensified during the economic downturn, and only further compounded the difficulties related to Protestant proselytizing and the shortage of Polish-speaking priests.

During the 1920s and the 1930s an increase in the immigration and number of parishes and missions, did lead to a rise in the number of Polish priests, despite the continued problems with clergy shortages. The rise also coincided with more religious and parish organizational activities.\(^{43}\) In Clairmont, Alberta, for example, the arrival of a Polish priest stimulated the emergence of new organizations, such as a men’s choir and a library.\(^{44}\) In Candiac, Saskatchewan, under the pastorship of Rev. Dr. Franciszek Pander, a monthly was published for the farming community.\(^{45}\) Priests, therefore, became community mobilizers and animators—they initiated and created religious and social organizations that would bring people together. A parish with a Polish priest often meant that the community would get a school that taught the Polish

\(^{41}\) ARCAT, SCAB06.11(d), Letter to Abp Neil McNeil from Fr. Stanislaus Jedruszczak, OSM, December 6, 1921.
\(^{42}\) ARCAT, Parish Inventory, St. Mary’s Polish Parish, Financial/Legal, General Correspondence, Letter from Rev. Stefan Mayer to Rev. Father J.M. Clair, September 17, 1929.
\(^{43}\) Radecki, *Ethnic Organizational*, 76.
\(^{44}\) Romaniszyn, 67.
\(^{45}\) Romaniszyn, 67.
language, history, culture and even geography. Such churches also became a place for amateur theatrical productions, sports clubs, dance groups, choirs and social gatherings. These, in addition to the Polish Girl Guide and Boy Scout movement (i.e., Harcerze), were particularly targeted at Polish youth (more on this below). In addition, devotional and beneficiary associations were created that reinforced both religious and cultural traditions, such as a devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The parish served as a reminder and perpetuator of religious and national-cultural values.

The reminder of this chapter will focus on three Polish parishes—Winnipeg’s Holy Ghost Parish and Toronto’s St. Stanislaus Kostka and St. Mary’s Parishes—as case studies of the everyday interplay between religion and nationalism. By looking at these three parishes, we can better comprehend the urban life of Poles, and also see if there were any trends that transcended regional particularities. With the exception of Montreal, Winnipeg and Toronto represent the major urban centres in Western and Eastern Canada where Poles conglomerated. They also reflect a population shift from West to East, and the urbanization of the Polish immigrant.

The immigrant community life revolved around the parish, which was a forum for both religious and non-religious activities that by circumstance and intention, reinforced the Polish-Catholic identity. Parish life can be divided into four areas: religious/devotional; social; patriotic; and educational/youth. Each of these four areas replicated and strengthened, to varying degrees, the cultural and religious life of the homeland. Novenas and adorations that were popular in Poland, for example, were being duplicated on Canadian soil. Theatre productions emphasized Polish language and traditions while allowing their audience to relive historical and religious

47 AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.5, A Report on Polish organizations in Eastern Canada, December 27, 1921; Rudolph Kogler, The Polish community in Canada (Toronto: Canadian Polish Research Institute, 1976), 8.
events along with myths and legends. Patriotic celebrations were infused with religious symbolism, and curriculum related to Polish history, language and culture was taught by religious groups. Religious and national values were fused. Yet, this was also the place where challenges were made to the status quo, such as those posed by radical ideologies. There is no doubt that the parish was at the core of community life, serving a variety of functions. It allowed immigrants to lead a social life that paralleled the broader Canadian society that was inaccessible to them. It created a space where Poles felt connected to their cultural and religious heritage. Hence, the coalescence of the religious and the national-cultural was mandated by the immigrants themselves and stemmed from a desire to create a miniature Poland in their new Canadian environment.

Holy Ghost Parish in Winnipeg was first established in 1899 by Archbishop Adelard Langevin for Polish, Slovak, German and Ukrainian Catholics. In 1902, in light of the growing immigrant population and fearing a loss of faith amongst these immigrants, Archbishop Adelard Langevin of St. Boniface turned to his own congregation, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, to fill this void, confirming Father Jan Kulawy as the first pastor. In the subsequent four years, the parish expanded to include a sanctuary, sacristy and side naves. After Jan Kulawy, Wojciech Kulawy (1904-5) and Karl Greczel (1905-9) became the next pastors. They were followed by Franciszek Kowalski (1910-17), Leonard Nandzik (1917-27), Antoni Sylla (1927-33), and Stanislaw Baderski (1933-40, 1946-49). The Polish-speaking clergy tended to emphasize Polish traditions over those of the other Eastern European immigrants. In 1903, the Benedictine Sisters also arrived to serve the growing community. They provided various social services,

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49 Martha McCarthy, *The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate: St. Mary's Province* (Saskatoon: Missionary Oblates St. Mary's Province, 2004), 32.
50 The Oblates were originally invited by Montreal’s Bishop Ignace Bourget to Canada in 1841 to give home missions to the people of his diocese and with the great migration their work expanded to meet a new challenge facilitating the transplantation of an old faith to a new country, where a different culture interacted with faith.
51 Edward Walewander, ed., *Leksykon*, vol. 2, 244.
such as taking care of the parish, running the orphanage (from 1912), teaching and working in local hospitals.\textsuperscript{52}

The Oblates tried to organize the parishioners so that their culture, religion and language were preserved through the parish schools and Catholic media, such as the \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}, (est. 1908). In 1901, the first Polish School in Canada was opened with an enrolment of 150 students, run by Jan Kulawy, Karolina Czerniagiewiczówna and her sister, Antonina from the Sisters of Charity.\textsuperscript{53} In 1902, the Bractwo Świętego Ducha (Holy Spirit Brotherhood) was founded with twenty-four members to provide affordable insurance.\textsuperscript{54} They went on to organize their own drama circle and a school in 1909, where underprivileged Poles could receive pedagogical training to become teachers. Two years later, Father Greczel founded Sokół, the non-parochial gymnastic association.\textsuperscript{55} This was followed by the Choir of St. Cecilia (1905) and the Henryk Sienkiewicz Library (1908). The organizational life of the parish was flourishing. By 1912, the parish had added a Sodality of the Holy Rosary; the Young Men’s Society of St. Stanislaus; the St. Vincent de Paul Society; the Polish Falcon’s Society #242 (Sokołów Polskich); the Polish National Alliance; the Total Absence League “Elentaria”; Polish Immigration Association; Bartosz Głowacki Polish Alliance; and the St. Michael Confederation of Polish Catholic Societies.\textsuperscript{56}

The parish also faced a series of challenges. In 1917 a new Polish church, St. John Cantius, was established in Winnipeg, acquiring a significant portion of Holy Ghost’s

\textsuperscript{52} Walewander, \textit{Leksykon}, 231.
\textsuperscript{53} The school went on to launch a choir, orchestra, a theatre group by the name “Ogniwo” and an athletic club all under the initiative of Father Stanislaw Baderski. Walewander, \textit{Leksykon}, 239; OMIAP Archives, \textit{Holy Ghost 1899-1974, 75th Anniversary Book}, 10.
\textsuperscript{55} McCarthy, 106; Walewander, \textit{Leksykon}, 72.
\textsuperscript{56} Other associations associated with the parish were: St. Michael’s Association (1909), St. Stanislaus Kostka Association (1909), Youth Club (1912), Third Order of Franciscans (1912), Children of Mary (1912), Orchestra (1917), Catholic Women’s League (1927), White Eagle Club (1927), Altar Boys Club (1927), Scouts (1929), mandolin orchestra (1932), Women’s Alliance (1933), Polish Students’ Club (1934). McCarthy, 107; Walewander, \textit{Leksykon}, 247; Romaniszyn, 68-9; OMIAP Archives, \textit{Holy Ghost 1899-1974, 75th Anniversary Book}, 12.
parishioners. This also meant that the debt load accumulated by Holy Ghost had become overwhelming. In response, the newly appointed pastor, Leonard Nandzik, brought administrative organization to the parish, mobilizing various parish organizations to work towards reducing the debt. He also introduced the envelope system for the systematic collection of funds.\textsuperscript{57} His successors, Antoni Sylla and Stanislaw Baderski, encountered even more financial difficulties during the Great Depression. Sylla, with his experience in Western Canada, accentuated the spiritual development of the parish, focusing on Marian devotions, litanies and missions in an attempt to articulate hope within the community.\textsuperscript{58} He was also strongly involved with the Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Kanadzie (Association of Poles in Canada, SPwK)\textsuperscript{59}, and under him, the community built a Dom Polski (Polish Home), where Polish organizations were located along with a library, bowling alley, and a large stage.\textsuperscript{60}

Education remained a staple of the parish life, and in almost all the Polish churches, one of the key priorities was the teaching of the Polish language and history. Baderski, who was the first Canadian-born Polish priest at Holy Ghost, is a good case in point. He concentrated on improving the level of education at the Holy Ghost school so that it was on par with other local schools. He also placed tremendous emphasis on the learning of everything Polish, which he saw as a defining characteristic of his faithful. They were not only Catholics—they were Polish Catholics. Baderski continued his work propagating Polish culture through children and youth activities, such as, for instance choir performances. Under his tutelage, drama and athletics groups were created, all of them reinforcing the connection of Catholicism and patriotism.\textsuperscript{61}

Baderski was not the exception but rather the rule. Well into the 1930s, priests served as the first

\textsuperscript{58} OMIAP Archives, \textit{Holy Ghost 1899-1974, 75th Anniversary Book}, 15.
\textsuperscript{59} For more information on this organization, please see chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{60} OMIAP Archives, \textit{Holy Ghost 1899-1974, 75th Anniversary Book}, 15.
teachers of Polish language and history, and functioned as organizers of mutual aid associations and libraries, social conveners, and legal representatives.

St. Stanislaus Kostka was the first Polish parish founded in 1911 in Toronto. The first Polish immigrants who arrived in the city at the turn of the century had sought out services at St. Patrick’s Church, St. Michael’s Cathedral, and St. Mary’s Church, and were attended to by a Resurrectionist, Father Paul Sobczak.62 A permanent priest, Father Bogdan Jasiak, began to offer services at St. Michael’s Cathedral in 1909. Unfortunately, a year later, the Archdiocese had to scramble to find another priest after Jasiak’s departure. The task of finding a replacement was left to Father John Kidd, Archbishop Fergus Patrick McEvay’s Secretary, who found Father John Hinzmann63 from Pittsburgh in 1911. 64 Hinzmann became part of the staff at the Cathedral, providing regular services to the Poles. Later that year, the Poles received their own church when Eugene O’Keefe purchased a Western Presbyterian Church and gave it to the Poles.65 This church was named after Poland’s patron saint, St. Stanislaus Kostka. Hinzmann was the pastor of the parish until 1919, after which Charles Baron (1919) and Leopold Blum66 (1919-20) assumed control. John Dekowski67 took over in 1921 and remained at the parish until 1935, when Oblate,

63 Hinzmann was born in East Prussia in 1879. He studied in France and was ordained in Paris by Bishop LeRoy, Superior of Holy Ghost Fathers in 1907. He was dispensed from Congregation vows before coming to the diocese. ARCAT, St. Stanislaus Parish Inventory: Parish History: Historical Notes and References.
64 Makowski, History and Integration, 79.
65 The building was in a horrible state and need major renovations. These were funded by O’Keefe’s daughter, Helen McLean. Zofia Shahrodi, “The Experience of Polish Catholics in the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1905-35,” in Catholics at the “Gathering Place”: Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991, ed. Mark McGowan and Brian Clarke (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993), 145; Walewander, 261.
66 Blum was born in Russian Poland in 1884. He studied at the Polish Seminary in Detroit and at Orchard Lake, Michigan. He was ordained in 1911 and had several placements in Wisconsin, Massachusetts and Manitoba. ARCAT, St. Stanislaus Parish Inventory: Parish History: Historical Notes and References.
67 According to the ARCAT file on Dekowski, he was the Rector at St. Stanislaus from 1922 to 1935, and not as Walewander noted, from 1921 to 1935. Walewander’s dates fit better with the timeline of rectors. Dekowski was born in Poland in 1882 and studied at the College of Holy Ghost in Pittsburgh, the Polish Seminary in Detroit and the Holy Ghost Seminary in Paris. He was ordained there in 1891. He was a chaplain for two years during the Great War in France and Poland after which he was decorated with French and Polish crosses. He was also a published author of two literary works. Dekowski came to Toronto from Pennsylvania in 1920. ARCAT, St. Stanislaus Parish Inventory: Parish History: Historical Notes and References; ARCAT, Clergy Files, John Jozef Dekowski.
Stanisław Puchniak (1935-46) took charge. The parish community continued to grow, purchasing a house in 1918 and then, in 1921, with a loan from the archdiocese, repairing the roof and the inside of the church. Six years later, a new presbytery was built and by 1937, the inside of the church was fully decorated.

Almost from its inception, the parish thrived, and patriotic sentiments remained centre stage. In 1912, Hinzmann established the Tow. Wzajemnej Pomocy św. Stanisława (St. Stanislaus Mutual Benefit Society), a mutual benefit association which focused on national issues while providing insurance. A year later, he created a Polish language school for children where he taught Polish and about Poland. The school, unfortunately, suffered from low attendance. He also organized the Stow. Żywego Różańca (Holy Rosary Society, 1935), and the Tow. Imienia Jezus (Holy Name Society, 1914) which concentrated its efforts on collaborative work with other organizations and associations pertaining to social and charity issues. Under Hinzmann, the parish placed great emphasis on national life, celebrating the different national events and supporting the idea of an independent Poland.

John Dekowski’s tenure revealed the challenges of parish life. A well-educated military man, he was decorated by the French and Polish governments. The initial years were marked by further organizational development. A few years after arriving, Dekowski created the Tow. Wzajemnej Pomocy “Ulga” (1924). However, his term was a contentious one. Though it started off on a positive note, by the late 1920s, the relationship between parishioners and pastor became strained as a result of financial problems. This was further aggravated by the years of the

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68 Shahrodi, “The Experience of Polish Catholics,” 149, 151; Walewander, 271.
69 Walewander, 262.
70 Walewander, 270. From 1937, the school was run by Felician Sisters.
Depression, when donations all but disappeared. This had a cascading effect on the parish social activities. The parish school closed down, national celebrations were halted, and even religious celebrations dwindled.⁷⁴ At one point, the parishioners were no longer able to financially maintain the church. This led to a standoff between the priest and his people, with Dekowski refusing to grant them the sacraments.⁷⁵ The situation had deteriorated to such a point that people left the parish with some going to St. Mary’s and others establishing the Polish National Catholic Church in 1933.⁷⁶ The people pleaded with McNeil and with his successor, James C. McGuigan, even sending letters to the Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Carroll. Any attempts by the diocese to diffuse the situation, by bringing in additional priests, for instance, were met with resistance by Dekowski.

In 1935 when Stanisław Puchniak OMI took the reins, he initiated an internal reorganization of the parish societies. His aim was to halt the tendency by a large faction of parishioners to remove the priest from every position of influence.⁷⁷ To achieve his goal, each parish society was excluded from social enterprise for a certain period to instil in them that their chief aim was spiritual. Puchniak began by focusing on the sacramental life, introducing monthly communion⁷⁸ and monthly adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.⁷⁹ Catechism classes were increased due to demand and the Stow. Żywego Różańca (The Rosary Society) was established in 1935 and was followed by the Stow. Młodzieży Katolickiej (Catholic Youth Association) in 1937.⁸⁰ By 1939, he had founded twenty societies “for religious, social and national purposes.”⁸¹

⁷⁵ Shahrodi, “The Experience of the Polish Catholics,” 150.
⁷⁷ OMIAP Archives, DOC St. Stanislaus Toronto Box, Minute Book of House Council, “Canonical Visit, 1940”.
⁷⁸ Each Sunday was dedicated to a certain group. The first Sunday of the month was for woman; this was followed by men, youth and children.
⁷⁹ Walewander, 263.
⁸⁰ Walewander, 266, 273.
⁸¹ These societies included: Senior Holy Name Society, St. Vincent de Paul, Holy Rosary Confraternity, Polish Handicraft, St. Cecilia’s Choir, CYO Boys/Girls, Girls Athletic, Boy’s Scout Association, Cubs, Girl Guides, Brownies, which met on a weekly basis. Additionally, there was the Study Club, Junior Holy Name Society.
Upon Puchniak’s invitation, the Felician Sisters arrived at the parish in 1937. They took over the Polish school (reopened by Puchniak), teaching Polish to 275 students by 1938. In addition, they also gave music lessons and ran an orphanage.\(^{82}\)

Puchniak’s balanced approach to the fusion of religious and national values paid huge dividends. The organizational life of the parish blossomed. During the latter half of the 1930s, ten other organizations were created: Stow. Dzieci Maryji (Marian Children’s Association); “Białego Orła” (White Eagle) Orchestra; Tow. Gimnastyczne “Sokół” (Sokol Gymnastic Society); Klub Podhalan (Highlanders Club); Tow. Leśniczych (Foresters Society); Krucjata Eucharystyczna (Eucharistic Crusade); Stow. Matek Chrześciańskich (Christian Mother’s Association); Third Order of Franciscans (1939); and Polish Section of the Canadian Red Cross (1939).\(^{83}\)

St. Stanislaus Kostka was not the only church to serve the needs of the Poles in Toronto. As a result of a growing Polish immigrant population, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Częstochowa, or St. Mary’s parish was established in 1914, with the church built a year later. At the onset, the parish had 250 families, but it grew rapidly and by 1918, it had 3000 parishioners.\(^{84}\) Its first pastor was Marian Wachowiak (1914-15), who was then followed by Bolesław Sperski\(^{85}\) (1916-17), Józef Chodkiewicz\(^{86}\) (1918-19), and Leopold Blum (1919). From 1919 to 1920, English-speaking priests led the parish. In 1920, Józef Dekowski took the helm

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\(^{82}\) Walewander, 263.

\(^{83}\) Walewander, 273.

\(^{84}\) William Makowski, History and Integration of Poles in Canada, (n.p.): Canadian Polish Congress, 1967), 81.

\(^{85}\) Sperski born in 1871 in Kończyny (province of Vilnius). He was ordained in 1897 and came to the US in 1913. He was a seminary professor, and was banished by the Russian Government he was well-respected by his superiors. Prior to St. Mary’s, Sperski was also in Welland and St. Catharine’s. ARCAT, Clergy Files, St. Mary’s, Boleslaw Sperski, Letter from Rector at St. Anthony’s Catholic Church in Homestead, PA to Abp Neil McNeil.

\(^{86}\) Chodkiewicz was born in 1882 in Czemierniki, Russian Poland. He was ordained in Michigan in 1909. ARCAT, Clergy Files, St. Mary’s, Jozef Chodkiewicz, Letter from Chodkiewicz to Abp. Neil McNeil, July 26, 1915.
until 1924. This was followed by John Franciszek Kulczyk\(^{87}\) (1924-6), Stefan Mayer CSR (1926-31), and Władysław Gulczyński\(^{88}\) (1931-40).\(^{89}\) In 1928, the rectory was dismantled and a new one was built by Mayer; the land for the rectory had already been purchased by Kulczyk. As did many others, the parish also suffered financially. The original loan for the building of the church became too much for the community after the economic downturn after the Great War.

The parish struggled with a large debt, and this caused conflict and strained relations between pastor and parishioners, and led to a constant turnover of pastors.\(^{90}\) At the onset, Wachowiak and Sperski organized a parish school, teaching Polish, and Polish history and geography.\(^{91}\) Wachowiak also founded the first religious association in 1914, Tow. Imienia Jezus (Holy Name of Jesus Society). Under Dekowski, many of the parish’s religious and cultural activities continued to develop. As at St. Stanislaus, he founded the Tow. Wzajemnej Pomocy “Ulga” (1924) and the Holy Rosary Society (c.1920). A parish choir and a Drama Club were also created in the 1920s. Gulczyński would reactivate the drama club a decade later. In 1933, under Gulczyński’s initiative, Stow. Weteranów Armii Polskiej (Polish Army Veterans Association) was established.\(^{92}\) Five years later, he brought over the Felician Sisters who took over the school along with the education of children and youth. The sisters also organized Dzieci Maryi (Mary’s Children) and Marian sodality.\(^{93}\) These complemented the creation of the Scouts, who Gulczynski organized in the 1930s, and a library for which he purchased 2400 volumes.

The interwar period transformed the demographic landscape of the Canadian Polonia. A statistical journey of the two decades reveals much about the evolution of the three parishes. By

\(^{87}\) Kulczyk was born in Chicago in 1884 and ordained in 1913. ARCAT, Clergy Files, St. Mary’s, John F. Kulczyk.
\(^{88}\) Gulczynki was born in Poland in 1895 and ordained in 1923. ARCAT, Clergy Files, St. Mary’s, Walter/Władysław Gulczyński.
\(^{89}\) Walewander, 306.
\(^{90}\) Shahrodi, “The Experience of Polish Catholics,” 149-150.
\(^{91}\) Walewander, 305.
\(^{92}\) Walewander, 304-6.
\(^{93}\) Walewander, 306.
1930, a canonical visit by the Oblate Provincial revealed that in the Holy Ghost district there were 913 Polish families (along with 350 Ruthenian, 20 Czech and 4 Lithuanian families). There were also seven parishes, two Polish and two Ruthenian missions with a total of thirteen parishes in the larger district. From 1,155 school kids, 200 attended the Holy Ghost parochial school, while 913 attended the public school.\(^{94}\) By 1934, dramatic shifts in the ethnic population were visible. The district now contained 245 Polish families (and 15 Bohemian and 3 Czech families), amounting to about 1275 people. Two hundred and forty children attended the parochial school.\(^{95}\) The number of confirmations also reflects a decline by the latter half of the 1930s. In 1920, the confirmation group stood at 121, and that number did not change much in 1923, with a total of 110 confirmed. In 1933, we see a jump with 137 people accepting the sacrament of confirmation, however, beginning in 1935 and for the next three years, the number of confirmations dropped to 34 in 1935, 95 in 1936 and 28 in 1938.\(^{96}\)

There were several factors that shaped the decline in membership at the Holy Ghost. Independent national churches certainly appealed to some Poles. Discontented parishioners often joined these churches or opted to attend other Catholic parishes. Many people wanted to control everything even at the cost of violating canon law. By the mid 1930s, the Polish immigrant population scattered across the entire city, decreasing the enticement of attending Holy Ghost. Also important was the migration of Poles eastward to Ontario and especially Toronto.

In Toronto, Catholics comprised 14% or 165,000 of the city’s population by 1939. The largest parish was 3000 strong, while the smallest parish had only 100 members. According to the Diocesan Quinquennial Report, there were three Polish parishes—St. Stanislaus and St.

\(^{94}\) OMIAO Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Ghost, Conseil local—et actes de visite, Canonical Visit of Holy Ghost District, 1930.

\(^{95}\) OMIAO Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Ghost, Conseil local—et actes de visite, Canonical Visit of Holy Ghost District, Fr. Provincial Schnarch OMI, September 19-31, 1934.

\(^{96}\) LAC, M-4409, Holy Ghost Parish [thereafter HGH], Codex Historicus [thereafter CH], p.192, 206, 214, 287, 305, 319, 334.
Mary’s in Toronto and St. Mary’s in Welland—compared with four Italian, three Irish, three
Ruthenian, and one Maltese, one German and one Lithuanian parish by the late 1930s.⁹⁷
However, the diocesan spiritual statistics for Toronto’s St. Stanislaus and St. Mary’s during the
1920s are very incomplete, especially when it comes to the number of parishioners. The earliest
information we have about St. Mary’s related to the confirmation of 22 people in 1918.⁹⁸ The
parish codex also relayed that by the end of 1923, the parish had 400 parishioners including 80
families, 3 widows and 23 single people.⁹⁹ At St. Stanislaus the situation was similar. An
undated account placed membership at 1800, with 175 baptisms, 116 marriages, 3 conversions
and 1500 Easter confessions.¹⁰⁰ In 1925, confirmation was administered to 57 people.¹⁰¹ Even
the canonical visits to the parish in the mid to late 1930s were more concerned with the
difficulties in the parish, than noting the size and activities of the community.¹⁰²

It is not until 1932 that there is more concrete information regarding these two parishes.
Accordingly, St. Stanislaus consecrated 76 Catholic marriages in 1932; a year later that number
increased to 78.¹⁰³ In 1933, St. Mary’s confirmed 28 boys and 37 girls.¹⁰⁴ In both 1934 and 1936,
the population of St. Stanislaus was 3000, and St. Mary’s had 750 members (in 1936). In 1934,
86 boys, 110 girls and 44 adults received confirmation at St. Stan’s.¹⁰⁵ In 1936 and 1937, there
were 40 and 29 Catholic marriages respectively, and 1 mixed marriage at St. Stanislaus, which

⁹⁷ ARCAT, Diocesan Quinquennial Report 1939 (Archdiocese of Toronto), p.3.
⁹⁸ St. Mary’s Parish Archives [thereafter MPA], Codex Historicus [thereafter CH], May 12, 1918.
⁹⁹ MPA, CH, December 1923.
¹⁰⁰ This information is found in Hinzmann’s file, but could be from the earlier period of Dekowski’s pastorship,
since Dekowski’s diocesan pastoral file is associated only with St. Stanislaus, despite the fact that he was a pastor of
both parishes. ARCAT, St. Stanislaus, Joseph Hinzmann, Undated Parish Statistics.
¹⁰¹ ARCAT, LB07.1760, St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, Record of Diocesan Transactions and Archiepiscopal Acts for
the Archdiocese of Toronto.
¹⁰² OMIAP Archives, DOC St. Stanislaus Toronto Box, Minute Book of House Council, “Canonical Visit, 1935” by
P. Fruke; “Canonical Visit, 1937”.
¹⁰³ ARCAT, Diocesan Quinquennial Report 1939 (Archdiocese of Toronto), p.3.
¹⁰⁴ ARCAT, LB07.2696, St. Mary’s Polish Parish, Record of Diocesan Transactions and Archiepiscopal Acts for the
Archdiocese of Toronto; St. Mary’s Polish Parish Toronto, Microfilm, Roll #1.
¹⁰⁵ ARCAT, LB07.2720, St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, Record of Diocesan Transactions and Archiepiscopal Acts for
the Archdiocese of Toronto.
had increased to 3,500 parishioners. This translated into 104 and 91 (including 5 adults) baptisms, and 118 confirmations including 17 adults) in 1937.\textsuperscript{106} At St. Mary’s, with a membership of 128 families, there were 10 and 3 Catholic marriages, along with 10 and 1 mixed marriages for those same years.\textsuperscript{107} Twenty-four (1 adult) and 10 (1 adult) baptisms were performed, along with 51 confirmations (7 adults, 1937).\textsuperscript{108}

By 1938, more information can be gleaned about the parishes. St. Stanislaus’ was steady at 3,500 members strong, while St. Mary’s jumped to 150 families. When it came to Catholic marriages, 45 occurred at St. Stanislaus and 10 at St. Mary’s; both parishes had 1 mixed marriage. It is interesting to note that attention is given to “mixed marriages.” A year later, St. Stan’s had 34 Catholic marriages while St. Mary’s had 7. As for other sacraments, in the respective two years, St. Stan’s performed 77 (1 adult) and 99 baptisms, along with 122 (11 adults) confirmations in 1939.\textsuperscript{109} St. Mary’s, on the other hand, had 10 baptisms and 38 confirmations in 1939.\textsuperscript{110}

A number of significant observations can be made about the three parishes and the two regions. Firstly, assuming that these numbers have not been inflated by the respective pastors, St. Stan’s had a large Polish population, despite a conflict with Dekowski. Secondly, the change in population could be accounted for by internal migration patterns shifting from west to east, and that incoming interwar immigrants did not continue westward upon their arrival on Canadian shores but rather preferred to stay in Ontario. Thirdly, the parish was still the place where certain key social transitions, such as marriage, were marked. Therefore, religious institutions continued

\textsuperscript{106} ARCAT, Diocesan Quinquennial Report 1939 (Archdiocese of Toronto), p.3; St. Stanislaus Parish: Parish Spiritual Statistics, St. Stanislaus #101.
\textsuperscript{107} ARCAT, Diocesan Quinquennial Report 1939 (Archdiocese of Toronto), p.3; St. Mary’s Polish Parish: Parish Spiritual Statistics, St. Mary’s Parish #085.
\textsuperscript{108} ARCAT, St. Mary’s Polish Parish: Parish Spiritual Statistics, St. Mary’s Parish #085; MPA, CH, November 11, 1936.
\textsuperscript{109} ARCAT, St. Stanislaus Parish: Parish Spiritual Statistics, St. Stanislaus#101.
\textsuperscript{110} ARCAT, St. Mary’s Polish Parish: Parish Spiritual Statistics, St. Mary’s Parish #085; St. Mary’s Polish Parish Archives, CH, May 29, 1939.
to play a crucial role within immigrant life. This is especially noted with the large number of children going to confirmation, despite the fact that we cannot be sure whether these were driven by religious or cultural motivations. Lastly, persistent and growing number of Poles involved in the parish indicated that religion continued to play an important role in immigrant life. Moreover, the rise in various organizations around parishes indicates that churches offered more than a spiritual home—they provided a foundation for a national-cultural life. As an ethno-religious space, they were able to facilitate various social activities that had powerful national undertones. At times, the connection between the religious and the national was overt, as in the case of masses marking important national holidays. But often, these connections were more subtle and nuanced. A parish school could be teaching Poland’s history or parish facilities could be utilized for purely national events. Simultaneously, secular ethnic spaces, such as Winnipeg’s Dom Polski (Polish House), became places where the religious spilled over from the local parish. The House often hosted religious events. In part, this was done for practical reasons, as the House offered a larger venue. The lines between the religious and the national were fluid, dynamic and flexible.

The parish codexes reveal much about the parish life of the Polish community. They are an insider’s account of the parish activities, providing intimate details about its social life, events of importance, social engagements and key turning points. But, these sources have their limitations, which must be borne in mind. Foremost, some of the codexes were compiled from a variety of sources, such as parish committee minutes at a later date. This is particularly true of the St. Stan’s codex, where the earlier history of the parish was compiled by Puchniak only in the 1930s. The Holy Ghost codex, on the other hand, was written on a regular basis as events occurred. There is also the question of detail (or lack thereof), and the narrators being selective about the information. The St. Mary’s codex seems to provide only the key essentials, without
offering too many specifics about the activities of the parish. Despite these limitations, a comparison of the three texts can offer a more comprehensive picture that transcends some of the shortcomings. Most importantly, the codexes remain the most insightful account of the daily life of Polish parishes in the interwar period.

A common part of Polish parish life that transcended ethnic orientation were religious celebrations following the Catholic liturgical calendar: weekly Sunday masses, Easter and Christmas celebrations, along with feast days. Special mention here needs to be made of the Feast of Corpus Christi, 40-hour devotions, and novenas, which played a special role within the Polish community. Nevertheless, outside these specific religious devotions, there was no mention of other religious celebrations, even ones pertaining to the most important of commemorations, such as Midnight Mass or Pentecost Sunday. Instead, a few specific observances are regularly repeated, indicating the community’s preferences for certain religious traditions that had a strong cultural component, such as Gorzkie Żale (Lamentations), święconka (blessing of the Easter baskets), Kołędowanie (Carolling), Oplatek (Christmas Wafer), and Jasełka (Christmas show). Celebrating these particular observances meant that Poles were repeating the cultural-religious practices of their homeland, and were engaged in the replication of their religious-ethnic identity.

Within the community, the most popular liturgical celebration was the Feast of Corpus Christi. The popularity of this feast did not wane over the interwar period. It was also an event that extended beyond the walls of the church and into the neighbourhood with a procession and creation of four altars at various residences of the parishioners or at designated locations. These altars would have been built and decorated with flowers, fabrics and religious images by given families or parish organizations. The procession itself would have included recent First

111 Both are mentioned once in the Holy Ghost codex between 1918 and 1939, whereas Goźkie Żale is mentioned three times; święconka is mentioned eleven times; Kołędowanie is brought up four times; Oplatek, twelve times; novenas, fifteen time; and Corpus Christi, nine times.

112 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 197, 201, 218, 223, 249, 255, 316, 325.
Communion girls in their white dresses, church organizations and associations with their banners, the parishioners, altar boys, and members of the clergy. As illustrated in images 1 to 5 (Appendix E), the festive nature of this occasion was coupled by a heavy community presence and patriotic images and flags.

Popular piety practices amongst the Polonia also included the Forty-Hour Devotion and novenas to particular saints. The former focused on the exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for a period of forty hours in the parish, beginning and ending with a mass.\textsuperscript{113} Novenas were another form that emphasized the religious over the national. These novenas tended to be said to St. Therese of Lisieux, to the Immaculate Conception, St. Joseph, and to the Holy Ghost, and would also have been parish-specific.\textsuperscript{114} The first two were the most popular, and even though there was a strong Marian devotion in Poland and amongst the Polish immigrants, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception did not have overtly national tones. The feast did not need to be explicitly national; it was enough that the spiritual event had an important role in the repertoire of the religious-national tradition in Poland. (There were other Marian celebrations that played a more prominent role within the national-cultural fabric.)

Similarly, Gorzkie Żale\textsuperscript{115} also did not have visible national connotations. Yet, it was a tradition that developed out of Warsaw in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, and had become a nationally-specific devotion. It focused on the passion and crucifixion of Christ, with the Marian dialogue serving to reinforce the Marian currents of Polish Catholicism. The devotion has three parts, which are rotated each Sunday during the Lenten period. Each variation contains six components: “Zachęta” or “Pobudka,” which invites or calls the people to awaken their hearts; the Intention, which directs the participant to offer their contemplation as an act of veneration and penance; the Hymn,

\textsuperscript{113} See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 200, 239, 262, 284, 287, 290, 295, 342, 253; SKPA, CH, 47.

\textsuperscript{114} See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 233, 237, 242, 250, 251, 255, 259, 267, 274, 275, 278, 290, 337, 338, 348.

\textsuperscript{115} See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 273, 323.
speaks to Christ’s suffering; the Soul’s Lament reviews moments of the passion; Mary’s Dialogue with the Soul, which focuses on her grief and the nature of her suffering; and the Final Refrain, asks for God’s mercy. Cumulatively, it was a spiritual tradition rooted in Poland’s Catholicism. Its persistence in Canada meant that immigrant Poles wanted to retain a connection to their homeland.

Another Easter tradition common to the Poles was the święconka or blessing of the Easter baskets, which took place on Easter Saturday. The baskets were decorated and filled with specific types of food, which had symbolic religious meaning: a lamb-shaped pastry; bread—symbolic of Jesus as the Bread of Life; sausage and ham—symbolic of Christ’s sacrifice; horseradish—symbolic of the Passion; eggs—symbolic of the Resurrection; and salt and pepper—symbols of preservation and bitter herbs. These were usually brought to the parish, where the priest would bless them with holy water. This national-cultural addition was considered to be just as important as the religious components of the Easter Triduum. Every Polish household in Canada had to create its own basket, which could then be blessed by the local priest.

The Christmas season also brought with it a hybridity of religious and cultural customs, such as Kolędowanie (Carolling), Jaselka (Christmas plays) and Oplatek (Christmas wafer). The first referred to a type of Christmas play that was based on medieval Franciscan mysteries. In 18th century Poland, Jasełki took on populist roots and current political topics were being brought into the churches. As a result, in moments of most severe foreign oppression, Jaselki were banned within churches by Poland’s bishops, and consequently, moved beyond the walls of the church, becoming wandering theatres. Though they maintained their religious format and connotations, the content became more and more secular and political. Jaselki were a common

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116 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 254, 262, 284, 290, 300, 332, 340.
occurrence in the three Polish parishes. However, it is difficult to determine the nature of the Jasełki in these parishes due to a lack of literary or material evidence. Nonetheless, they remained an important ingredient in the constellation of events around Christmas. After 1918 and the re-establishment of Poland, they lost much of their overtly political undertones. Yet, although their political content transformed, it is difficult to ascertain how it changed in Canada. Given the Canadian Polonia’s orientation towards “Polishness”, the Jasełki could have been a means to further reassert and cement Polish cultural “norms”, especially since the tradition reinforced Polish folklore.

Jasełki would at times have been closely associated with kolędowanie, or carolling [see Appendix E, Images 6-8], which was also a common occurrence in the three parishes. Carolling was a custom that took place after Christmas day up until the Three Kings, whereby a group of people would visit from house to house singing Christmas carols or reciting poetry. This visit was considered good luck, and in response, the visited home would show their gratitude by offering the carollers money and/or food. The carollers themselves would dress up as figures from the Christmas narrative—shepherds or Three Kings, for instance—or folklore and community characters, including an old man, old woman, a Jew, Death, the devil, Gypsy, musician, soldier, policeman, and chimney sweeper. These were dependent on the region, with the last three being common in the Kaszub region, and the first three common in Małopolska. There was also a person holding a built star of Bethlehem, along with a “szopkarz” or nativity scene builder, who came with his marionettes playing Herod or Jasełki [see Appendix E, Image 9]. In addition, the carollers walked around with masks or carried around puppet animals, such as the goat, bear, horse, rooster, or heron intended to scare the spectators. This tradition had strong

117 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 260; MPA, CH, December 1938.
118 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 220, 296; St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Archives [thereafter SSKPA], Codex Historicus [thereafter CH], 17.
roots in Polish folklore and so the immigrant community saw it as an important expression of their cultural-national heritage. As in other traditions, its role was to preserve a quintessential Polish legacy.

The celebration of the Oplatek (Christmas Wafer) continued the same articulation of the ethno-religious symbiosis. The Oplatek refers to a Christmas wafer that is shared on Christmas Eve at the start of the evening meal preceded by a prayer. The custom originated in Poland and was popularized in the 17th century. The Christmas wafer is made from the same ingredients and produced in the same way as a Communion wafer but is not consecrated. The practice refers back to the sharing of bread in Biblical times and early Christianity, and it is a reminder of the Body of Christ (Eucharistic Meal). The Christmas Wafer is embossed with religious imagery pertaining to the nativity scene, and the process of breaking and sharing it imparted blessings on the participants. The tradition was an integral part of the Christmas experience even being added to Christmas cards [see Appendix E, Image 10]. This was another specifically Polish tradition that was brought over across the ocean. Polish parishes in Canada would organize an Oplatek meal within the parish hall so that individuals (without families) were able to gather and exchange Christmas wishes.

The parish was not just a place for spiritual and religious celebrations. Polish Canadian parishes also served as a space where national events could were commemorated. Important national political figures or their anniversaries were celebrated. The codexes do not always indicate whether these commemorations were made in the form of a mass or simply as secular events. However, the fact that they were recorded indicates that they were important moments in the life of the community.

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119 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 221, 236, 251, 270, 271, 289, 297, 312, 314, 322, 331, 349; SSKPA, CH, 44.
An important aspect of the national repertoire surrounded important national political figures of the Second Republic. One such critical moment in the national narrative was the assassination of Poland’s first president, Gabriel Narutowicz.\textsuperscript{120} His short term in office was symbolic of Poland’s newfound independence and democratic government. The community also marked the election of his successor, Stanislaw Wojciechowski. It appears that Poles were quite interested in the political situation in Poland, evident not only in the content of Polish ethnic newspapers but also in Polish parishes. Even the assassination of Poland’s Minister of Interior, Bronislaw Pieracki was observed with a mass at Holy Ghost parish. Several masses were celebrated in remembrance of Józef Piłsudski—probably the most known of the leaders of the Second Republic.\textsuperscript{121} Poland’s political life was well and alive within the far reaches of Polish Canadian parishes, and so were current national events, such as Poland’s signing of the Concordat with the Holy See or the death of Poland’s Cardinal Dalbor.\textsuperscript{122} Concern and interest were also focused on aiding flood victims in Poland and on the plight of Polish refugees.\textsuperscript{123} In this way, the community saw its social obligation to their homeland. Poles in Canada could feel as members of the larger Polish family that has been scattered across the world. Being aware of the affairs in Poland became a benchmark for someone’s Polishness. All of this echoed within the walls of the Polish churches across Canada.

Contemporary Polish political figures or current affairs were not the sole staple of the Polish tradition that immigrants wanted to uphold. The community also honoured the contributions of important historical figures. The internment of writer Henryk Sienkiewicz’s body from Switzerland to St. John’s Cathedral in Warsaw was one such moment that required

\textsuperscript{120} See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 190, 202.
\textsuperscript{121} See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 292.
\textsuperscript{122} See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 221, 216.
\textsuperscript{123} See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 184, 191, 192; MPA, \textit{CH}, 1938.
The death of Władysław Reymont was noted and the anniversary of both Frederic Chopin and Ignacy Paderewski’s birth were celebrated. Even Casimir Gzowski’s contributions, as a Polish pioneer and builder of Canadian society, were commemorated at Massey Hall. Polish parishes sanctioned tributes that praised cultural figures that embodied the best of what the Polish culture offered. Keeping alive the memory of these individuals was symbolic of participating in and maintaining their ethnic culture.

The parish also provided a space where national (historical) events could be repeatedly experienced. Here, the objective was to strengthen the collective memory of the community by focusing on the key historical events. To that end, both January (1863) and November (1830) Uprisings were commemorated, and even though they were unsuccessful in extricating Poland from the partitioning powers, they emphasized the idea that the nation was resilient and persevering.

Especially important were historical events that became closely intertwined with religious properties. One such vital historical moment that became imbued with divine power was the “Miracle on the Vistula.” It commemorated the Polish-Soviet War of 1919-22, when, against all odds, the Polish army fought off a Soviet invasion. Poland’s victory took on religious connotations since it was attained on August 15th, or on the Feast of the Assumption of Virgin Mary. The historical fused with the religious also in the commemoration of May 3rd, which celebrated the Feast of Mary Queen of Poland and Poland’s first constitution of 1791. Similarly interpreted was the Battle of Vienna in 1683 when the Polish army stopped the

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124 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 214.
125 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 220, 301, 309.
126 MPA, CH, August 1938.
127 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 260, 269, 271.
128 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 257, 266, 287.
advancement of the Ottoman Turks on Europe.\textsuperscript{130} King Sobieski’s victory was attributed to his placing of the army under the protection of the Virgin Mary at Sanctuary of Jasna Góra. Because of the victory, the Pope extended the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary (day of the battle, September 12) to the universal church. Even a strictly secular holiday, such as Święto Morza (Sea Holiday), which observed Poland’s historical right to the Baltic Sea, was permeated with religion.\textsuperscript{131} Celebrating these events included a (solemn) mass, a homily specific to the subject matter and often, a social gathering, during which leaders (or special guests) would give speeches or the community would produce related plays.

Throughout the 1920s and the 1930s, a whole constellation of events were developed to promote Polish customs, traditions and history in the parish community. For example, there were screenings of documentaries on Poland. There were numerous events that promoted Polish culture, including the exhibit in Poznań, Poland on the tenth anniversary of independence [see Appendix E, Image 11], which traveled to Canada; a “Polish Day” in Winnipeg; guest lectures, as given, for instance, by Professor Kirkconell on Adam Mickiewicz; or the organization of a “Polish booth” at the CNE.\textsuperscript{132} All of these were organized by and included the participation of the clergy and parishioners. The commemoration of everything national occurred within the walls of the church or at least, with the blessing of the clergy. The religious and the national reinforced each other by promoting the Pole-Catholic identity. The priests would promote the use of traditional Polish Catholic names for newborn children in order to stave off assimilation and secularization.\textsuperscript{133}

As a centre of the community, the parish was also a forum where the main social and cultural events could be planned and realized. For the most part, the parish social calendar was

\textsuperscript{130} LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 286.
\textsuperscript{131} MPA, \textit{CH}, July 1939.
\textsuperscript{132} LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 244, 289; SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 56.
\textsuperscript{133} SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 45.
full of activities and programs that replicated Polishness without necessarily rejecting the mainstream Anglo-Canadian society. These social gatherings would often serve a number of functions. First, they allowed Poles to come together and feel connected to each other and the larger Polish community. Polish immigrants did not always settle and create exclusive ethnic ghettos, frequently living near their place of employment and not in the area surrounding their parish. The parish, then, was a point of convergence—a gathering place. Second, as mentioned earlier, Poles wanted to replicate and continue the cultural activities they brought from their homeland. The church offered the essential atmosphere of the recognizable and the familiar. Third, these activities would also be used to fundraise for community needs, especially those pertaining to the parish, such as renovations, decorations, etc. Overall, the Polish community within Canada had a very active social life. Not only was it involved in theatre productions, but it organized carnivals, dances, parties, banquets, picnics, bazaars, concerts, variety programs, raffles, card parties, and tea gatherings. All of these were certainly imbued with Polish “flavour” even if they were not bound to any specific and distinctly Polish traditions. They reinforced a sense of togetherness to the community. Even sports teams, such as softball/baseball and hockey were created so that Poles could participate in the Polish version of the mainstream Canadian culture.

The most popular social activity within the immigrant community was parish picnics. These were organized by either the parish or parish organizations, such as St. Cecilia’s Choir, at Holy Ghost. In most cases, the picnics took place at a location outside of the city, were accompanied by a high mass, and even were a source of income for the parish, with proceeds going towards decorating the church or towards the rectory.\textsuperscript{134} The turnout could become so large that transportation would be arranged. For example, at Holy Ghost, and depending on the

\textsuperscript{134} LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 316; S SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 29, 30, 20; MPA, June/July 1938, 1939.
size of the crowd, chartered streetcars, trucks, or CPR coaches were ordered to bring people to the picnic grounds.\footnote{See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 201. Carpooling, the charter of four trucks and CPR coaches were another means of bringing people to the picnic grounds. LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 264, 265, 302.} After 1936, most of the picnics took place on parish grounds with the meal held in the Dom Polski. Each summer would see three (1927) or four picnics (1928). They were such an integral part of parish life that the high mass at the church was cancelled because it was instead held on the picnic grounds. Such cancellations became common occurrences, indicating that the majority of the parishioners participated in these social gatherings. At times, their popularity reached such a fevered pitch that there would even be food shortages.\footnote{See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 249.} Though the frequency of picnics decreased during the height of the Depression, they remained a staple of the community life.\footnote{We do get an impression of the numbers that attended these picnics. In July 1934, for example, 100 people arrived by streetcar and automobile for the parish picnic at St. Charles, Manitoba. LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 293.}

Theatre productions became another highly popular activity. Each parish had its own Drama Circle or Club. Yet, the putting on of a play was not limited solely to specialized clubs. Almost any church organization could produce a play, with even schoolchildren becoming involved in productions.\footnote{See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 220.} By the mid 1920s, at Holy Ghost, for example, plays were an annual (even a bi-annual) occurrence [see Appendix E, Images 12-15]. The subject matter for these plays came from popular culture and was meant to entertain. At St. Mary’s, the plays even dealt with regional identity, as in the case of the Górale, or Highlanders.\footnote{MPA, CH, 1938.} However, there were occasions when the focus was explicitly religious and national, especially when plays dealt with topics such as national independence.\footnote{See for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 238. The play was called “The Cross with the Red Stain.”} This type of subject matter was more common starting with the 1930s. Yet, Holy Ghost’s new drama club, “Ognisko”, went on to produce plays about a variety of topics, including the American War of Independence, Polish women, Prussians in
Poland, and the miracle at Jasna Góra. Comedies, arias and operettas were also featured. Theatre productions were a form of public discourse that permitted the community to experience and comment on issues they found important. Moreover, as all other parish events, they promoted the same dynamics of the Polish identity.

Other very popular social events included tea parties and bazaars. Bazaars were an alternative way in which funding could be raised. Lasting usually a week, they tended to raise a significant amount of money. In 1918, for example, the parish bazaar cleared over $1,300. Throughout the interwar period, the bazaar never became an annual event in the same way as the picnic or the theatrical play. They tended to appear when funds needed to be raised for a specific purpose, such as improvements or repairs to the church or school, or for an orphanage. Tea “parties” became popular in the mid-1920s and like the bazaars, they had a strong fund-raising character. The funds collected would go towards church needs, such as a new carpet for the sanctuary or flowers for the October devotion. They would also go towards the larger Polish community, as in the case of funding for orphanages. Most “Teas” took place at the rectory or parish hall, and at times would be sponsored by a parish organization, such as the Rosary Society. However, by the late 1920s, these “Teas” would also be organized by a female parishioner in her home. In any given year, a parish had on average three “Teas”, and the

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142 See for example the operetta on November 5, 1932, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 279; SSKPA, CH, 18, 45.
143 See, for example, MPA, CH, 1935, SSKPA, CH, 42.
144 See, for example, December 18, 1918, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 185.
145 See for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 194, 222; SSKPA, CH, 41.
146 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 217, 225.
147 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 220.
148 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 238, 247; MPA, CH, April, July 1938.
amount of money raised ranged greatly anywhere from $27 to $100. By the 1930s, “Teas” were at times combined with another event, such as a raffles, movies or variety programs.

Variety programs appealed to and attempted to involve Polish immigrant youth. By the 1930s, there was an increase in the number of variety programs and they began to be organized by parish organizations. They showcased the talents of the community, including abilities in gymnastics, acrobatics, debating and boxing. Movies became popular after the mid-1930s. At Holy Ghost, for example, movies were shown for both children (after Catechism class) and for adults (after the evening devotions) each Sunday in the Dom Polski. There were both Polish and English movies shown. Some of the showings included “Przybłęda” (Vagabond, 1933) or “Barbara Radziwiłłowna” (1936) a Polish historical film about the wife of Poland’s king, Zygmunt August II. Besides entertainment, they were also intended to provide a form of education and information. At times, the subject matter was religious in nature as in the case of the “Forty Japanese Martyrs.” In some instances, they even brought people into the church.

There were even movies concerning Canada and the British monarchy, like the coronation of King George VI. The fact that these movies were shown within the confines of the parish also points to the creation of a parallel social system or “societal life” that pointed to a space between the Canadian and Polish worlds. In many ways, the lack of access Poles had to a “Canadian” way of life further reinforced ties to the life they had left behind.

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149 In November 1927, $27.25 was cleared for supplies for the altar boys. LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 234.
150 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 289, 282, 291, 318.
151 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 297.
152 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 311.
154 SSKPA, CH, 42.
155 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 325.
The parish also provided a place for other types of social gatherings, including socials, (choir) concerts and card parties. Socials could take the form of carnivals, parties, or banquets. Banquets tended to honour community achievements, such as the winning of the interparochial basketball cup. In addition, they celebrated various organizational anniversaries, the contributions of parish individuals, such as the arrival or departure of a parish priest, or key Canadian and Polish events, such as Armistice Day. In addition, banquets could be sponsored by a church organization like the Rosary Society. Quite often, they were a source of fundraising. The Catholic Women’s League at the parish, for example, ran a banquet to raise funds for the Dom Polski. For the most part, banquets would occur between two to three times a year, but with the early years of the Depression, they almost all ceased, only to start up again in the mid 1930s.

Carnivals and concerts tended to be associated with the liturgical calendar and marked the change in periods between liturgical seasons. Concerts tended to be produced by the parish choir, but by the late 1920s, even schoolchildren began putting on their own concerts. This form of entertainment was most popular in the 1920s, but began to wane at the onset of the 1930s. Card parties or Bingo were yet another form of socializing that brought the community together. Though they had a relatively short period of popularity, from the mid 1920s to the early 1930s, during this time, a card party would be organized three to four times a year. The Polish community had a vibrant social life within the parish. All of these social gatherings enabled Poles to reconnect to their mother tongue and culture. Even though the parish’s primary

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156 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 298, 307, 317, 324, 328, 338, 244, 249, 250, 253, 261, 263, 230, 238, 242, 243; MPA, CH, June, July, February and September 1938; SSKPA, CH, 41.
157 MPA, CH, May, June, July 1938, November 1938, January 1939
158 See for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 298, 307, 317, 324.
159 See, for example, LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 204, 210, 212, 229, 233, 238, 239, 249; MPA, CH, November and May 1938.
160 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 205, 220, 221, 229, 233, 237, 243, 244, 246, 250; MPA, CH, June, July, August, and October 1938; SSKPA, CH, 45.
purpose was to bridge the connection between person and the divine, it inadvertently promoted the idea of a “little Poland.”

The parish was able to provide the Poles with an alternative Polish Catholic milieu that paralleled Canadian society. This was most evident in sports. Sporting clubs, such as a volleyball team and a softball team [see Appendix E, Images 16-18] sprang up everywhere.\(^{161}\) Regardless of whether these sporting teams were created by parish organizations or the parishes themselves, they continued to reinforce the idea that one could have a complete life in the confines of a Polish Catholic parish. It sold the image of the church as providing an extensive array of social services and activities. A Catholic Pole need not lose any aspects of his identity and still have access to all that the Canadian society offered.

Parishes were not just places of worship or for social gatherings. They placed a great deal of importance on the future generations. Not only was there a concern for the spiritual well-being of the youngest Poles, but also for the preservation of their intellectual and cultural heritage. The community wanted to ensure that these children did not forget about their Polishness. Once again, they turned to the parish to complete this formidable task. The parish had to also become an educational institution. Hence, the building of churches was often quickly followed by the development of programs and classes where the young were taught Polish history, geography and language. These parish schools would try to raise children to remain Polish, while simultaneously, helping their parents improve their socio-economic well-being by giving them English-language lessons.\(^{162}\) Other mechanisms were also created to promote the Polish language. Libraries were established with volumes of classics brought over from Poland (or the United States). Moreover, the scouts’ movement—which became highly popular—emphasized Polishness and Catholicism as the two key tenets by which youth should be guided.

\(^{161}\) LAC, M-4409, HGP, *CH*, 264, 322; SSKPA, *CH*, 55.

\(^{162}\) See, for example, SSKPA, *CH*, 7, 12.
The type of education that was offered through the church depended on the location of the parish. The education provided by the parishes was complimentary in nature to the program set out by the Canadian educational ministry. Given that St. Stanislaus and St. Mary were located in Toronto, and Ontario had a separate school system, there was less impetus to create a parochial school. As well, these two parishes were younger than their counterpart, Holy Ghost, in Winnipeg, which, on the other hand, had founded its own parochial elementary and high school already in 1901. In part, it was able to do this because of the (financial) support coming from the Oblate Fathers (who did not arrive to Toronto until the mid 1930s), and their ability to bring in female religious orders to teach in Winnipeg. Moreover, since Manitoba had lost its separate schools by the late 19th century, there was greater need to establish parochial schools.

Statistics also provide some insights about the successes of Polish parish school in Toronto and Winnipeg. In 1937, for example, 93 children from St. Mary’s parish attended separate schools and 28 attended the public school. At St. Stan’s that same year, 375 attended separate schools and “very many” attended public schools. A year later, 379 of St. Stan’s kids attended separate schools, while “very many” attended the public schools. St. Mary’s kids who attended separate schools numbered 101, while 30 went to public schools. In 1939, St. Mary had 90 students attending the separate school and 26 attending the public school, whereas at St. Stan’s, 420 kids attended the separate school and a “large number” attended the public school. In comparison, in 1921 Holy Ghost’s school had 160 kids and eight years later that number

163 Unfortunately, there is no way to determine what “very many” or “a large number” meant. There are two possibilities for interpretation. One, the public school numbers equalled or exceeded the separate school numbers, or two, any number regardless of its value, would have been considered “too large” since this meant that these kids were not being educated in a Catholic environment, and were under the influence of the Protestants. Father Puchniak, in 1936, complained that very few of his parish children attended separate schools. ARCAT, St. Stanislaus Parish: Parish Spiritual Statistics, St. Stanislaus #101; St. Mary’s Polish Parish: Parish Spiritual Statistics, St. Mary’s Parish #085. SKPA, CH, 51.

164 LAC, M-4409, HGP, CH, 198.
was at 180.\textsuperscript{165} In 1934, this was the only Polish parochial school that inaugurated grades 9 and 10 along with a nursery for pre-school kids.\textsuperscript{166} Grade 11 commenced a year later, and grade 12 was launched in 1936.\textsuperscript{167} Unfortunately, grade 12 was cancelled a few days later due to a small class (10 students). In 1937, Holy Ghost high school had the biggest graduation class, 17 completed Grade 11.\textsuperscript{168} This was followed by 13 graduates in 1938, and 8 graduates in 1939.\textsuperscript{169} That same year, the High School had a large grade 9 enrolment of 25 students. In all the cases, education meant a \textit{Polish} education. The parishes demonstrated concern for this type of an education, and they responded to this concern by creating classes and schools to meet the desires of the community. The parish was the only place where this was prevalent.\textsuperscript{170}

The demand for Polish language came from the community—from the parents who wanted to protect the Polish-Catholic upbringing of their children. Fr. Puchniak noted this in St. Stanislaus’ codex, writing:

This business of teaching Polish was not an easy one. The reluctance of the children was great. They had their day at school, they wanted to relax in sports. Yet, they had to spend two or more days a week from 4:30-6:00 without a break learning something they did not much care for. Yet, this was the only way to keep the children and the families under the church’s influence. Otherwise, the parents who wanted this more than anyone, would send their children to the Polish schools which were proselytizing away from the church.\textsuperscript{171}

Though Polish language classes were an additional burden on the youth, attending such classes was imperative in retaining their parents’ national identity. The parish also

\begin{footnotes}
\item[165] LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 250.
\item[166] LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 294.
\item[167] LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 306, 318.
\item[168] LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 326.
\item[169] LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 335, 343.
\item[170] However, in the late 1920s, as the organizations (see chapter four) grew and became more established, they too began to establish their own schools. In 1928, ZPwK had more children who signed up for Polish language classes than books; it requested the help of the consulate in obtaining 50 \textit{elementarze} (primers) and 50 \textit{pierwsze czytanki} (first readers). In a letter to the Montreal’s Consulate General, the ZPwK had established two schools in central and western Toronto where 57 and 55 children attended in 1929. AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers (Correspondence), F1405, POL0013, MU 9118, Letter to the Consulate General in Montreal, June 21, 1929.
\item[171] SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 34.
\end{footnotes}
benefited from such an arrangement since it could simultaneously promote Catholic values. But how was this “Polish education” realized on an everyday basis?

An examination of a Teaching Plan at Holy Ghost elementary school sheds light on the subject matter and content taught in the first eight grades. Though the teaching plan was created in the United States for American Polonia in parochial schools, this Plan provided the curriculum for teaching Polish language and history, and religion at Holy Ghost. In general, the teaching plan covered the major aspects of a holistic education, with religion, Polish language, physical exercises, and physiology and hygiene as the only subjects that were consistent over the course of the eight grades. [See Appendix A.] Other subjects included mathematics, penmanship, English, writing, and geography, which were introduced into the curriculum in the third grade. In grade five, natural history and composition was added, along with singing in grade eight.

As already mentioned, the Polish language was taught from the first grade. This was followed by the addition of Polish national history in grade three, and Polish literature in grade eight. In the early years, language education included the expansion of the vocabulary (grade 2); the various parts of speech and declensions (grade 3); parts of a sentence and translations (grade 4); the declension of Polish words into seven cases, along with structure of prose and poetry (grade 5, 6); expanding on parts of speech, such as uninflected parts of speech (grade 7 and 8). Beyond the advanced knowledge of the language, children were also expected to acquire knowledge about Polish literature. Consequently, the introduction of Polish literature took place at the end of the elementary school education. Students became familiar with the works of Jan Długosz, Jan Kochanowski, Mikołaj Rej, Ignacy Krasicki, Adam Mickiewicz, and Juliusz
Slowacki among others. These selections were considered key contributors to the shaping of the Polish literary tradition.

Polish national history—the second pillar of the education for the young Canadian Polonia—first appeared in grade three with a discussion of the legend behind the creation of Poland and the first Polish King, Mieszko I. The national narrative that students learned pertained to the country’s political history, which was divided into a pre-Christian and post-Christian period. For the most part, the focus of the material was on the political leadership—kings and important rulers—along with a discussion of the Partitions and the resulting insurrections. Consequently, the curriculum was familiarizing the students with the country of their birth or ancestry, with the hope of reinforcing the identity of the Catholic Pole.

The third component related to the promotion of the Pole-Catholic identity was religious education. The teaching of religion can be divided into four parts: general knowledge; catechism; biblical history; and church history. The first two were introduced early in the curriculum. In the first year, the basics of Catholic prayer were taught, such as the “Our Father” and the “Hail Mary”, and about the life of Jesus (e.g., his birth) and Mary. These were taught primarily through biblical images. By grade three, as part of their broader religious education, children began to learn the “little” catechism, in conjunction with the perfection of God, the Fall, and the Cardinal Virtues. By grade four these students were familiar with the sacraments, and a year later began studies in the “średni” or “middle” catechism, with, for instance, a more in-depth discussion of

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173 According to the legend there were three Slavic brothers, Lech, Czech and Rus, who set out to hunt. Each ended up following a different path that ended in settlement of Lechia (Poland), Czechia (Czech Republic), and Ruthenia (Russia). Lech came across a very large white eagle protecting its nest. He saw this as a good omen, and settled in a place he called Gniezno (gniazdo—nest) and adopted the white eagle as his coat of arms.
175 See for example, OMIAP Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Ghost, Plan Nauk dla Szkół Osmioklasowych Parafianych, p.19.
176 See for example, OMIAP Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Ghost, Plan Nauk dla Szkół Osmioklasowych Parafianych, p. 24, 39.
the Ten Commandments.\textsuperscript{177} At the same time, students began lessons in biblical history, which was divided into two parts: New Testament and Hebrew Scriptures. For the first three years (grades three to five) students became familiar with the New Testament, with a special emphasis on the life of Christ. In grades six and seven the focus shifted to the Hebrew Scriptures.\textsuperscript{178}

In grade four, the liturgical calendar was added as another subject. Here the focus for three grades was the different liturgical seasons—Christmas, Advent, Lent, Easter, and so forth. In grade seven, this subject was replaced by a study of the Liturgy, which was oriented towards the objects used at a Catholic mass and various holy places.\textsuperscript{179} In the last year, even though there were the standard religion and catechism subjects (i.e., a review of previous years), the focus centred now on church history. Consequently, religious identity, like its national counterpart, was given equal attention so that it could become the other essential pillar of the young Canadian Pole.

The impetus for this “movement” that reinforced Catholic and Polish identities came with support from the top, like Archbishop Sinnott and the Polish government. Polish Catholic schools were seen as a “victory of the Catholic idea,”\textsuperscript{180} contributing to the “maintenance of Roman Catholic faith,”\textsuperscript{181} and a way of counteracting Communist propaganda.\textsuperscript{182} Moreover, they inculcated certain cultural values. Initiation of a “Polish” education by the parishes was considered to be a necessary feature of parish life by the community. This education encompassed both religious (e.g., Catechism classes) and non-religious classes, and was realized in different ways in the three parishes. As the more established of the three, Holy Ghost had its

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{177} See for example, OMIAP Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Gost, \textit{Plan Nauk dla Szkół Osmioklasowych Parafianych}, p.27.
\item \textsuperscript{178} OMIAP Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Gost, \textit{Plan Nauk dla Szkół Osmioklasowych Parafianych}, p.28.
\item \textsuperscript{179} OMIAP Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Gost, \textit{Plan Nauk dla Szkół Osmioklasowych Parafianych}, p.33.
\item \textsuperscript{180} AAN, Opieka Polska nad Rodakami na Obczyźnie (thereafter OPRO), sygn.358/1, t.42, s.27, “Zjazd Polaków z Zagranicy a Sprawy Religijne,” \textit{Kurier Poznański} July 20, 1929.
\item \textsuperscript{181} AAN, OPRO, 135, sign.82, s.5, “J.E. Arcybiskup Sinnott o Obowiązkach Polaka,” October 1930.
\item \textsuperscript{182} OMIAP Archives, DOC St. Stanislaus Toronto Box, \textit{Minute Book of House Council}, “Canonical Visit, 1940”.
\end{itemize}
own parochial elementary and secondary school, which paralleled the type of education set out by the provincial government, with the exemption of the emphasis on a “Polish” education.\textsuperscript{183} St. Mary and St. Stan’s, on the other hand, provided supplementary education that focused on a “Polish” education in addition to catechism. St. Stan’s had, for example, a Polish school that commenced every day after 4pm and was held at St. Mary’s Catholic school.\textsuperscript{184} Puchniak led two Polish language classes, from which he recruited altar boys and girls for the children’s choir.\textsuperscript{185} St. Mary’s parish held its Polish classes at the church unless the church was under renovations, in which case it made use of St. Rita’s school, holding two classes of Polish.\textsuperscript{186} Over the interwar period, Polish education gained in importance. A priest at St. Mary’s noted that children from outside of Toronto (e.g., Beechborough and Mimico) were making their way to Saturday’s Polish classes.\textsuperscript{187}

Catechism, on the other hand, was taught on Sundays in the Church, taking place after the 9 a.m. mass at St. Stan’s, but was moved to a later time in the afternoon since the turnout was poor. It took about a year (from 1935 to 1936) before St. Stanislaus had strong attendance.\textsuperscript{188} In part, this was a result of the legacy of the problems that the parish experienced with its priest, and also because of a large contingency of communists in the parish. At St. Mary’s, catechism was also offered on Sundays in the afternoon. In 1938, for example, the attendance numbered 125 kids.\textsuperscript{189} Catechism was especially important for those who attended the public schools, and since it was taught in Polish, it helped to further solidify the connection between the religious and the national.

\textsuperscript{183} The school was funded by the tuition students paid, and more significantly, the Oblate order.
\textsuperscript{184} OMIAP Archives, DOC St. Stanislaus Toronto Box, \textit{Minute Book of House Council}, “Canonical Visit, 1940”.
\textsuperscript{185} SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 51.
\textsuperscript{186} See for example, MPA, \textit{CH}, September 12, 1938.
\textsuperscript{187} MPA, \textit{CH}, January 4, 1939.
\textsuperscript{188} SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 38, 42, 45.
\textsuperscript{189} MPA, \textit{CH}, September 1938.
In addition to children’s education, the parish were also concerned with helping adults to better cope with the English-based society in which they lived. Consequently, clergy established English-language classes for adults in the evenings. All three parishes, in this case, provided a similar service. At St. Stanislaus, for instance, these took place twice a week for an hour and a half.\footnote{The ZPwK also provided such classes in the 1930s. SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 52, 53.} The hope was that having familiarity with the local language would aid those Poles who were interested in obtaining citizenship while helping to improve the socio-economic standing of the immigrants. Poles tended to remain on the lower rung of the employment ladder as skilled and unskilled labourers because of their inability to speak English.

Besides education, parishes created libraries filled with Polish literature. For the most part, these were private endeavours. Father Dekowski, for example, purchased out of his own pocket, $400 worth of Polish literary volumes creating a library for the parishioners, and he was the main source of any new works that were added.\footnote{SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 20; OMIAP Archives, DOC: St. Stanislaus Toronto, Książka Protokułowa, January 22, 1933.} At Holy Ghost, a children’s library was established in 1920; three years later, the parish had resolved to find 350 books for the library.\footnote{LAC, M-4409, HGP, \textit{CH}, 192, 209.} Libraries, for the most part, tended to crop up around parishes, which had assumed the role of the educational and cultural centre of the community.\footnote{See, for example, AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.908, s.114-5, Report from J. Pawlica, January 24, 1934.} The establishment of libraries gave Poles another opportunity to remain connected to their homeland.

All the schools and classes—regardless of whether they were established by religious or secular institutions—required a level of financial support, which depended on but could also only accommodate a certain number of participants. Prior to 1930, twenty-five Polish schools had been established across Canada with most only lasting between two and three years due to a lack of teachers, materials and funds.\footnote{Radecki, \textit{Ethnic Organizational}, 68.} For their children to attend Polish classes in secular schools, parents were asked to pay a sum dependent on the number of children. Parish schools had an
advantage as they provided their education for free. Both sets of school faced the same challenge of having access to school materials and readers. Parishes turned to the Polish government and to Opieka to receive books that were appropriate. Fr. Klita of St. Stanislaus, called on Opieka to send books on Polish grammar and history.\(^{195}\) The books that were sent by the Polish government included literary works, history books, religious books and patriotic books. These included, for example, “Wybór Pism dla Młodzieży” (Selection of Works for Young People) by literary greats, such as Stefan Żeromski, “Historja Żółtej Ciżemki” (History of the Golden Boot); “Historja Święta” (History of Religious Holidays) by Rev. T. Kowalski; and “Bóg i Ojczyzna” (God and Fatherland), which was a prayer book.\(^{196}\) Such works fit the general objective of promoting the Pole-Catholic identity. The importing of these books from Poland indicates that the immigrant community was not established enough to produce its own publications. (Only in some cases did it turn to the American Polonia for school materials.) The Canadian Polonia was (willingly) dependent on the Polish state, strengthening the bond between the two. Poland continued to be a nurturing force within the community.

Parish schools certainly provided an institutionalized framework for the promotion of the Polish identity. But there was another venue for the formation of the young Poles. Harcerstwo, or Scouts, emerged as an extension of the parish community. Scouting became especially popular within the Canadian Polonia in the 1930s. It was an effective way to keep the youth occupied in an organization that underlined certain national and religious values and traditions.

At St. Mary’s parish, a scouts group was organized by Rev. Gulczyński in 1931.\(^{197}\) St. Stanislaus also founded a scout group for both boys and girls in 1936, which met twice a week.

\(^{195}\) AAN, Opieka Polska nad Rodakami na Obczyźnie (hereafter OPnRnO), sign.358/39, s.167-8, Letter from Rev. Piotr Klita to OpnRnO, June 5, 1936.
\(^{196}\) AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers (Correspondence), F1405, POL0013, MU 9118, Letter to the ZPwK from Consul General, June 26, 1929.
\(^{197}\) MPA, CH 1914-1956, 1931.
for two hours.\textsuperscript{198} [See Appendix E, Images 19-21.] The movement in Canada paralleled the
Scouts in Poland, replicating the strong patriotic, ethical and moral orientation, which accepted
“God” and “Fatherland” as key authorities. For the Polish government, Polish scouts in Canada
were a means of propagating nationalism. It was simple for the Polish Consuls to adapt the
organization to the Canadian environment. Yet, even though the desire was that Polish scouts
become a separate nation-wide organization, Polish diplomats took a more conciliatory
approach. Jurisdictionally, the Polish scouts became members of the Canadian scouting
organization. However, they retained their own Polish undertones.

Polish language, books culture, songs, and traditions were promoted—all means were
used to strengthen the connections between the Canadian Polish scouts and their counterparts in
the Second Republic.\textsuperscript{199} The links between the Canadian Polish scouts and Poland were
reinforced in a number of ways. Polonia scouts were encouraged to participate in scout rallies in
Poland, such as one that took place in July 1935 in Kraków.\textsuperscript{200} As well, Scout Masters from
Poland gave speeches to Polonia scouts.\textsuperscript{201} Scouts represented a continuation of Polish youth
culture in Canada, and an inculcation of religious and national values that could ensure that the
next generation would continue to be Poland-oriented. The same approach was applied to the
scouts’ affinity for Catholicism. Organizing the scouts within a parish meant that Catholic
values would continue to influence and guide the development of the youth. As well, certain
scout activities were officiated by a Catholic priest, such as the blessing of the Scout’s flag by St.
Mary’s Rev. J. Sajewicz.\textsuperscript{202}

\textsuperscript{198} SSKPA, \textit{CH}, 53.
\textsuperscript{199} AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.913, Confidential Letter from Jan Pawlica to MSZ, Emigration
Department, November 5, 1934.
\textsuperscript{200} AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.913, Letter from the MSZ, November 17, 1934.
\textsuperscript{201} See for example, MPA, \textit{CH}, February 12, 1939.
\textsuperscript{202} MPA, \textit{CH}, February 12, 1939.
The parish was not just a place where Poles came to worship and which fulfilled their religious obligations and desires. The sacred space provided more than just moral and spiritual guidance. It functioned as the centre of the community, by providing a space—both physical and immaterial, overt and subtle—where the cultural traditions left behind could be replicated, relived and reinforced. It was a place where the Polish Catholic identity was revitalized, fortified, and commemorated. The religious popular devotions practiced in the Polish parishes in Canada were plucked from the Catholic churches in Poland, and continued on Canadian soil. The national celebrations, such as revolts of the Partitions, which emphasized the bond between immigrant and his homeland, were observed in religious settings, and by consequence, were sanctified. This Pole-Catholic identity needed to trickle down to the following generations, and for this to be successful, the community desired that children receive a Polish education and be immersed in everything Polish. Consequently, Polish language classes, history and geography became part and parcel of a holistic education that also included religion or catechism classes. To help the youth engage with their identity and to stave off assimilation, youth groups were created such as the scouts or sports clubs. For Polish immigrants of all ages, the parish would remain their “little Poland”—a centre of their community—where familiar religious and national traditions continued to shape their daily lives.
Chapter 3: Religion and the Polish Consuls: A Marriage of Convenience\(^1\)

The arrival of the Polish consuls on Canadian soil commenced a new dimension in the development of the Polish community. Prior to the interwar period, and with the non-existence of the Polish state, Polish immigrants were left to fend for themselves without the protection afforded to them by a consular network. In the period leading up to the 1920s and 1930s, the parish priests were the only consistent leaders that attempted to create a semblance of community life, while functioning as mediators between the immigrants and the Canadian authorities. Given that the migrations of the mid and late 19\(^{th}\) centuries consisted of individuals who did not speak English, who lacked a sense of national identity, and who had received no formal education, the clergymen with their formal education and knowledge of the language became the bridge between these new groups and Canadian laws and culture. They informed the immigrants of how to search for employment and seek out housing, while helping to recreate a community life, which they had left behind.

For the most part, as the first institutions of the Polish community, parishes quickly responded to the needs of immigrants, providing them with a local and easily accessible space which served the cultural, religious and national needs of the people. According to one of the vice-consuls, Roman Mazurkiewicz, the social life of the immigrant could not be separated from the religious life—the parish engendered all the social functions and this was also the place for the development and maintenance of national ideas.\(^2\) In addition to the parishes, responsibilities that would have normally been held by consuls were also conducted by “private” organizations, such as the Polska Rada Narodowa\(^3\) (Polish National Council) in St. Catharines, Ontario, and a

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\(^1\) Parts of this chapter have previously been published in Gabriela Kasprzak, “Patriotic Priests and Religious Consuls: Religion, Nationalism and the Polish Diaspora, 1918-1939” Polish American Studies 68, no.2 (Autumn 2011): 11-39.

\(^2\) AAN, Akta Janiny i Kazimierza Warchałowskich, sign.244, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w kanadzie (Warszawa: MSZ, no date).

\(^3\) This organization was also known as the Rada Polska w Kanadzie (Polish Council in Canada).
similar organization, Rada Polaków w Zachodniej Kanadzie (Polish Council in Western Canada) in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Such organizations were usually established during the years of the First World War given that prior to this period, passports and other forms regulating migration were limited or even non-existent.¹ These particular organizations had received permission from the Polish National Committee in Paris² to provide Poles with certificates of national identity and passports. Simultaneously, they helped to direct money and goods to Polish territories.³ During the Great War, these national identity certificates distinguished Poles from Prussians or Austro-Hungarians, precluding them from being identified by their region of origin (Prussia or Austria-Hungary) and labelled as “enemy aliens.”⁴ As there were no Polish state representatives in Canada, such organizations provided only basic services to the community. Like many others, they were comprised of lay and clerical administrators. In the case of the Polska Rada Narodowa, the president was a young man in his twenties with an elementary school education; however, the real authority lay with the secretary, the local pastor, Rev. Ostaszewski.⁵ The reach of the priests extended to many areas outside of the parish walls simply because there was no one else to fill these voids. Once consular posts were established, these organizations were dissolved.

In their respective works, both Benedykt Heydenkorn and Mateusz Bogdanowicz make the claim that the “consulates in Canada made no effort to organize Polonia for purposes of great political power nor did they use the Polish group for any such aims...they did try to channel

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² This organization was established in 1917 by Roman Dmowski, and recognized as Poland’s legitimate government by the French that same year and by the British and Americans in 1918. Its purpose was to support the Entente by creating a Polish Army in exchange for Entente support for Polish independence. This Committee was resolved with the re-emergence of an independent Poland.
³ Kołodziej, *Dzieje Polonii*, 238. ARCAT, MNEC05.06, Letter to Archbishop McNeil from the Polish National Council, October 19, 1919.
⁴ AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign. 897, s.28-9, A Report to the Polish Delegates in London from the MSZ, October 4, 1919. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign. 1320, s.12-24, A report to the MSZ dated 1920.
⁵ The first names of clergy are provided in cases where they are known; otherwise such information is not available in archival materials or secondary sources.
Polonia’s political interests towards Canada,”⁶ or that “Polish consuls who feared of being accused of setting off defeatism in Poland and militarism in Canada...tended to cut their support for any (higher) movement which was pro-Polish and patriotic.”⁷ As will be clearly indicated within this chapter, the consular role went beyond just cultural matters. Supporting cultural development was part and parcel of a much larger agenda that had both political and economic implications.

The arrival of consuls in the post-World War I period added another level of management within the Polish community. This group of individuals attempted to further the national interests of Poland by emphasizing the relationship between Polishness and Catholicism. These two factors were to be sustained by cultural works, by strengthening the organizational life of the Polish community, and in particular, by underlining the relationship between the immigrants and their homeland. The concept of Polishness was central to the consuls’ work amongst their compatriots in Canada. The involvement of consuls—and the Polish government—within the life of the Poles in Canada points to the conspicuous uniqueness of this period within the larger history of Polish immigration to Canada. Neither prior to this period in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, nor in the post-World War II Communist period do we see the same relationship between the Polish émigré community and the Polish government. The Poles of the 18th and 19th centuries did not have a government, as Poland did not exist before the end of the Great War. The Poles of the Cold War era, on the other hand, did not recognize the legitimacy of the Communist government in People’s Poland. Many of the post World War II organizations that were established by veterans were not necessarily interested in establishing a modus vivendi with

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⁶ Heydenkorn, A Community in Transition, 209.
Communist Poland. Hence, the interwar years were the only time (with the exception of the post-1989 period) when Poles could freely collaborate with the Polish government.

In comparison with the already endorsed parishes and associations with their clergy, the consuls were late comers to the Canadian scene, arriving only once a Polish state had been re-established. Diplomatic relations with Canada were first established in 1919 and directed from the Polish Embassy in London. The first consulates were opened in Montreal and in Winnipeg at the turn of 1919/1920, followed by a Consulate General in Ottawa in 1933. Until 1933, consuls reported to London and directly to the MSZ. As representatives of the Polish government, the consuls had a multifaceted program they desired to realize, which was implicit in its function of Polish nationalism and was to be fulfilled through a religious medium. A key component of their agenda was to garner support amongst the immigrants for the governing party in Poland and its ideological position. In the early 1920s, the focus was placed on general support for the Polish state. However, as partisan lines were drawn in Poland, the ideological battle was extended to include Canada. This became especially visible following a coup d’état in 1926 when Józef Piłsudski assumed power under conservative authoritarianism. Support for Piłsudski’s policies became a high priority by the latter half of the 1920s. Criticism of the Polish government was an especially sensitive subject given the young state’s domestic troubles and foreign policy pressures. Great misgivings were felt about the rise of socialist sentiments amongst Polish and Ukrainian elements within Canada, and the spread of these currents to the homeland. After all, the revisionist Bolsheviks remained a significant threat to the Second Republic throughout the interwar years, especially given their defeat during the Soviet-Polish War of 1919-21. Radicals from the Left tended to be critical of the Polish state. Their anti-government activity was met with strict sanctions. Criticism of the Polish government in the Zwiazkowiec [Alliancer], for

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example, Toronto’s Polish newspaper and the mouthpiece for the ZPwK, resulted in the banning of the paper from Poland. The Communist-based papers, such as Budzik [Alarm] and Głos Pracy [Voice of Labour], also experienced the same fate. Neither were the clergy an exception to such concerns. The MSZ directed all three consulates to inform MSZ of any priests who took a position damaging to Polish interests; this was especially important in the months leading up to the Second World War.

Apprehension about the immigrants’ potential agency in affecting the political climate in Poland was further indicated by control over the re-emigration of Polish nationals, especially to the eastern regions of the country. Re-emigration to Poland was restricted to prevent the potential diffusion of anti-government propaganda and agitation against the state. Simultaneously, keeping Poles in Canada also ensured the flow of much needed remittances into a country that had to re-establish new ministries and re-consolidate three post-partitioned regions that had achieved different levels of socio-economic development. As well, overpopulation and lack of urban centres to absorb and provide employment for the populace forced the consuls to

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9 Library and Archives Canada (thereafter LAC), Benedykt Heydenkorn Fond (thereafter BH Fond), MG 31 D237 vol.7, “Consulate of the Republic of Poland, Montreal-Ottawa, 1937-42,” Several letters from Związkowiec to the Consulate, December 1937; “Consulate General of Poland, Montreal, 1931-41,” Letter to the Consulates in Montreal and Winnipeg from the Consul in Ottawa, December 23, 1937.

10 Archives of Ontario (thereafter AO), Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario Fond (thereafter MHSO), Canadian Polish Research Institute file, F1405, POL:0010, MU9689, Memo to the three consulates in Canada from the MSZ, July 26, 1939.

11 Edward Kołodziej, Wychodźstwo zarobkowe z Polski 1918-1939: studia nad polityką emigracyjną II Rzeczypospolitej (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1982), 60.

12 There is information lacking about the amount of money sent from Poles in Canada to Poland. However, an examination of the amounts sent by Polish Americans illustrates the importance of remittances. Though there are a number of caveats—the Polish group in Canada was smaller and less established than their southern co-nationals; their contributions were probably also smaller—the significance of the consuls’ policies in this regard must not be overlooked. According to Adam Walaszek, in 1902, 3.5 million dollars in money orders were sent from the U.S. to Galicia; another 4 million was brought by re-emigrants; 3.5 million was sent to Russian Poland and another estimated 12 million dollars was sent with private letters. Between 1919 and 1924, this amount increased to 220 million dollars. This amount closely corresponds to Mieczysław Szawleski’s figure of 200 million dollars transferred between 1921 and 1923. According to Zbigniew Landau, for each respective year between 1928 and 1930, money transactions reached 271, 274 and 291 million złoty. Adam Walaszek, “Overseas Migration Consequences: The Case of Poles Returning from the USA, 1880-1924,” in Eastern Europe and the West. Selected papers from the Fourth World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies, Harrogate, 1990, ed. John Morison (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), 194; Bobiński and Pilch, 119; Kołodziej. Wychodźstwo, 61.
limit the re-emigration of Poles. This need to safeguard the political and economic situation in Poland was juxtaposed by the need to help retain the Polish identity amongst the immigrants.

The concern for the preservation of Polishness was a perpetual problem for the consuls. The loss of Polish “character” or changes to its definition were strongly feared by the Polish government’s representatives, not only as this would affect the people themselves, but also as it would be detrimental for the Polish State and its political, and more importantly, economic relationship with Canada. Polish immigrants were important to the consuls as they were regarded as the personification of Poland—as advocates that could speak on behalf of Polish interests. Given this crucial role that was imparted on the people, the consuls were vehement that Poles present their culture and traditions in such a manner that would highlight the grandeur of the nation. The Polish emigrant had an active role to play in this regard, educating others about his/her country. But, in order for this to be successful, the “task of the Pole, living outside the borders of the Republic, was to vigilantly observe the internal changes in Poland, informing others about these changes, [and] seeking out elements which would positively contribute to the psychological structure of the Polish society abroad.”

Polish emigrants were to create a united front with the homeland to preserve Polish interests.

Essentially, the Polish government and its consuls considered Polish immigrants as spokespersons that could mediate a (hopefully) burgeoning economic relationship between the two countries. The eventual hope was that Canada would begin to import Polish products onto its market. This “propaganda supporting trade with Poland” even became a strategy of one of the largest organizations of the Polish community, the Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie.

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13 AAN, Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (thereafter MSZ), sign.4400b (B20626), s.97, A letter to Ministerstwo Przemysłu i Handlu in Warsaw from the MSZ, February 24, 1927.
14 MHSO, Ethnic Group POL Box 9, Kurs wiedzy o Polsce dla młodzieży Polskiej z zagranicy: streszczenie wykładów z 1933/34” (Warszawa: Rada Organizacyjna Polaków z Zagranicy, 1934), 60-1.
15 AAN, MSZ, sign.4400b (B20626), s.72-3, Letter to MSZ, Political Department from the RP Consulate in Montreal, February 8, 1927.
(Federation of Polish Societies, ZZPwK). Consequently, the consuls always directed the immigrants to abide by Canadian laws and standards, to behave with dignity, and to be contributors to Canadian society. Except as Poland’s “ambassadors”, the immigrants were also to push for Poland’s economic policy by demanding and purchasing Polish products.

In the case of Poland, economic nationalism accompanied political nationalism, manifesting itself within protectionist practices and industrialization. Poland’s independence resulted in an outward-oriented economic nationalism, which was strongly driven by external stimuli. The outward nature of their economic nationalism was directed in defence of domestic economic interests and against the interests of other states. After all, this was a young state with little domestic capital, significant regional problems, and facing stern international competition for markets.

The Polish consuls were hoping to ensure that Canada would increase its import of Polish products, such as coal and textiles, and the Polish immigrant was the bargaining chip that was offered. Given Canada’s need for cheap labour was one thing, but Canada’s need for immigration was matched by Poland’s need to relieve pressure on its socio-economic system. Since many Poles arrived to Canada under the pretext of being farmers—this was essentially the only way Poles could enter the country—but left quickly for the factories of the cities, concern was raised that Canada’s plan to farm the West was ineffective. In a discussion with W.J. Egan, the Deputy Minister of Immigration and Colonization stated that only 20% of immigrants that

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16 The ZZPwK was an organization established in 1931 under the guidance of the consuls. Receiving its largest support from the provinces of Manitoba and Quebec, the organization comprised of both religious and secular organizations. Its central focus was on maintaining Polish culture and preserving national traditions and historic customs. Henry Radecki, Ethnic Organizational Dynamics, 71. Benedykt Heydenkorn, ed., A Community in Transition: the Polish Group in Canada (Toronto: Canadian Polish Research Institute, 1985), 210-1.


19 Kofman, 47-8.
came in 1927 remained on farms, whereas the government wanted to see a rate of 60% compliancy.\textsuperscript{20} The fear was that “escaping farm workers” would result in the cancellation of the immigration agreement between the two nations as only 10% of Polish immigrants tended to remain as farm labourers.\textsuperscript{21} Attempts at controlling immigration by the Polish and Canadian governments were also a point of contention. The Polish government wanted some measure of control over who was leaving its territory, which they managed to achieve for the most part under the guise of the Syndykat Emigracyjny (Emigration Syndicate).\textsuperscript{22} However, Egan continued to press that the Canada Pacific Railway (CPR) and the Canada National Railway (CNR) continue this process, and that the Polish government abide by the March 1927 agreement, which laid out the Canadian requirements regarding who could migrate.\textsuperscript{23} The Canadian government was hoping to pressure the incoming Poles to stay on farms in the West.

The Polish government attempted to take advantage of Canada’s immigration policy complying with the Canadian government’s demands for Western settlement. By utilizing its emphasis on settling the West with farmers, the consuls along with the MSZ hoped to create separate Polish enclaves. These enclaves would meet the Canadian government’s demand for agricultural labour, while keeping Poles isolated from other ethnic groups and facilitating the maintenance of language and culture. Such enclaves would also ensure speedier immigration for

\textsuperscript{20} AAN, MSZ, sign.9552 (B25959), s.4-10, A letter to MSZ from Jan Pawlica, the RP Consulate in Montreal, October 14, 1927, discussing the 1927 Polish-Canadian immigration agreement.

\textsuperscript{21} AAN, MSZ, sign.9679 (B26089), s.173-7, A letter to Director of Urząd Emigracyjny, Roman Kutyłowski, from RP Consulate in Winnipeg, December 15, 1929.

\textsuperscript{22} The Syndykat Emigracyjny was a corporation created in January 1930 and owned in part by the Treasury (60%). Its role was to take over the recruitment of emigrants and to oversee their well-being in foreign lands. As a quasi-government institution, their finances were based on government support and from the selling of ship liner tickets. Consequently, they were strongly motivated by improving and increasing Polish emigration, especially when it came to overseas migration. Anna Kicinger, \textit{Polityka Emigracyjna II Rzeczpospolitej} (Warszawa: Środowoeuropejskie Forum Badan Migracyjnych, 2005), p.32, accessed October 18, 2010, http://www.cefmr.pan.pl/docs/cefmr_wp_2005-04.pdf.

\textsuperscript{23} This situation would change come March 1930 when the House of Commons indicated that it would not extend the contract it held with the CNR and the CPR. Ibid; AAN, MSZ, sign.9680 (B26090), s.17-9, A letter to MSZ from the RP Consulate in Montreal, January 11, 1930. Alojzy Balawyder, “Stosunki kanadyjsko-polskie w latach 1919-1935,” in \textit{Współczesna Kanada}, ed. Michał Dobroczyński and Roman March (Warszawa: Biblioteka Spraw Międzynarodowych, 1978), 208.
Poles further alleviating the pressures of over-population and unemployment. To this effect, an agency was created—the Towarzystwo Kolonizacyjnego do Kanady—\(^{24}\) (The Association of the Colonization of Canada)—to assess the potential regions where Polish settlement could be established.\(^{25}\) In a report to the MSZ, the Towarzystwo Kolonizacyjne indicated that Polish settlement in Canada would be beneficial because there was the probability of gaining certain rights similar to those achieved by the Francophones of Quebec.\(^{26}\) Delegates were sent to Western Canada, to survey the climate and topography of a given region; to determine the costs associated with the establishment and maintenance of a farm; and to ascertain the prospect of the success of these settlements.\(^{27}\) The most effective regions for achieving the government’s goals were Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, with greater emphasis placed on the former two. There were even hopes that the Towarzystwo Kolonizacyjne would purchase large tracts of land, which would be utilized for settlement by Polish families.\(^{28}\) This would ensure greater control over Polish communities, while attempting to avoid Canada’s anti-block settlement strategy\(^{29}\) an unrealistic option given Canada’s immense size. Though these plans were not met with success, a part of which was due to the Great Depression and the closing of borders, the question remains: under what authority did the Polish government think that such action was possible?

Endeavouring to improve Polish-Canadian relations while pressing forward with increased Polish emigration, the Towarzystwo Kolonizacyjne called on the Polish government to facilitate the liquidation of property and to improve access to loans for the trip.\(^{30}\) Polish officials

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\(^{24}\) The two delegates representing this association were Roman Mazurkiewicz, advisor to the MSZ and Aleksander De Lago, one of the two directors of the association. 

\(^{25}\) AAN, MSZ, sign.9825 (B26235), s.1-2, Letter from Urząd Emigracyjny to the MSZ, Consular Department, July 8, 1929; Instructions from the Urząd Emigracyjny to the MSZ, Consular Department, August 7, 1929. 

\(^{26}\) AAN, MSZ, sign.9825 (B26235), s.17-22, Instructions from the Urząd Emigracyjny to the MSZ, Consular Department, August 7, 1929. 

\(^{27}\) Ibid. AAN, OPnRnO, sign.135/82, s.13, Article “Kolonizacja Polska w kanadzie,” X-XI, 1930. 

\(^{28}\) AAN, MSZ, sign.9825 (B26235), s.34-40, Report from Roman Mazurkiewicz to Towarzystwo Kolonizacyjne, September 8, 1929. 

\(^{29}\) Gucka, 120; Balawyder, 208; Grześkowiak, 65. 

\(^{30}\) AAN, MSZ, sign.9825 (B26235), s.17-22, Instructions from the Urząd Emigracyjny to the MSZ, August 7, 1929.
also reduced the baggage costs and pursued a liberal policy toward passport-giving. Improving the outflow of Poles was accompanied by the need to ensure the preservation of Polish language and culture. Paradoxically, while advocating that Poles become beneficial members of Canadian society, the Polish consuls were attempting to halt the Canadianization of their co-nationals. The consuls were well aware that their involvement within the Polish community had to appear free of any political motives that would result in conflict between the two nations, and could be construed by the Canadian government as consular support for anti-Canadian agitation, resulting in the closing of doors to Polish migration. Even during the period directly preceding the Second World War, the Polish Consulate in Ottawa warned MSZ that any monetary collections the government was asking Poles to make through the consulates had to proceed with caution. The Canadian government was carefully watching such actions under the pretext of keeping an eye out for fascist movements in Canada. Consequently, the Polish consul suggested that all donations be made directly to the country, bypassing the involvement of the consulates. The promotion of Polish identity amongst immigrants had to take place through non-political means, and the easiest way to achieve this was by turning to an already built network of religion and clergy.

Turning to clergy was rooted in the relationship established between Poland’s Primate, Cardinal August Hlond and the Polish government, particularly that of Piłsudski. Piłsudski’s role in Poland lasted for the most part of the interwar period. From November 1918 to December 1922, Piłsudski acted as Chief of State. This was followed by the presidencies of Gabriel Narutowicz (December 1922) and Stanisław Wojciechowski (December 1922 to May 1926). Following the coup of 1926, although the official presidency was given to Ignacy Mościcki (June

31 Gucka, 198.
32 AAN, MSZ, sign.9825 (B26235), s.118-134, Wnioski i umotywanie w sprawie kolonizacji i wychodźtwa do kanady, January 11, 1930.
33 AAN, MSZ, sign. 10020 (B26430), s.2, A letter to MSZ from Jan Pawlica, the RP Consulate in Ottawa, March 7, 1939.
1926 to September 1939), real power lay with Piłsudski until his death in 1935. This latter decisive period corresponds with the election of Cardinal Hlond in 1926 as Archbishop to the Metropolitan See of Gniezno-Poznań and is punctuated by strong co-operation between the two men in regards to the welfare of emigrants.

Hlond was responsible for taking care of the spiritual needs of émigré Poles, and was the liaison to be contacted by Polish diplomats—via the MSZ—regarding matters of religious welfare of Poles in Canada. In 1932, he established the male religious order, Towarzystwo Chrystusowców dla Wychodźców Polskich (Society of Christ Fathers), to serve the needs of the Polish émigré community, and he opened an interdiocese seminary for training priests to work amongst Polish emigrants. He was also the patron of the Polish School Fund Abroad, and had founded the Dzień Polaka z Zagranicy (Day of the Pole Abroad) in 1937. Most important was the reorganization of Opieka Polski nad Rodakami na Obczyźnie (Poland’s Aid for Compatriots Abroad) in 1929 as a Catholic organization in a collaborative effort between Piłsudski and Hlond to ensure the religious and national identity of Polish emigrants. The purpose of the organization was to “engender as its general program aid to emigrants within a Catholic and

34 For more information about the relationship between Church and State during the interwar years, please see, Neal Pease’s Rome’s Most Faithful Daughter, The Catholic Church and Independent Poland, 1914-1939 (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2009).
35 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.55, A Circular Letter to All Diplomatic and Consular Posts of the Polish Republic from W. Babiński, Department Director, MSZ, July 15, 1927. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.45, A Letter from Primate Cardinal Hlond, April 19, 1927. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.55, Circular Letter to all Diplomatic and Consular Posts outside Poland from W. Babiński, Department Director, MSZ, July 15, 1927.
37 Bakalar, 15.
national spirit.” Essentially, the role of the Opieka was to create a symbiosis of the patriotic with the religious.

The financial support for this society was to come from the Urząd Emigracyjny (Department of Emigration, UE), and its activities were to be felt within the cultural domain of the Polish community. Opieka was to become a beacon of Polish unity amongst all immigrant groups, while acting as a bridge between these communities and the homeland. This society was to monitor the economic, cultural and educational evolution of Polish immigrant communities while ensuring that they received the material funds needed to further areas of educational and cultural improvement, including supplying Polish organizations with newspapers, books, funds and materials for Polish schools, including the opening of more Polish missions and programs for youth in particular.

The concern for emigrants was reflected in a variety of ministries and associations established to respond to the needs of emigrants. In 1919, the Polish government had established the Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, MPiOS) under the control of the UE, and the Państwowy Urząd Pośrednictwa Pracy (National Employment Agency, PUPP). PUPP was responsible for providing emigrants with information about gaining employment in another country, obtaining passports, credit for travel purposes, money exchange, and re-emigration. Only during the following year in 1920 was PUPP brought under the control of the UE, launching a united emigration front. The task of the UE was to gather information about employment possibilities for emigrants and to collaborate with the

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38 AAN, OPnRnO, sign.358/16, s.9, Booklet Sprawozdanie okręgu Zachodniego Stowarzyszenia “Opieka Polska” nad Rodakami na obczyźnie, September 12, 1929 to March 31, 1931.
MSZ on improving information about emigration and re-emigration. Nevertheless, even though
the UE was cited as being responsible for overseeing emigration, in all actuality, the MSZ’s
consular network was accountable for the well-being of the emigrants. After all, the consuls were
on the ground and operated at the local level. Involvement in emigration matters extended
beyond the UE and the MSZ to include government agencies, such as the Ministerstwo Wyznań
Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego\(^\text{41}\) (Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education,
MWRiOP) and the Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej\(^\text{42}\) (Ministry of Social Welfare, MOS), whose
interests lay with the social and religious welfare of emigrants and the government’s policies in
this regard. In determining such policy, “the Ministry of Social Welfare in understanding with
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs has the right, after hearing
the opinion of the Director of the Emigration Department, to temporarily halt emigration in its
entirety, or to certain countries, if the protection of life, liberty, and the moral and economic
interests of emigrants requires it, or for the public good.”\(^\text{43}\)

It was the collaborative effort of these various ministries along with social organizations
that led to two Zjazdy Polaków z Zagranicy (Conventions of Poles Abroad), with the first
convention taking place in the Fall 1925, followed by the Summer of 1929. The second
convention was placed under the protectorate of President Ignacy Mościcki, Marshal Józef
Piłsudski and Primate August Hlond in order to gain favour with Poles living abroad and to try

\(^{41}\) MWRiOP was first established in 1917, but received organizational status in 1921, and was originally divided into
two departments: Religious Affairs and Public Education, with the former being further divided into three
departments: that of Roman Catholicism; Protestantism and Judaism. One of its main functions was to act as an
liaison between the government and religious groups. Paweł Leszczyński, Centralna Administracja Wyznaniowa II
RP—Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego (Warszawa: Semper, 2006), 158.

\(^{42}\) MOS was responsible for advocating on behalf of emigrants, in particular, reporting on the conditions of travel,
treatment of Poles by immigration agents of other countries and for ensuring the safety of Poles during the process
of migration.

\(^{43}\) AAN, Ministerstwo Społecznej Opieki (thereafter MOS), sign.15/I/79, s.1-2, Emigration Act, signed by M.K, no
date.
and mitigate the influence of the Endencja and its popularity within the Catholic Church.\footnote{Even though Piłsudski and the consuls in Canada were always very careful about their relationship with the Catholic Church, he did come into conflict with those religious individuals who were supporters of Endencja, and those who held a different vision for Polish nationalism. For information on Catholicism and Polish political thought please see, Jarosław Maćala, \textit{Polska katolicka w myśli politycznej II RP} (Toruń: Wyd. Adam Marszałek, 2005). For more information about conventions held by Poles, please see Danuta Bromowicz and Anna Rzeczyńska, \textit{Zjazdy Polaków zagranicy w okresie międzywojennym} (Kraków: Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Polska, 1992).}{\footnote{AAN, OPhRnO, sign.358-I/42, s.6, Announcement to All Poles outside Poland, no date. (However, the announcement was probably published in the early months of 1929, since the text begins by indicating that “a few months ago we celebrated the tenth anniversary of Independence [November 1928].")}

During this latter convention, a new umbrella organization—Rada Organizacyjna Polaków z Zagranicy (Organizational Committee of Poles Abroad)—was called into action with the purpose of supporting cultural and educational activities, along with establishing scholarships to Polish universities, organizing trips to Poland, establishing economic co-operatives, and consolidating Polish organizations.\footnote{Bromowicz and Reczyńska, 21.}

This organization, fully reliant on the MSZ, was transformed into the Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy (Worldwide Association of Poles Abroad, Światpol) in 1934, and followed up with another convention in an attempt to bring together representatives of Polish immigrant communities. The objective was to provide a continuation of Polish culture between the émigrés and the motherland “without encroaching upon the responsibilities Poles held in regards to countries in which they resided.”\footnote{AAN, OPhRnO, sign.358-I/42, s.6, Announcement to All Poles outside Poland, no date. (However, the announcement was probably published in the early months of 1929, since the text begins by indicating that “a few months ago we celebrated the tenth anniversary of Independence [November 1928].")} It is also important to know that a number of the delegations, from the US and Germany in particular, called on the organization to provide an apolitical agenda and to concern itself primarily with cultural and educational matters. Even though Światpol had emphasized cultural preservation, they also pushed for a political agenda, in particular, Polish immigrant representatives were expected to pledge an oath of loyalty to the Polish government. Polish Americans refused, affirming that their loyalty lay with the American government; instead, they saw their ties to Poland being maintained only within cultural
parameters. This would be the last convention held as the one planned for 1939 was cancelled due to rising political tensions within Europe.

For better or worse, the involvement of the Polish government via the consuls in the affairs of the Polish immigrant community was motivated by a political agenda that was interwoven with a strong desire to preserve the Polishness of its co-nationals. This agenda, which continued to see itself as a fulfillment of the political trends in Poland—where Pole and Catholic were integral components of each other—also had to find a way of accessing the Polish immigrants. The consuls become its most effective conduit. Since maintaining Polishness was a top priority, a medium had to be chosen that could carry the message of national identity preservation. In the case of the Canadian Poles, religion (along with clergy), were the means by which this was to be achieved. The support for using the already existing religious and clerical networks was fully endorsed by the Polish government, and reflected in a co-operative relationship between Hlond and Piłsudski. It also made sense. Firstly, most immigrants had accepted this social network and utilized it as a means of maintaining contact with each other. Parishes offered a place where culture and identity would be celebrated and nursed. The founding of parishes had also led to the establishment of other religious and secular organizations, which again, brought people together, while responding to the needs of the

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47 As a result of such an antagonistic reaction, until 1939, Światpol would focus its energies on the European continent. Kicinger, 46.
48 Nevertheless, the success of these ministries and associations was mitigated by the extensive nature of Polish migration. Between 1919 and 1925, 347,177 Poles left to go overseas, with the largest number (over 200,000) leaving for the United States; continental migration was numbered at 384,372. With regard to the period between 1926 and 1930, continental migration numbered at 679,077 Poles, while 284,505 Poles travelled overseas, with just over a 100,000 of these migrating to Canada. Given that most migration was seasonal in nature and bound to the borders of Europe, greater focus was placed on these Polish groups. The economic situation of the 1930s and another world war further reduced the effectiveness of these organizations. Edward Kołodziej, Wychodźstwo zarobkowe, 88-9, 98-9, 144, 148.
49 An example of this very plan were the discussions between Consul Jan Pawlica and Rev. Sylla, Solski and Rev. Dr. Kreciszewski, with the latter two agreeing to a co-operative relationship when it came to supporting the consul-sponsored ZZPwK. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.126-8, Confidential Letter to the Consular Department Director, MSZ from Jan Pawlica, May 11, 1933.
community, including furthering patriotic sentiment and fostering Polish language and culture.\textsuperscript{50} Moreover, this was the only public space within which national holidays were celebrated.

The association of Polishness with Catholicism was not just political manoeuvring; it was fully endorsed by the Catholic leaders in Poland. In a booklet addressing the issue of religion amongst Polish emigrants, the Bishop of Częstochowa, Dr. Teodor Kubina declared that “the Polish government has the undeniable right that the Polonia beyond the borders, and especially the Catholic element, assume a positive attitude toward the Polish State. And this approach to the State should also be taken by clergy outside the borders.”\textsuperscript{51} All parties—including those of the Polish State, the consuls, the Polish (Canadian) clergy and the émigrés—were to co-operate for the good of the State and of Catholicism. A proper Christian outlook, according to Hlond, ensured that the homeland and its needs were properly met—shunning one’s country could not take place within a Catholic ethos. Fundamental to maintaining the appropriate balance between notions of Polishness and Catholicism was a good, close working relationship between the consulates and the Polish priests.\textsuperscript{52} Achieving such a harmonious relationship would take much effort by both parties.

The consuls quickly realized that the local clergyman was the de facto leader amongst the immigrants. He was familiar with the goings on in the community, he was educated, and he functioned on a grass-roots level—something that would have been difficult for the consuls to achieve. Consequently, he was a perfect candidate to facilitate this movement. Moreover, religion was accepted amongst (most) people, making the establishment of a new system of networks unnecessary. All that the current system required, according to the consuls, was some fine-tuning. It is important to note that the consuls did not directly impose their policies on the

\textsuperscript{50} AAN, OPnRnO, sign.135/82, s.22, “Wychodźtwo Polskie w kanadzie,” 1931.
\textsuperscript{52} AO, MHSO Fond, Canadian Polish Research Institute file, F1405, POL:0010, MU 9689, A Letter to Dr. A. Zarychte, Director of the MSZ from J. Marlewski, Consul in Montreal, August 9, 1934.
immigrants, but rather incorporated them by supporting certain aspects of the Polish cultural and organizational life. Fundamentally, it was just a matter of nuances. They had to affect certain ideas without overtly seeming to do so. The activities of the consuls focused on expanding matters of culture and education, which were already underway within various parishes in the 1920s, and which would expand into secular organizations in the 1930s. This focus also coincided with a pressing need to unify all Poles under one umbrella organization—the ZZPwK. Nevertheless, the grand desires of the consuls could not always be realized. Though clergy and consuls may have had similar goals in mind when it came to maintaining Polishness, they did not always agree on each other’s methods. Even amongst the consuls there was disagreement about the approach required to bring Poles together. Józef Marlewski wanted to pursue a more moderate approach—one that did not force the ZPwK and the SPwK to join the ZZPwK. Jan Pawlica, on the other hand, was of the opinion that the ZPwK and SPwK should be compelled to join.53 However, regardless of how the community needed to be approached, the consuls did achieve consensus on one point—they could not comprehend the lack of desire by independent organizations to join the ZZPwK and to be loyal to the Polish state.

The relationship between these two camps—the religious and the political were not always in agreement about the proper character of the Poles’ Polishness or its development. Foremost, criticism was rampant about the quality of nationalism found amongst clergy. Praise was given out just as often about works promoting nationalism under the leadership of priests. Regardless of the tensions between the two groups, both of them needed each other. The consuls were cognizant of the lack of resources available to clergy. They were also acutely aware that in order for Polish clergy to be effective conduits of Polishness, the numbers of Polish priests and female religious orders had to increase in order to meet the needs of the dispersed Polish

53 Heydenkorn, A Community in Transition, 224-5.
population. To that effect, both the episcopacy in Poland and the MSZ, of which the consuls were an extension, joined forces to complement the network of pastoral outposts, including supporting the work of both secular and religious Polish priests.\textsuperscript{54} In discussions with the Apostolic Delegate, Msgr. Cassulo, the Consul General to Canada, Dr. Jerzy Adamkiewicz, even pressed the issue for a Polish Clerical Representative headquartered in Ottawa, who would oversee the Polish clergy, arguing that the Canadian Catholic Church was slow to action, resulting in inappropriate individuals heading parishes. In consequence, Poles faced anti-Roman and atheistic agitation, and were leaving the Church.\textsuperscript{55} Not only were consuls attempting to strengthen the Polish Catholic Church on Canadian soil, they were vigorously involved in the activities of the Church presenting themselves as the protectors and advocates for the Polish Catholic element. This involvement not only included advocating on behalf of the Polish parishes but also questioning the nationalistic elements—or the lack there of—within the community. The reality of what the consuls were able to achieve given their extensive agenda, especially following the Depression, reveals mixed results. Already in 1927 calls for funding the religious outposts and missionary priests was put off by a year due to a lack of funds.\textsuperscript{56} However, the Polish immigrant community was deeply affected by the activities of the consuls on Canadian soil.

The arrival of the consuls was met with initial dismay at the chaos they found within the Polish community. It is essential to note that their first reports on the status of the Polonia are a commentary on the pre-World War I arrivals, given that the interwar migration from Poland

\textsuperscript{54} AAN, Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego (thereafter MWRiOP), sign.437 (B9431), s.13, Letter to the Polish Episcopacy Bureau from Babiński, Director of the Consular Department, MSZ, February 26, 1926.
\textsuperscript{55} AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.21-3, Letter to the Consular Department Director, MSZ from Dr. J. Adamkiewicz, September 16, 1934.
\textsuperscript{56} AAN, MWRiOP, sign.437 (B9431), s.26-7, Letter to MWRiOP from August Hłond, December 3, 1927. AAN, MWRiOP, sign.437 (B9431), s.30, 34, Letter to Centralne Biuro Zagranicy Opieki Duszpasterskiej from Dr. J. Brzeziński, MSZ, no date.
reached its peak only in the mid-1920s. The status of the community further propelled the consuls into action, believing that a quick response needed to be taken to stave off the creeping assimilation and Canadianization. In examining the Polish community in the early 1920s, the consuls indicated that in Eastern Canada, for example, achievements had been made within the realm of religion—the building of parishes and organizing religious associations. Exploring the cities of Toronto, Hamilton, St. Catharines, Windsor, Kitchener, Brantford, Montreal, and the village of Wilno, the consuls pointed out that each city had its own Polish parish and parish-based organizations. Nevertheless, there were only a handful of associations and organizations—all found in Hamilton—which operated an education program, and which limited their roles to celebrating national holidays and patriotic drama performances.

Upon an inspection of the various Polish communities within Canada, the consuls expressed concern for the lack of intelligentsia found amongst the Poles (with the exception of the clergy), and an underdeveloped institutional life beyond the parish walls. There was only one Polish newspaper, Toronto-based Nowe Życie [New Life] for Eastern Canada, an absence of Polish doctors, lawyers, engineers, and businessmen, and only two secular organizations within the region—Spójnia Narodowa Polski (Polish National “Progressive” Union) and Związek Polaków z Zagranicy (The Polish Friendly Alliance in Canada, ZPwK). Winnipeg, was

57 The peak of Polish migration to Canada transpired between 1926 and 1930. Anna Reczyńska, For Bread and a Better Future: Emigration from Poland to Canada 1918-1939 (North York: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1996), 38.
58 It is interesting—and important—to note that the consuls had divided Canada into two regions: Eastern Canada and Western Canada. However, these definitions in actuality referred to the provinces of Ontario and Quebec (Quebec is later dropped from this characterization), and to the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, respectively. The focus was directed at compact Polish settlements, which had established—to various degrees—some sort of Polish national community life.
59 AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.3-8, Report to the MSZ from Consul J. Okołowicz, Montreal, QC, March 27, 1921.
60 This concept of “education” or “oświatowy” embodies a broader sense of “enlightenment”, and not only as a program of instruction or the imparting of information. Within this broader notion lay the concepts of nationalism and national identity as expressed in the study of history and language.
61 AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.3-8, Report to the MSZ from Consul J. Okołowicz, Montreal, QC, March 27, 1921.
somewhat better with two Polish doctors and two lawyers—none who aspired to national activism, and a newspaper, *Gazeta Katolicka* [The Catholic Gazette]. The consuls were only consoled by the generally slow assimilative nature of the Polish community. Nonetheless, they were acutely aware that a faster assimilation would transpire within urban centres. The need to ensure the continued existence of Polish identity was further stimulated by the arrival of more migrants in the mid to late 1920s.

In their desire to preserve the integrity of the Polish community, the consuls were also concerned about the quality of nationalist sentiment amongst the leaders within the community. In particular, would clergy be receptive vessels for furthering Polish identity and would this receptivity be based on their own nationalist attitude? In the early 1920s, the consuls complained that not all clergy were open to the suggestions and activities of the consuls. When sending out surveys, inquiring about the size and nature of Polish settlements and parishes, not all surveys were returned or not all information was related. Reports of clergy who hindered aspects of a nation-oriented organizational life were attributed, by the consuls, to a given priest’s place of birth or of training.

Consul Józef Okołowicz, commented on one particular case, that of Fr. Stanislaus Jedruszczak of St. Catharines, attributing the priest’s anti-national stance to his Americanization and having been a ward of the American seminary. The consul further inferred that as a result of Jedruszczak’s position, a significant portion of the Polish population in the area did not belong to the parish. Whether Jedruszczak’s position on the national question was the determining element keeping Poles at bay from their parish is up for dispute. In letters to Toronto’s Archbishop Neil McNeil, Fr. Jedruszczak discussed parish life in St. Catharines, Beaverbord, Thorold and in

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63 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.66-80, Report of the Consulate General, Montreal, June 14, 1923.
64 AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.3-8, Report to the MSZ from Consul J. Okołowicz, Montreal, QC, March 27, 1921.
Welland, expressing the difficulty he had with Poles attending masses (except for the attendance of children at Sunday school) or in maintaining a position of ecclesiastical authority within the community.\textsuperscript{65} A number of issues could have affected this relationship. First, the continuous changing of clergy or long periods without a priest could have made it difficult to establish a positive relationship between the two. Second, the slow response of the archdiocese for calls from the community in obtaining Polish clergy could have translated into apathy within the community. Third, financial problems and poverty could have affected Polish participation in the parish, whereby Poles did not attend because they were unable to make monetary donations or due to a lack of “appropriate” Sunday attire. Jedruszczak noted something similar in regards to the blessing of homes, where Poles declined his offer to bless their houses because they could not make an offering.\textsuperscript{66} Fourth, the transitory nature of Polish migration may have also affected church attendance. Given the fact that children did attend Sunday school, religious instruction was important to the community, despite adult non-attendance. Nevertheless, a close relationship between that which was religious or Catholic, and that which was national or nation-oriented, was clearly the determining factor for Okołowicz.

In writing about the national character of the Polish community in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, consul Jan Pawlica indicated that when the new pastor—“a Pole of American extraction”\textsuperscript{67}—had come to the parish and started speaking to them in English, the “Poles energetically demanded that the priest speak to them in Polish and teach them their native

\textsuperscript{65} ARCAT, SCAB06.11(b-c), Letters to Bp. Neil McNeil from Fr. Stanislaus Jedruszczak, OSM, July 1, 1921; October 24, 1921; December 6, 1921.

\textsuperscript{66} ARCAT, SCAB06.11(c) Letter to Bp. Neil McNeil for Fr. Stanislaus Jedruszczak, OSM, October 24, 1921.

\textsuperscript{67} Given that in actuality this priest was an American of Polish heritage, the consul’s choice of language illustrates the attitude held by the consuls and Polish government regarding Polish emigrants. Regardless of how long a Pole was abroad—whether it was a few years or generations—they were still considered to be Poles in the full sense of this word, and in need of safeguarding from elements harmful to their identity.
language.” 68 Once again, the matter of a priest’s national orientation was an imperative issue for the consuls. Even the Oblates of Mary Immaculate—an order that had Polish priests working with Polish immigrants in Western Canada since the late 19th century—did not escape unscathed. According to one report, the “priests of the Oblate order, especially those educated here, are completely unsuitable for cultural activities especially patriotic and civic ones amongst Polish emigrants in Canada. They are mostly denationalized, having no knowledge of contemporary Poland, not understanding the life of the Polish peasant, his customs and attachments to certain religious rites unknown here [in Canada].” Pawlica continued to endorse the need for priests from Poland stating, “The flow of intelligent, civic-minded Polish priests to Canada, could result in the establishment of numerous Polish parishes, and the creation of national centres of Polish life in already-established parishes, which, for the improvement of the cultural state of emigrants and the improvement of their national awareness, as well as to prevent the denationalization of the polish element, are of utmost importance.” 69 Priests were great for the Polish community, but only if they had the right national orientation and disposition.

Despite the difficulties that the consuls faced in convincing (some) clergy to expand their repertoire to include the promotion of Piłsudski’s government, they still relied on priests to expand the edification of national identity amongst Polish immigrants, to achieve group consolidation and to ensure their loyalty to the Polish government. These three objectives were so critical that they were used as criteria to assess the appointment of clergy to a parish. The consuls actively networked with clergy to achieve their goals, but it was also important that the

68 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.141, Letter to Polish Embassy in London from J. Pawlica, August 18, 1933. (Copies of this letter were also sent out to the MSZ, the Consul General in Ottawa and the Rada Organizacyjna Polaków z Zagranicy.)
69 AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.19-28, Report of the Consulate General, Montreal, June 14, 1923.
clergy support and collaborate with the consuls. A positive and open attitude by the clergy towards the consolidation of the Polonia was strongly desired. Even better if the clergy “would support the government of Marshal Piłsudski, towards whom they are loyally inclined...” In this way, consuls praised clergy who supported the national development of the Polish immigrants, while reproaching those who did not follow that agenda.

The question of the clergy’s national orientation and national identity was of serious consequence in maintaining the appropriate form of national sentiments amongst the people. As the leaders in the community, it was essential that the clergy presented an image of Poland which coincided with support for the Piłsudski government, while subverting the “radical” elements—communists, socialists, and even integral nationalist (associated with Dmowski). The consuls were looking for reliable clergy who could be entrusted with the proper national education of the masses, and this “reliability” was rooted in an affinity for the Second Republic and its political leaders (after 1926, of course centring on Piłsudski). The attitude of the consuls was thus mirrored in the stance taken by Polish clergy visiting Canada. Both groups considered the Poles to be under threat from denationalization, Anglicization and even Ukrainianization (in the West), and related this to the inadequate number of Polish clergy and to some of the priests being born or raised outside of Poland (in Canada or the United States). Rev. Dr. Ludwik Gostylla, the representative of Cardinal Hlond, on his visit to Canada in 1929, conveyed the fundamental problem within the Polish community. The Polish community had 43 priests of Polish descent, with 38 of these being active, serving 195 churches and chapels. Out of this group, 16 were born and raised in Poland and only 9 had become priests in Poland. Accordingly, Gostylla argued that it was critical for Polish clergy to be brought to Canada while young and promising priests.

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70 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.126a-128, Confidential Letter to the Consular Department Director, MSZ from Jan Pawlica, May 11, 1933.
71 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.19-20, Confidential Letter to the Consular Department Director, MSZ from Jan Pawlica, March 12, 1934.
72 OMIAP Archives, Box HSB Polish Pastoral Work in Canada, A Report from Rev. Gostylla, undated.
of Polish descent ought to be sent to Poland to learn Polish and “become familiar with the
traditions and spirit of our country.”

Nevertheless, critique of clergy’s national orientation had to be balanced against the
utilitarian value of the clergy within the community. A lack of collaboration between consuls and
clergy would make the consolidation of the community, under the banner of loyalty to the Polish
government, almost impossible. The clergy were the individuals who had been and still were
leading educational campaigns amongst the Poles, and while it was imperative to bring in Polish
priests with similar nationalistic attitudes to those held by the consuls, it was just as important to
ensure that the current Polish clergy maintained and strengthened the nationalistic component in
their activities amongst the people. Consequently, the relationship between consuls and priests
involved two fronts: consuls would intervene with the Canadian Catholic authorities to try and
increase the number of Polish priests and improve the status of Polish clergy within the
community, and they would strengthen their relationship with the clergy in hopes of gaining
clerical support for their own activities. The involvement of the consuls in matters of religion
was not necessarily condemned within the Polish community; instead, consuls became the go-to-
men for concerns regarding the religious and specifically the national development of Poles.

One of the most prominent ways in which the consuls intervened in religious matters was
by ensuring a supply of participants. Hence, the responsibility of attaining the services of more
Polish priests did not only lie with the Canadian Catholic Church, but also with the consuls and
the MSZ. The consuls became active participants within the ecclesiastical sphere, as they
believed that the Canadian Catholic Church was not doing enough to help preserve the ethnic
character of Polish communities. They wanted to either place pressure on the religious

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73 OMIAP Archives, Box HSB Polish Pastoral Work in Canada, A Report from Rev. Gostylla, undated.
74 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.19-20, A Confidential Letter to the MSZ Consular Department
Director from Consul Jan Pawlica, March 12, 1934.
authorities or to sidestep the bureaucracy altogether. By presenting the Canadian Catholic authorities with names of potential individuals, for instance, the consuls would be assured that priests of the “appropriate national sentiment”—those who valued the Pole-Catholic framework promoted back home—would be selected. Understandably, when raising the plight of inadequate numbers of priests working amongst Polish migrants, the issue presented to the Canadian Catholic hierarchy did not point to the preservation of Polish national identity, but rather the loss of individuals either to Protestantism or to communism. The selling feature was religion and not nationalism.

The MSZ turned to religious orders and seminaries in Poland asking for Polish missionaries to be sent to Canada. At times, these types of activities excluded the Canadian Catholic Church from the process. Once a priest had been selected and sent to Canada, he would then approach the archbishop of a region and offer up his services. Though the offering up of services was also done by correspondence, in many of these instances, such a request for aid was gracefully refused. Interestingly, the exchange between priest and archbishop would be relayed to the consuls, as in the case of Rev. Antoni Mazurkiewicz, who stationed in Brooklyn, was sent by his superiors in Poland to Toronto. Upon being informed by McNeil that his offer of assistance was not needed, Mazurkiewicz related his experience to Montreal’s consul Józef Marleowski. Consequently, priests also became the consuls’ source of information on the

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77 Determining the basis for such refusals is difficult to pinpoint due to a lack of evidence. However, in some letters, refusal is explained by a lack of need for such services. There may have been other factors influencing these decisions. In particular, the archbishop may have been aware of the consul’s involvement in these matters; there may not have been a parish to which the inquiring priest could have been assigned; or the calibre of the priest was not up to par; lastly, bringing in a new priest to a parish that was in conflict with the diocese—usually unhappy with the performance of the priest in one way or another—would present a picture of capitulation of the archbishop to the whims of the parishioners.
community. Correspondence between the two parties tended to include information about the status of a Polish community that the priest had visited along the way. In the case of Mazurkiewicz, he visited the Polish community in Welland, Ontario on the request of McNeil, and in a letter to Marlewski, he stated that the Poles were a religious people but “nationalistically neglected”. The lack of national progress found amidst the Polish communities, according to the consuls, was directly related to a lack of clergy within these communities, and this problem could only be resolved by ensuring that each Polish community had its own priest.

The call for priests was met with tempered success, in part by the difficulties the consuls encountered with the Canadian Catholic hierarchy and the Canadian masses. According to the report by Gostylla, English-speaking Catholics were not keen on the formation of national parishes, nor did they support the teaching of religion in the children’s native language. Even when Polish-speaking priests were sought out, they were usually American with cursory knowledge of the Polish language. The attitude of English-speaking bishops was more varied than that amongst the French bishops. Some bishops, like Toronto’s Neil McNeil were quite open to founding of ethnic parishes, while others, such as Calgary’s (later Hamilton’s) John Thomas McNally saw the parish as a means of integrating and assimilating the immigrant. Under the initiative of Archbishop Sinnott, for example, a Polish language and literature chair was opened in the Winnipeg seminary. The French-speaking bishops, like Edmonton’s Émile-Joseph Legal, tended to be supporters of national parishes, arguing that Catholic ethnic minorities would remain Catholic as long as they could preserve their language. This very argument was proposed by the Polish consuls when attempting to secure Polish priests or when

80 AAN, OPnRnO, sign.135/82, s.23, “Język Polski w seminarium w Winnipeg, Man,” Dziennik Zjednoczenia, September 16, 1931.
seeking to improve the status of Polish priests within the Canadian hierarchy. However, there were difficulties that both McNeil and the French bishops faced when dealing with Polish clerics. The latter complained to the consuls about the difficulty they had in controlling Polish priests. This lack of control was attributed to the Poles’ poor comprehension of language, resulting in a problem of communication between the Canadian hierarchy and Polish priests.\textsuperscript{82} Not only were there hitches between Polish clergy and its Canadian component, the consuls were once again the intermediaries between Polish immigrants and Canadian priests. Fulfilling a multi-dimensional array of functions, it appears that consuls worked with, and on behalf of, all parties—Polish government, Polish emigrants, Polish priests and Canadian Episcopacy—but always with the intention of fulfilling their agenda. The consuls’ role amongst the varying parties is also an indicator that Polish immigrants needed an overarching authority that could speak on behalf of the entire community from one coast to another. The consuls gladly assumed this position.

Consular involvement in religious matters even extended to recommending certain priests for a higher office. The consuls were concerned that the Polish (national) spirit was missing within the Canadian church, and at one point could not even count on the intervention of Cardinal Hlond in Polish-Canadian religious matters, since such involvement was viewed negatively by the Canadian ordinaries.\textsuperscript{83} The endeavour to raise the rank of Polish priests was first attempted in Toronto but not limited to this diocese. Toronto was a good choice to begin such an initiative because the late 1920s and especially the 1930s saw the urbanization of the Polish immigrant. The movement from the Prairies into urban centres such as Toronto was compounded by the rise of the secular and more importantly, anti-clerical and left-leaning,

\textsuperscript{82} AO, MHSO Fond, Canadian Polish Research Institute file, F1405, POL:0010, MU 9689, A Letter to the Consul General, Ottawa from Józef Marlewski, Montreal, January 21, 1935.

\textsuperscript{83} AO, MHSO Fond, Canadian Polish Research Institute file, F1405, POL:0010, MU 9689, A Letter to Dr. A. Zarychte, Director of the MSZ from Józef Marlewski, Consul in Montreal, August 9, 1934
Toronto-based Związek Polaków w Kanadzie (The Polish Friendly Alliance in Canada, ZPwK), which also held a Canada-oriented (instead of a Poland-oriented) policy. The activities of this organization needed to be curbed and once again, clergy were to be the means by which this was to be achieved. The consuls wanted to build the authority of the priests within the Polish community, and even within the wider Canadian society. Consequently, the Consular General approached many of the ordinaries in hopes of convincing them to raise the rank of priests. However, the consuls were met with either a lack of possible candidates or difficulties within the Canadian episcopate, which they attributed to their pursuit of a policy of assimilation.84

Rev. Józef Dekowski (1922-35) of St. Stanislaus Parish, Toronto, became the hopeful candidate. The Consul General, Jerzy Adamkiewicz, turned to Archbishop Neil McNeil, requesting that the Archbishop recommend to the Holy See the elevation of Rev. Dekowski to a higher ecclesiastical office. Adamkiewicz even cited support for this action from the Apostolic Delegate in Ottawa, Archbishop Andrew Cassulo. According to the consul, given that the Poles of Toronto played a significant role within the larger Polish community, and the fact that Poles in general had a strong affinity for the Catholic Church, it was in the interests of the Canadian Church to support the promotion of Dekowski. It would not only illustrate Church solidarity with the immigrants, but would ensure that they remained in the fold of the Church, protected from anti-religious and Communist propaganda. The letter is revealing:

As is known to Your Excellency, the Province of Toronto is inhabited by a large number of Polish Catholics, who, whilst playing a prominent part in the national and cultural life of the Polish population of Canada, have always manifested their deep attachment to the Catholic Church. This being the case, the opinion is frequently voiced in Polish circles that it would lie in the interests of Catholicism, if a higher position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy were to be accorded to one of the priests of Polish nationality, officiating in the Province of Toronto, since this would tend to emphasize the solicitude of the Holy Church for the Polish population of this archdiocese...and at the same time effectively counteract anti-

84 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.14-16, A Letter to Consular Department Director, MSZ from Dr. Jerzy Adamkiewicz, February, 5, 1934.
religious and especially Communist propaganda, which is endeavouring to estrange certain factions of the Polish community from their religious allegiance.

I take the liberty of respectfully approaching your Excellency on behalf of a Polish priest, namely the Reverend Father Joseph Dekowski, rector of St. Stanislaus in Toronto, who—according to my knowledge—has achieved great merits both with respect to the interests of the Catholic faith, as also with regard to the work he has accomplished amongst his parishioners...I should deem it an especial favour, if your Excellency would find it possible to recommend to the Holy See the elevation of Father Dekowski to a higher ecclesiastical dignity.  

By arguing for Catholicism as a bulwark against Communism and anti-clericalism, the consuls wanted to ensure support for their ethnic parish. Such a parish could ensure that language, history and national sentiment would not be lost, since these very elements were considered safeguards against radicalism and anti-Catholic sentiment. With the financial aid of the consuls, programs, such as drama groups, Polish-language schools, and libraries were funded in hopes that they would protect against the assimilation of the Pole to the larger English society, while shielding against organizations—whether Communist or anti-clerical—considered anti-Catholic and therefore anti-Polish. By promoting a Polish priest, who was the de facto leader within the community, the consuls alleged that the religious, and by default, the national elements would be emphasized within the community, ensuring the likelihood that the people would be garnered under these very ideas. Consequently, the consuls closely followed the actions of Polish clergymen, favouring those who maintained a close relationship with their communities, and especially those who focused on the educational and national elements within their missions.

Those priests, such as Rev. Władysław Guczyński of Toronto, Rev. Tomasz Tarasiuk of Hamilton, Rev. Górka of Fort William, and Father Stanisław Baderski, OMI, of Winnipeg, who excelled in establishing an environment that promoted Polish nationalism received special

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85 Unfortunately, McNeil’s response is unknown; however, this idea was never realized. Instead, in the 1930s great conflict arose between Dekowski and his parishioners in part because of the economic crisis, rising influence of the Left, and Dekowski’s inflexibility in dealing with his poverty-stricken parishioners. ARCAT, John Jozef Dekowski Clergy File, A Letter to Archbishop Neil McNeil from Consul General Jerzy Adamkiewicz, September 24, 1932.
86 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.908, s.114, A Letter from the Consul Jan Pawlica, January 24, 1934.
Among this group was also Rev. Dekowski, a man decorated with the French Croix de Guerre and the Polish Cross of Vituti Militari, who was cited by the consuls for giving patriotic homilies. He was also praised for the work he had accomplished within Toronto’s Polish community, especially against the radical elements found in the parish. His experience and accomplishments—as one of the founders of the Catholic Association of “Filareci”, as co-editor of the Polish monthly magazine Filaret, and as author of two volumes of poetry—indicated qualities of leadership that were missing within the Polish immigrant community. Rev. Tarasiuk was decorated with the order of Odrodzenia Polski (Rebirth of Poland) upon the recommendation of the Consulate General for his organizational work amongst the Polonia in the Hamilton area. Rev. Jan Pander of Candiac, Saskatchewan was commended for his openness in nurturing Polishness amongst his parishioners, while Fr. Baderski was described as a man who was a great orator and fluent in Polish. Qualified as a Canadian by Jan Pawlica, Rev. Anthony J. Gocki of Regina, Saskatchewan was acknowledged for improving the national awareness of his parish, not only from the pulpit but also in the parish hall through various theatrical, artistic and patriotic celebrations. What is also important to keep in mind is that the consuls did not support all clergy equally. The relationship between consuls and priests was oftentimes filled with tensions and conflicts. Rev. Joseph Solski of Saint Jan Kanty Parish in Winnipeg was criticized for his lack of tact, stubbornness and extremism when dealing with the Towarzystwo Jana Kantego (Association of Jan Kanty). His approach—which Jan Pawlica notes was done

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87 AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.49-61, A Letter to the MSZ, Consular Department from Jerzy Adamkiewicz, November 6, 1931.  
89 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.82-4, Confidential Letter to the MSZ from the Consulate General, Montreal, April 15, 1925.  
90 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.142, Letter from Jan Pawlica, August, 17, 1933. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.10, A Confidential Commmuniqué from Jan Pawlica, September 20, 1933.  
91 Gocki was actually born in North Dakota, but settled in Cedoux, Saskatchewan.  
92 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.135-6, Letter to the Consular Department Director, MSZ from Jan Pawlica, August 9, 1933.
with the best interests at heart—resulted in the association separating from the parish and pursuing a secular education and patriotic agenda. Though the association remained Catholic and belonged to the ZZPwK, its split from the parish was a disappointment to the consul. Remaining associated with the parish would have garnered greater access to the association by the consuls (via the priest), and greater control or influence over their activities. Solski’s lack of attendance at some of the national celebrations, such as the Święto Morza ([Baltic] Sea Holiday), and his refusal to lead mass that day were met with disapproval by the consul. More flagrantly, his increasing dislike amongst the parishioners was blamed on his lacking nationalism.

Support by clergy also meant that the consuls had to be very careful in their dealings with the Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC). Even though this faction was not nearly as large or as significant in Canada as it was in the United States—for example, there were two parishes in Winnipeg totalling 500 parishioners—it consisted of a nationally-oriented group of individuals who saw Catholicism as intrinsically bound with Polish nationalism. In many ways, they seemingly valued their nationalism above their religious affiliation—something the consuls hoped to achieve in Canada. Since they continued to pursue this very orientation, the consuls did not foresee the need to estrange themselves from this group. However, they did recognize that an active role within the national and religious celebrations of this group was not the wisest course of action, especially as this could evoke a very negative response from the Catholic clergy and immigrants. Consequently, invitations to national celebrations by the PNCC were declined under the pretext of a commitment to a previous engagement. But an official from the consulate

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93 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.17-18, Letter from Jan Pawlica, February 19, 1934.
94 This commemoration celebrated the recovery of Gdańsk from Prussian/German control and Poland’s access to the Baltic Sea. The holiday was created after Polish independence.
95 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.916, s.7, Confidential Letter to the Consular Department, MSZ from Jan Pawlica, May 20, 1933. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.897, s.9, Response to Towarzystwo Spiewu im. M. Konopnickiej, Winnipeg, May 18, 1933.
was sent as a substitute. Roman Catholicism was the preferred religion of the consuls, because it was the religion of the Polish immigrant majority. Official support for other Polish religious groupings was very limited.

Consular involvement in the religious life of the Polish immigrant community also included initiatives to bring ecclesiastical visitors from Poland. Father Stanley Puchniak, pastor of St. Stanislaus Parish in Toronto, noted that Joseph Gawlina, the Polish Military Bishop was to come to Toronto to celebrate Polish independence. According to him, the Polish consuls were making the arrangements with the lay people, by-passing both the local clergy and the Canadian episcopacy. However, correspondence between Archbishop James McGuigan and Jerzy Adamkiewicz, the Consul General, indicated that approval for this unofficial visit was requested and granted. Although Puchniak’s omission remains a mystery, it may in fact allude to the cultivation of consuls’ position as intermediaries between the Polish (Catholic) elements and the Canadian Episcopacy. The consuls had a clear objective in mind for the visit. The goal was to strengthen the ties between Polish immigrants and their homeland. Gawlina was also urged by the consuls to influence the people into joining the ZZPwK, an organization that was fully supported and funded by the Polish government, and which proposed a close relationship between the emigrants and their homeland, along with support for the politics of the Piłsudski government. The Polish Episcopacy and the Catholic clergy in Canada were thus recruited to strengthen the consular position and legitimacy amongst the Polish community.

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96 OMIAP Archives, Box DOC: St. Stanislaus Toronto, Codex Notes, August 4, 1935.
98 OMIAP Archives, Box DOC: St. Stanislaus Toronto, Codex Notes, August 13, 1935.
99 Not all clergy were eager to join the ZZPwK, Rev. Puchniak of St. Stanislaus had informed the consul that before he could join the organization, he had to bring his parish under order. Only then would he consider joining ZZPwK.
Consuls went even as far as attempting to secure the creation of a Polish province within the Oblate order in Canada. Originally, the German (and Polish) Oblates were incorporated into the old French Oblate provinces in Western Canada. However, calls for separation from the French, and the creation of a German province quickly made headway in the years leading up to the Great War, but would not be achieved until the establishment of St. Mary’s Province in 1926. Under this new structure, Polish Oblates joined the new German province. However, the influx of immigrants and Oblates from Poland, along with a rise in the number of Oblates of Polish heritage in Canada, resulted in calls for the separation of the Poles from the Germans already in the mid-1930s. According to the position of the consuls, the establishment of a separate Polish province was an imperative matter for Polish interests. While the Germans were in support of this split, the French were against it, citing concerns that the Polish province would not be able to fund its own seminary. Polish consuls found a simple solution—they made plans whereby the Polish candidates for priesthood would go to Obra near Wolsztyn, Poland, or to the high school in Lublin for their studies. This possibility of study in Poland would “guarantee us [consuls] Polish work in regions to which only the clergy has access.”

The year 1938 became a crucial occasion for the consuls in regards to the establishment of a Polish province, since the General Administration met once every six years, and they were the only ones who could decide in favour of such a motion. The consuls turned to the MSZ and urged the Ministry to convince the General of the Oblates to undertake the division of the

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100 Maciej Michalski, “Powstanie i rozwój Prowincji Wniebowzięcia Studium historyczne w świetle zasob archiwalnego Archiwum Generalnego Misjonarzy Oblatów Maryi Niepokalanej w Rzymie,” in Polscy Oblaci w służbie Polonii kanadyjskiej, ed. Wojciech Kluj and Jarosław Różański (Peplin: Wyd. Bernardinum, 2007), 58. For more information on the creation of St. Mary’s Province please see, Martha McCarthy, The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate: St. Mary’s Province (Saskatoon: Missionary Oblates St. Mary’s Province, 2004).

101 In the 1930s the Oblates in Poland had sent 25 priests to Canada. Nevertheless, there existed problems with finances and administration, compounded by another war and especially a reluctance by the Superior General, Theodore Labouré, to address this issue. Consequently, the creation of a Polish Province would not be realized until 1956. Michalski, 59. AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers, F1405, POL0093, MU 9055, Press release for the Oblates of Mary Immaculable, 25 years in Toronto.

102 AO, MHSO Fond, Canadian Polish Research Institute file, F1405, POL0010, MU 9689, Confidential Letter to MSZ, Department of Emigration from Juliusz Szygowski, Director Consular Department, MSZ, July 2, 1938.
province: “only at the General Administration can the decision be undertaken to divide the province of the Polish-German Oblates in Canada...and the emancipation of the Polish province is a matter of primary importance for us, we strongly request [emphasis in the original] the Ministry to courteously begin any and all steps to convince the General of the Oblate order about the necessity of such a division this year.”  

A province of Poles for Poles, would further ensure that the Catholic element would remain Polish, allowing the clergy to carry out plans of continued Polonization of the emigrants. A Polish province would have administrative autonomy that the consuls hoped to exploit in the future.

The arrival of the consuls on Canadian soil initiated a new dimension in the evolution of the Polish émigré community within Canada. Perceived by the Polish government as “good organizations,” which could oversee the needs of emigrants, the consuls attempted to use clerical influence over the Polish community. To achieve their agenda of maintaining Polish language, culture and customs, while simultaneously securing the support of the Polish emigrants for the government in Poland and for Polish political and economic interests, the consuls became quite involved in the religious and ecclesiastical life of the Polish Canadian Church. By endeavouring to increase the numbers of, and greater authority for the Polish clergy, the consuls hoped to capitalize on the reputation of clergy as leaders within the community. Consulates gave financial support to parish schools, and for Polish language courses and educational materials. They tried to rally the clergy in support of Polishness. The consuls did not condemn secularization, but neither were they its campaigners. Catholicism was simply more useful as a venue for promoting their goals, especially given its close affinity with Polish statehood. Most

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103 AO, MHSO Fond, Canadian Polish Research Institute file, F1405, POL0010, MU 9689, Confidential Letter to MSZ, Department of Emigration from Juliusz Szygowski, Director Consular Department, MSZ, July 2, 1938.
104 Kołodziej, Wychodźstwo zarobkowe, 46.
important to them was the need to ensure that national identity and national awareness continued amongst the emigrants, who for the most part, were viewed as temporary labourers in Canada.

Overt political activity conducted by the consuls on Canadian soil was absent, and their success may have been tempered by both the Great Depression and the Second World War that followed; nevertheless, their agenda clearly attempted to utilize and exploit the clergy and the religious-parish network system to achieve the said results. Interestingly enough, the goal of maintaining a bridge between the Polish emigrants and their motherland was somewhat successful. The many reports sent to the Polish government detailing the community life of the Polonia in Canada ensured that finally, the emigrant Poles were not forgotten—well, at least until the war.
Chapter 4: Unity and Division: Organizing the Community

“Keeping vigil over nationalism belongs to agents of government and clerics, [and the] church, and not to individual persons,” a Polish consul informed a farmer in the late 1930s who emigrated to Canada ten years earlier. Though the consuls may have relegated the business of nationalism to persons of “high culture,” the unnamed consul was mistaken if he thought that nationalism would emanate from government and church, and only trickle down to the people. One cannot deny the critical role that consuls, priests and parishes had in maintaining the relationship between nationalism and Catholicism; however, the initiative in support of this ideal was also rooted in the grass-roots actions of the immigrant. Beginning with their calls for and pressure on clerics and consuls to provide and maintain Polish culture, language and identity, Poles continued to expand their activity by creating new venues for nationalist expression in the form of various culture-based organizations and associations. The 1920s were defined by the rise of numerous small regional groupings which focused on bringing together Poles based on geographic location, shared hobbies, or profession, with the majority seeing this as a

1 Parts of this chapter have previously been published in Gabriela Kasprzak, “How the Poles Got Organized: The Emergence of Organizational Life amongst Polish Canadians in the 1920s and 1930s.” Historical Studies 78 (2012): 47-72.
2 Szkoła Główna Handlowa (thereafter SGH), Sekcja Zbiorów Specjalnych, Memoir #27, Rose Valley, Saskatchewan, January 3, 1937. The name of the individual has been omitted, as per the request of the Szkoła Główna Handlowa Library (Warsaw School of Economics) in order to protect the privacy and identity of those individuals who submitted their memoirs to the SGH in the 1930s. All individuals cited from the SGH—unless otherwise noted—will be omitted or italicized to indicate that they are pseudonyms.
3 Wrześniński, 116.
4 Polish organizational life consisted of varying degrees of established groupings, which operated in accordance with a specific idea or principle. Organizations (organizacje), associations (towarzystwa), and mutual aid societies (stowarzyszenia) were the three types of official groupings found within the community. Though all these organizations had constitutions that defined their ideals and activities, not all had registered with the government to obtain a charter and official status as “organizations”. Consequently, this latter criterion will not be used as an identifying marker in what constitutes an organization. Instead, those groups which self-identified as any of the three forms of organizational bodies listed above, and had created a constitution, will fall under the category of “organization”. For the sake of simplicity, and unless referring to an individual group, I will use the term “organization” when discussing these established groups.
consolidation of their identity. Most of these organizations were found in Ontario and then in Quebec.¹

By the early 1930s, momentum began to change within the organizational structure of the community. These small organizations faced the reality of extinction. Their lack of funds, limited ability to expand, shifting populations and growing economic problems in Canada meant that new approaches had to be developed. It is within this context that three federations² arose: Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polaków w Kanadzie (Federation of Polish Societies, ZZPwK), Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Kanadzie (Association of Poles in Canada, SPwK), and Związek Polaków w Kanadzie (Polish Alliance Friendly Society of Canada, ZPwK). They were all affected and shaped by similar phenomena: secularization, consular influence and political thought (especially socialism). Throughout the 1930s and right up until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the federations encompassed and directed Polish organizational life.³

Despite the fact that their creation was rooted in a desire to unify Polish settlements and prevent the denationalization of the people, the mere emergence of three federations meant that there was much disagreement and ambiguity over authority, jurisdiction and ideology. In addition, these federations faced a growing economic crisis that affected their ability to attract and retain members. To that end, they used diverse approaches and strategies. Each federation’s claims to an authentic Polish identity became a central component of its policies and propaganda,

¹ AAN, MWRiOP (1919-38), sign.439 (B9433), s.177-182, Report to the MWRiOP from the Polish Consulate in Montreal, December 27, 1921.
² As previously mentioned, the fourth federation—that of the communist PTRF—will not be discussed in this work, as it focused on class and labour issues, as opposed to issues of nationalism. Despite its popularity during the Depression (this is difficult to assess given a lack of information on this federation), its membership was officially excluded from participating in other Polish cultural organizations.
³ After World War II, a new organization was created in hopes of offering a new start to the Polish organizational life. In May 1944, the executives of the ZZPwK, ZPwK and the PZN met to discuss the creation of a new umbrella organization, which came to be known as the Kongress Polonii Kanadyjskiej (Canadian Polish Congress, KPK). The KPK would base its statutes on that of the ZZPwK. However, worried about losing their autonomy, the ZPwK never joined the KPK. For more information on the KPK please see, Benedykt Heydenkorn, The Organizational Structure of the Polish Canadian Community.
and a significant source of contention among them. At the centre of this definition of Polishness was the debate over the role of Catholicism. Was Catholicism a component of the Polish ethnic identity? If so, did it play a crucial or only a supportive role? How did it relate to the Polish state? Hence, Polish organizations, whether independent (as some attempted to stay clear of the “big three”) or belonging to a federation, had to define their approach to religion: some embraced it as a vehicle for nationalism while others rejected it.

Within the ethnic immigrant community, organizations were essentially voluntary associations that fulfilled the economic, social, cultural and/or political needs of individual members and of the broader community.\(^4\) According to Thomas Owusu, ethnic organizations were also associated with the preservation of culture, traditions and language, while functioning as a means for social networking.\(^5\) However, the organization as a place of cultural preservation was only one of its manifestations. The other, as indicated by Saskia Sassen-Koob, was “instrumental”—organizations that entered into a dialogue with the host society, mobilizing the community towards a particular political and economic identity.\(^6\) Polish organizations prior to the establishment of the federations were never able to move beyond the former. Their work centred on cultural activity. Even the federations had difficulty to move beyond this framework, having a primary focus on cultural maintenance with a further second goal of politicizing Poles. The matter was further complicated by the diverging aims of each organization, especially in relations to the old and new homelands. For example, the ZZPwK wanted political and economic benefits for Poland; for the ZPwK, the goal was to achieve greater influence and stay within the Canadian political system. Attempts at bridging the gap between the Polish community and the host society were only begun by the ZPwK in the latter half of the 1930s, with their emphasis on

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\(^5\) Owusu, 1159.

\(^6\) Sassen-Koob, 324-5
integration into the larger society. However, the onset of the Depression, followed by the war, generally impeded the “instrumentalization” of organizations. Before 1939, political activity was negligible and amounted to pronouncements in support or against certain Canadian policies.

The environment within which these organizations arose was a critical determinant of the trajectory of their ideological development. The case of Italian immigrants to Switzerland, for example, illustrates a similar pattern to that experienced by the Poles in Canada. According to Barbara Schmitter, the involvement—or in this instance, lack thereof—of a host country’s government towards immigrants delayed their assimilation. Since official Swiss institutions remained uninterested in the Italian workers, the established ethnic organizations and associations strengthened the myriad of Italian-sponsored institutes, such as consulates and embassies, trade union federations and Catholic organizations, whose primary focus was the financial support of the ethnic organizations and on maintaining the ties between the immigrants and the Italian state. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Canadian government showed a similar lack of interest towards the Polish community. In addition, the Polish government and the Catholic Church supported ethnic organizations to various degrees, always underlining the relationship between the emigrant and the country of origin. As in the case of the Italians in Switzerland, Poles in Canada faced an environment that made it easier to create institutions, which furthered the relationship between Poles, their national identity and the home country. Though one cannot exclude the establishment of organizations as a response to the marginalization of immigrants and their restricted access to the host society’s organizational life, the focus of this chapter will be limited to the ideological underpinnings and approaches taken by organizations in preserving identity through culture (including religion) and language. Immigrant organizations, thus, are a

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8 Schmitter, 187-8.
9 Schmitter, 183.
prism that reflected the community’s culture and value systems. Simultaneously, organizations helped direct, create and inform the community’s understanding of these systems. This, however, sometimes led to a clash between the two and it forced the issue of identity and its components to the forefront of the discussion. In many ways, organizational legitimacy was tied up with each federation’s understanding of identity and religion, and the degree to which it could muster support within the community.

REGIONALISM AND DIVERSITY: POLISH ORGANIZATIONAL LIFE OUTSIDE THE FEDERATIONS

Prior to 1918, Polish organizational life was plagued by a lack of experience and inadequate leadership. The Poles of the pre-Great War period were not always aware of their national identity or were late in ascertaining this identity, quite often after their arrival on Canadian shores. In addition to this issue, the Polish state did not exist, and as a result, the Canadian environment lacked official Polish institutions, such as the consulates—Poland had yet to reclaim its independence—that could direct the organizational life, which consisted of small numerous organizations that were regionally isolated and lacked strong leadership. For nationalism to persist, something more was required to take over the state’s responsibility regarding education, tradition, and culture. Religion and the Catholic Church served this surrogate role. Initially, the parish was at the centre of Polish national life in Canada and in the majority of cases organizational life was limited to religious or parish-based associations and mutual aid societies, which focused on Polish national interests, education and cultural celebrations, and to some degree, insurance matters. These earlier forms of organizational life, according to Henryk Radecki, were affected by regionalization—rural areas were more concerned with religious matters, whereas urban centres focused more on mutual aid

10 Radecki, 63-4.
11 Radecki and Heydenkorn, 61.
12 Radecki and Heydenkorn, 67.
organizations. For the most part, religious-based organizations experienced greater longevity than their secular counterparts. Out of fifteen lay organizations created between 1902 and 1920, only two still existed by the late 1970s. Nevertheless, the factors that comprised the organizational life prior to the Great War illustrated an important step within Polish organizational life. Foremost, organizational life was reactive: the types of organizations created were a response to a particular wave of immigrants, which arrived with certain attitudes, interests and aspirations. Unfortunately, existing organizations did not always adapt to incoming waves of immigrants with their distinct sets of social and economic needs. Instead, they simply ceased to exist, being replaced by new ones. This reveals an important lack of continuity within Polish organizational life.

According to Benedykt Heydenkorn and Henryk Radecki, Polish organizations could be broadly divided into three categories: church-oriented, lay, and political (i.e., political clubs). The first referred to organizations that were staffed by priests and some lay people with an emphasis on preserving Catholicism, in addition to a focus on mutual aid. In the mid-1920s, and in response to what these groups perceived as a lack of growth within parish organizational life, some defected and joined secular or lay organizations. Even though Heydenkorn and Radecki’s definition of lay organizations—“socially more encompassing, serving a great variety of special needs of Polish immigrants, generally stressing [...] culture and identity”—comes dangerously close to Radecki’s later description of parish-based organizations, there were two subtle but very important differences between secular or lay, and parish-based organizations.

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13 Radecki, 64-7. 
14 Radecki, 50. 
15 Heydenkorn and Radecki, 61-2. 
16 However, in a later work, Ethnic Organizational Dynamics, Radecki corrects his position by presenting a more accurate portrayal of parish-based organizations to include a focus on culture, education and national interests. This was especially evident in auxiliary groups that founded amateur theatre, music, sports clubs, English and Polish-language classes. Radecki, 66-8. 
17 Heydenkorn and Radecki, 62.
Firstly, their association to a parish was a critical determinant of their ideology. Secondly, there were regional factors at play, with lay organizations being more common in urban settings. There is another reason why a strict categorization of organizations into church-oriented or secular is not useful: not all secular organizations were anti-religious or anti-clerical. Considered as the forerunner of Polish secular organizations in Canada, Montreal’s Sons of Poland, established in 1902, was concerned with preserving and supporting Polish culture and identity along with Christian morals.18 Conversely, several secular organizations had a priest on their board of directors.

Given the fragmentation, disfunctionality and ineffectiveness of organizational life, the establishment of federations was an important step as it denoted the centralization and advancement of the community. It involved not only the consolidation and amalgamation of, but also a discussion of diverse ideologies on nationalism, especially those pertaining to religion and nationalism. There is no doubt that this process was yet another response to the quest for identity formation and maintenance. The objective of the newly created Federations was to consolidate all Poles across Canada under one umbrella organization in order to ensure that language and culture would not be lost, not only amongst the immigrants, but amongst their children. However, the emergence of three federations within a short period illustrated the lack of consensus about how Polishness was to be preserved. Each of these competed for the loyalty of the community. Equally important was how Polishness would actually be defined and propagated. The ideological battleground and rivalry for members was best revealed through debates over religion’s role within the construction and maintenance of the Polish identity. This process was highly politicized—politicized by the organizational rivalry, politicized by the very nature of nationalism, and politicized by the various institutions (such as the consulates or the

18 Heydenkorn and Radecki, 66-7.
Church). Could a Pole be a Pole without Catholicism? What then was the relationship between state (Poland), Church and nationalism? How was a Pole within Canada to define himself? Where would his loyalties lie? Initially, parish organizations functioned as a place of gathering where individuals could interact, celebrate cultural and national events, and where language and customs permeated everyday life. It was thus no surprise that when the ZZPwK and ZPwK emerged in the 1930s, they contested the role of religion in their definition of Polishness. The former saw the parish as too vague in its stance on nationalism and commitment to Polish interests and the latter thought that it over-emphasized these matters and should refocus its attention on the adopted homeland.

Two main trends can be identified in relation to these federations. First, those which were positively disposed to religion and its role in furthering nationalism, were also strong supporters of maintaining the connection between Poland and her emigrants, as in the case of the Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polaków w Kanadzie (ZZPwK) and to a certain degree, the Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Kanadzie (SPwK). Secondly, those like the Związek Polaków w Kanadzie (ZPwK) that held an anti-clerical stance, were also critical of maintaining the link between the immigrants and their homeland; instead, their emphasis was on integration and improving the social condition of Poles in Canada. Though they were positively disposed to preserving Polish language and some traditions, they saw Canada as their new motherland, and so Poland could no longer be the recipient of their loyalty. How contentious the issue over the relationship between ethnicity, Catholicism and state loyalty was is best exemplified by the eventual break within the ZPwK, which led to the creation of a seceding organization, the Polski Związek Narodowy (Polish National Union, PZN). The PZN simply rejected the assimilationist version of the Polish identity, as they wanted to retain ties to Poland.
It is also important to emphasize that ideological transformations within the networks of organizations, along with their politicization, went hand in hand with structural changes. During the interwar period, the Polish organizational dynamics underwent three defining shifts. The first shift marked the move from small, independent and local organizations and associations, to the creation of three large “all-encompassing” federations. Small, regional organizations, associations and fraternities were replaced by amalgamated federations that actively sought the community’s support for their ideologies and activities, claiming that their programs and ideologies held the best possible measures for protecting and preserving Polish identity. These federations became the chief players within the community, offering varying definitions of Polishness.

The second shift involved a move from parish-oriented organizations under the leadership of clergy to lay-established and lay-run organizations. These may or may not have remained associated with a parish. The difference was that the Poles who immigrated in the interwar years had some organizational experience, and they were no longer reliant on the parish priest as the exclusive creator of Polish organizations. The priests, small in numbers, were also unable to meet fully the demands of the growing community, thus facilitating this transition. Lastly, the final shift taking place during this period was a move from religious to secular organizations. This change, however, was not completed until after the Second World War when the query over Polish-Catholic identity was viewed in light of the hostile nature of the Communist regime towards religion in Poland. In this context and a new wave of Polish immigrants (mostly veterans escaping from Communism), religion ceased to be a point of contention and became a point of unity.

19 These changes coincided with the formation of professional and trade associations; women’s auxiliaries; and new cultural clubs concentrating on education. Kołodziej, *Dzieje Polonii*, 240; Heydenkorn and Radecki, 68.
Despite the emergence of the “big three”, there was an active community life beyond the major Polish urban centres of Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg, with not all organizations clamouring to join one of the three federations. These smaller organizations tended to centre on regional life and interests. Not joining a federation did not mean that they were isolating themselves from the broader community. Instead, they tended to establish communication lines with all or one of the federations. Their interest in remaining independent stemmed from focusing on the regional concerns of the local community, and trying to remain outside the political debates regarding Polishness, role of religion, and links to the Polish state. They had to make a conscious choice of either following one of the more generic and prescribed formulations or come up with something of their own. Some actually tried to push forward their own distinct definition of Polishness. It is also important to note that not all organizations would directly mention religion within their mandate or statutes. Nonetheless, a mere discussion concerning the “preservation of Polishness” would often encompass religious aspects related to national identity.

A cursory study of the evolution of community life in the Sudbury region, Niagara Peninsula, Western Canada (i.e., Alberta), and Montreal reveal the complexity of the various organizations: how they emerged, how they evolved and changed, and what sort of relationship (if any) they created with one of the larger federations.

The Polish community in Sudbury, Ontario, and its surrounding area (Copper Cliff, Garson and Falconbridge), for example,—reaching a population of 393 in the former and 909 in the latter by 1931\(^{20}\)—first began its forays into organizational life by coordinating cultural activities, such as amateur theatrical performances held in private homes. By 1934, the community had established the “Polish Club” that functioned as an umbrella organization for the Sudbury region. This was followed by the construction of a Polish House, where language

classes (both Polish and English) were taught, along with choir, dance groups, orchestra and a theatre group.  

The language classes for girls had 130 students, and their Adam Mickiewicz Library contained approximately 600 pieces.

The Polish Club in Sudbury reveals the complexity that many organizations faced in the Canadian context. The differences between the English and the Polish versions of their statutes speak volumes. The aims of the Polish Club, according to the English-language version of their mandate stated the following:

- To establish, maintain and conduct a club for the accommodation of its members and their friends [...] and to promote friendly and social intercourse among its members;
- To promote among persons of Polish nationality in [...] Ontario a knowledge of the requisites of good Canadian citizenship;
- To promote a knowledge of the English and Polish languages among persons of Polish nationality; and
- To aid in the relief of persons of Polish nationality who are in distressed circumstances or who require help of any kind by reason of their recent arrival in Canada.

Paradoxically, the Polish-language version clearly rejected this pro-assimilation and pro-Canadian stance with one that called for the strengthening of Polish identity:

1) To organize and establish brotherly contacts among all Poles in Sudbury and area;
2) To cooperate and defend the good Polish name;
3) To build [our] own organizational home;
4) To establish a library;
5) To organize and give theatre performances, concerts and lectures; and
6) To maintain the spirit of Polishness in Canada, and close ties with Poland.

The latter version, speaking to the community, emphasized identity and culture as key elements that needed preservation. The former text, one that Canadian authorities would have read, illustrated Polish desire to assimilate into the broader society.

The two versions of the club’s mandate illustrate how Polish organizations approached their relationship to Canada and to Poland in a manner that reflected the hybridity of their

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21 Radecki, “Polish Immigrants in Sudbury,” 51.
22 In 1936, ZPwK (Group 13) would establish a branch in Sudbury, coexisting with the Polish Club, while making use of the Club’s Polish House for its school and theatre group. AAN, Akta Janiny i Kazimierza Warchałowskich, sign.244, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w kanadzie (Warszawa: MSZ, no date), 73.
23 AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Club of Sudbury Incorporation Papers, F1405, POL0128, MU 9059, ser.54-128, “Polish Club of Sudbury Limited,” 1936.
24 Radecki, “Polish Immigrants in Sudbury,” 50.
identity and loyalties. By calling on Poles to become familiar with requirements of good Canadian citizenship in their English mandate, the Poles were also fulfilling the very enterprise that the Polish consuls had asked of them. They certainly also wanted to appear as good and trustworthy to their English-speaking neighbours. Both the Canadian and Polish communities may have had differing expectations, and the organization was willing, at least in theory, to meet all these expectations. Lastly, and the question that appears most pressing is which of these mandates more authentically represented the interests and motives of the organization? In this case, does the Polish-worded mandate better represent the desires of the members? In this instance, the English version seems disingenuous. If the Polish Club genuinely was serious about assimilation, as in the case of the ZPwK, it would have overtly mentioned this in both the English and Polish mandates.

The Niagara Peninsula also experienced the growth of organizational life with the influx of immigrants into the region. The largest concentrations were found in St. Catharines, Welland and Niagara Falls. By the late 1920s and the early 1930s, new organizations, such as the Twarzystwo Polsko-Kanadyjskie (Polish-Canadian Association), and the Stowarzyszenie Kanadyjsko-Polskie (Canadian-Polish Society) were established in Welland and St. Catharines respectively. The latter organization was preceded by the Towarzystwo Św. Stanisława (St. Stanislaus Association), which had been initiated by the local Polish priest, Father Sperski, in 1916. The organization was very successful at bringing together the Poles of the area. Its decline came about with Sperski’s death and the inability of the Toronto Archdiocese to find another Polish cleric to take his place. The life and death of the St. Stanislaus Association illustrates a number of key issues related to the region’s community life. Firstly, religion-based

25 The consuls were adamant that the Poles preserve their heritage but also made clear that Poles were to become familiar with Canadian laws and society. This mandate grew in part from their desire to influence Canadian economic and immigration policy through the Polish community.
26 Makowski, History and Integration, 103.
organizations were the priority when organizational life was at its earliest stages. Secondly, religion was not a divisive factor in the early 1920s but rather provided a platform for unity. And lastly, some organizations would fail to thrive without good leadership, which during the earlier period of the interwar years, essentially amounted to clerical leadership. Yet, once a popular priest passed away and a replacement could not be found, no secular leadership existed to take over. That is why the interwar era became such a critical stepping stone in the process of Polish organizational life in Canada.

In Edmonton, Alberta, only an influx of immigrants led to the establishment of the Polish-Canadian Association in 1927 followed by the Polish Army Veterans’ Association. These two organizations along with Polish parishes became the centre of Polish social and cultural life until the post-Second World War period. The statute of the Polish-Canadian Association emphasized the maintenance of ties amongst Poles, including the fostering of language, tradition, culture and customs. In particular, these organizations, like the Coleman’s Polskie Towarzystwo Bratniej Pomocy (Polish Brotherly Aid Society) established by miners, were to foster what Roman Mazurkiewicz called “national traits,” (i.e., language, customs, culture, including religious traditions and customs). These would be strengthened by the eventual settlement of Poles in Canmore, Coleman and Crow’s Nest Pass. In places where a Polish parish did not exist, such as Coleman, organizations became centres of cultural and national preservation. The Polish-Canadian Association held social gatherings and amateur

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29 This organization would go on to request membership to the ZPwK; however, the fact that the federation had not obtained, by the late 1930s, a charter for the whole of Canada, prevented this union. LAC, Polish Alliance Friendly Society of Canada Fond [thereafter PAFSC], MG 28 v55, vol.11, Polish Brotherly Aid Society—Coleman, Alta/Polskie Towarzystwo Bratniej Pomocy 1937-44 File, Letter from the Polish Brotherly Aid Society to the Zarząd Główny (Central Committee), ZPwK, October 22, 1937; Letters from the Zarząd Główny, ZPwK to the Polish Brotherly Aid Society, October 25, 1937 and November 15, 1937.
30 AAN, Akta Janiny i Kazimierza Warchałowskich, sign.244, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w kanadzie (Warszawa: MSZ, no date), 76.
31 Matejko, Polish Settlers in Alberta, 18.
theatrical productions. Another form of organizing, which was also popular in Ontario and Manitoba amongst female members in the 1930s, was called “Herbatki” or “Tea”, where get-togethers were held in the home of a female member. This type of gathering meant that members were able to collect some income for the organization without having to pay for the rental of a hall or for food.

Montreal’s independent Towarzystwo Bialego Orła (White Eagle Association) had approximately one hundred and twenty members in the 1930s and its constitution stipulated the organization’s desire to promote Polish nationalism and Christian morality and civilization. The same can be said of Polskie Towarzystwo Patriotyczne Bratniej Pomocy (Polish Association of Patriotic Brotherly Help), which sought to uphold the national identity, especially amongst the youth. Other organizations such as the Koło Przyjaciół Morza (Friends of the Sea Circle), Związek Weteranów im. Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego (Alliance of Marshal Józef Piłsudski Veterans), and Związek Weteranów Polskich, Placówka 42 Legionu Kanadyjskiego (Polish Veterans Alliance, Branch 42 Canadian Legion) who joined the ZZPwK at one point or another,

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32 Carlton, 28.
33 See for example, MHSO, POL-8092-WOJ, Bronisława Wojtala interview by Józef Sieramski, Hamilton, ON, March 30, 1981.
34 The organization was established in 1927, becoming an umbrella organization for smaller organizations to unite. It comprised of mostly pre-Great War immigrants, who did not have interest in opening the organization to interwar immigrants, and it had evolved from an organization that was first affiliated with the Związek Narodowy in the United States. LAC, BH Fond, MG31 D237 vol.7, Consulate of the Republic of Poland, Matters of Immigration, Confidential 1934 File, Report on the Polskie Towarzystwo Patriotyczne Bratniej Pomocy. AAN, Akta Janiny i Kazimierza Warchałowskich, sign.244, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w kanadzie (Warszawa: MSZ, no date), p.73.
36 This organization had forty-five members and held monthly lectures pertaining to the relationship between the sea and Poland.
37 The organization contained seventy-one members whose goals were to promote national unity. The organization made clear that it was apolitical being directed only by its patriotism and its desire to serve the Fatherland. It also organized lectures, theatrical productions, and the celebration of national holidays. LAC, BH Fond, MG31 D237 vol.7, Consulate of the Republic of Poland, Matters of Immigration, Confidential 1934 File, Report on Koło Przyjaciół Morza.
38 This organization had seventy members and would join the Związek Weteranów im. Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego in June 1935. LAC, BH Fond, MG31 D237 vol.7, Consulate General of Poland, Montreal, 1935, “Protokół”; Letter to the MSZ from Władysław Kicki, June 11, 1935.
adopted constitutions of their mother organization. 39 Many organizations also directed their energy at cultural and educational work. The Chór Lutnia (Lutnia Choir) was described by the consuls as being actively involved in the celebration of national holidays. 40 The Polski Klub Akademików (Polish Club of Academicians [sic]), overtly declared neutrality regarding political and religious matters. It focused on establishing connections with academics in Poland all the while advancing the knowledge of the Polish language, history and literature amongst Polish Canadians. 41 Another organization that followed a similar path in maintaining neutrality was Uciecha, a drama association with the ZPwK. According to its constitution, the association was apolitical and its council was to ensure that conflict did not occur as a result of religious and political differences. 42 Smaller organizations not only responded to the needs, wants and conflicts found within the local community, but also were focused on promoting and maintaining their heritage and culture. Yet, the very issues that they were promoting, were also a source of conflict. Polishness did not only refer to specific cultural traditions and language; it also had political and religious connotations. In many ways, the ambiguity and differences regarding this matter would eventually spill over into the federations, which picked up the task of defining Polishness.

The rise of the small organization in the interwar period was driven by an increasing influx of immigrants who wanted to create a space where their ethnic identity—and its idiosyncracies—could be expressed and experienced. In many ways, organizations attempted to recreate a sense of belongingness that was rooted in a re-living of the old country. Anna

40 LAC, BH Fond, MG31 D237 vol.7, Consulate of the Republic of Poland, Matters of Immigration, Confidential 1934 File, Report on Chór Lutnia in Montreal.
41 LAC, BH Fond, MG31 D237 vol.7, Consulate General of Poland, Montreal, 1935, Statut Polskiego Klubu Akademików.
42 AO, MHSO Fond, Jozef Pankowski Papers, F1405, POL 0038, MU 9103, Regulamin Kółka Dramatycznego “Uciecha”, April 27, 1924.
Swistara, who arrived in Toronto in 1931, related the Canadian reality for immigrants. She cited the example of a Polish business owner—a barber—who had five English-speaking clients waiting, when an elderly Polish man entered his premises. The barber made the mistake of speaking to the man in Polish, and as a result, had all five of his English clients leave the premises.  

She continued by stating that “people were scared to speak in Polish,” and that “there were not enough Poles from which one could make a living...a Pole was nothing at one point in Canada.” These types of experiences spurred the community to create places of refuge where the homeland—or at least some of its cultural aspects—could be acted out or relived. However, it was this re-creation of the homeland that forced immigrants to face the reality of (re)constructing their identity. They were forced to decide what elements, and in what combinations, defined the parameters of their identity.

Many of the organizations, clubs, associations and groups that existed in the 1920s (and those that emerged in the 1930s as well) faced the tough decision to either join one of the “big three” or to remain independent. There is no doubt that the establishment of the federations represented a major shift, marked by the formalization and institutionalization of the Polish identity. Yet, the decision and the actual process of amalgamation involved much debate and disagreement. Not all organizations wished to join a federation because they worried about losing their administrative and ideological independence. The Polskie Stowarzyszenie Narodowe (Polish National Association, 1938-1953) in London, Ontario, for example, did not want to join the ZPwK because it did not want to lose its provincial charter and was thinking about building its own Dom Polski (Polish House). Yet, since its sympathies lay with the ZPwK, it did not exclude a possible merger in the future.  

Joining a federation meant that the incoming party

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43 MHSO, POL-8826-SWI, Anna Swistara interview by Jozef Sieramski, Toronto, Ontario, April 7, 1981.
would have to adopt the attitudes of the umbrella organization on issues related to nationalism, religion and politics. The Orzel Bialy (White Eagle) Drama Club in Hamilton, for example, indicated as much in its statute after it joined ZPwK, Group 2: “In general matters of a national, social or political nature the Theatre Circle must adapt itself to the ZPwK Constitution, having the possibility to express itself at the meetings of the Group through its representative.” Consequently, the socio-religious-political orientation of a federation would become a determining factor for a smaller organization. Conversely, the ideological position of a local club was also confirmed in the choice of the umbrella federation. Such identification was especially important in the matters of religion.

Many parish-based organizations—which emerged in the years before the “big three”—underwent an important transition during the interwar period, shifting from an outright rejection of secular organizations to collaborating with them. In many ways, the growing immigrant community dictated this shift. For example, when created in 1913, the Towarzystwo Św. Stanisława Kostki (Society of St. Stanislaus Kostka) forbade its members from belonging to secret organizations banned by the Catholic Church. Even participation on the parish committee was precluded by membership to certain organizations, such as Spójnia or Synowie Polski. However, by the 1930s, such attitudes had to change. For one, the Towarzystwo Św. Stanisława Kostki became one of ZPwK’s founding organizations. The community wanted to see the expansion of services offered by the parish organizations, while parishes could no longer meet this demand. The Catholic clergy became acutely aware of these changing circumstances and began to fear the loss of the religious elements within Polish customs and culture.

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45 AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers, F1405, POL 0013, MU9110, Regulamin Kółka Teatru, no date.
46 AO, MHSO Fond, Jozef Pankowski Papers, F1405, POL 0038, MU 9103, Konstytucja i kwitariusz Towarzystwa Bratniej Pomocy pod Opieką św. Stanisława Kostki w Toronto, est. 1913.
Eventually, the emergence of the SPwK was a response to this secularization that accompanied the growing organizational activity.

Although priests worried about the effects of this process, religious undercurrents remained prominent in the community life, especially within small groups, regardless of whether they were parish-based or not. Winnipeg’s Związek Polskich Obróńców Ojczyzny na Kanadę Zachodnią48 (Association of Polish Protectors of the Fatherland in Western Canada, est.1933) and the Ognisko Związku Podhalań w Kanadzie49 (Polish Highlanders Alliance of Canada, est.1933) are good examples. Both, non-parish based organizations, eventually joined the ZZPwK and were seen to hold great consolidation potential for the community. The ZZPwK recognized the mobilizing potential by highlighting the former’s Opłatek (Wafer gathering), which saw the attendance of 108 persons.50 Sharing the wafer symbolically fused religion and culture. Similarly, when the Ognisko Związku Podhalań w Kanadzie held its first convention, it began with a mass held in Holy Ghost parish by its Rector, Rev. Baderski.51 This tradition would continue at every convention held by the organization.52 Roman Mazurkiewicz, commenting on the organizational life of the Polish community, praised the appropriate direction taken by the organizations: their focus on the faith of their ancestors. According to him, “the Catholic faith constitutes the Polish national tradition.”53 Religion had to remain a prominent component of the life of the community.

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48 The organization was originally called the Stowarzyszenie Weteranów (Association of Veterans).
49 Upon its establishment, the organization had 150 members. The consul, Jan Pawlica, expected that number to rise to 250 and 300 people. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.2, Report from Jan Pawlica, August 15, 1933.
50 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.12-3, Report from Jan Pawlica, November 14, 1933; AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.21, Report from Jan Pawlica, January 17, 1934.
51 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.10, Report from Jan Pawlica, October 23, 1933.
52 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG 28 v55 vol.11, Polish Highlanders Alliance of Canada File, Program III-go Walnego Zjazdu Podhalań w Kanadzie, August 6-8, 1936.
53 AAN, Akta Janiny i Kazimierza Warchałowskich, sign.244, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w kanadzie (Warszawa: MSZ, no date), 79.
The intertwining of religion and nationalism was reflected in the constitutions of both Związek Polskich Obrońców Ojczyzny na Kanadę Zachodnią and the Ognisko Związku Podhalań w Kanadzie. Ties to the motherland were critical, especially for the members of the ZZPwK. Both adapted their constitutions from similar organizations in Poland: Związek Obrońców Ojczyzny in Warszawa (Association of Polish Protectors of the Fatherland) and Związek Podhalań in Kraków (Central Association of Polish Highlanders). In their call for members, representatives of the Canadian branch of the Związek Podhalań made clear the aims of the organization:

The aims and duties of the Canadian Central Association of Polish Highlanders will be the same as the aims of the Head Association, being bound to our Fatherland in the Old Country, working according to the directives and ideology of the Great Builder of Young Poland, Marshal Piłsudski, fostering the Podhale Spirit, Culture and the Podhale Dialect.

We do not doubt that in the name of these magnificent slogans, under the banner of Fatherland, we will all gather and create in Canada a strong and vibrant working front for the good of Poland, for Podhale and for the improvement of our existence through the association and collaboration of working arm in arm.

By replicating existing organizations founded in Poland, their Canadian counterparts met several goals: they reinforced the need for maintaining ties with the homeland, ensured the welfare of the Second Republic, and recognized the political ideology of Piłsudski, where Pole and Catholic were closely bound to each other. The Związek Podhalań perceived its emphasis on regional identity (i.e., Highlander) as complimentary to a Polish national identity, and not one that would subvert it. Both organizations joined the ZZPwK in 1934 because it held a similar cultural-political viewpoint.

Again, it is important to emphasize that in the interwar years the lines between the religious and the secular within the Polish community were blurred. Secular organizations

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54 Mountain region in Southern Poland, also known as the Polish Highlands.
55 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.5, Announcement sent by mail from the Organizational Committee of the Canadian Fire Association of Polish Highlanders.
became involved within the religious life of the community. Groups such as Ulga Stowarzyszenie Zajemnej Pomocy (Ulga Mutual Benefit Association) and Ognisko Związku Podhalań w Kanadzie, would unite with parish-based associations, such as the Ladies’ Rosary Society of St. Stanislaus parish, to petition the Archdiocese for new Polish priests or to remove clergy with whom the parishioners were dissatisfied. Religious organizations would join secular organizations, such as the Towarzystwo Polsko Katolickie Wzajemnej Pomocy (Polish Catholic Association of Mutual Help) of Timmins, Ontario under Rev. F. Sawiński, who inquired about joining the ZPwK. Organizations, therefore, became voices for the average person; as formal entities, their appeals held greater weight when dealing with Canadian authorities.

The persistence of “independent” organizations did continue throughout the interwar period. But the rise of the federations resulted in greater ideological entrenchment throughout the entire community. Smaller entities joined a federation, for the most part, because of a similarity in ideological attitudes, coupled by increased financial security and support. In the case of the ZZPwK, this meant strengthening the ties to the homeland. Not only did the ZZPwK and ZPwK maintain a different understanding of Polish nationalism, the religious role within it, and loyalty to the homeland; each functioned in a different way. Firstly, ZZPwK (and the SPwK) looked and behaved more like a confederation of organizations. Its approach was to invite already established organizations to join its ranks. It was not interested in creating new branches across Canada. The SPwK worked in similar fashion to the ZZPwK, accepting existing associations and parishes as members. Their main concern was the loss of Catholicism and Polishness amongst the immigrants. Since this was a Catholic federation, religion was a critical determinant of

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56 ARCAT, St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, MN DS 36.39 (a), Letter to the Apostolic Delegate of Canada and Newfoundland, Archbishop Andrea Cassulo, December 27, 1934.
membership. The ZPwK, on the other hand, was much more centralized in its structure. Its expansion was based on establishing branches in Ontario’s urban centres. Consequently, the ZPwK was (theoretically) assured that branches would not deviate from the political ideologies of the Central Branch in Toronto. Moreover, these satellites did not really extend a hand to other organizations in the local community. At the turn of the 1930s, in the early life of the federations, joining one of the two secular institutions was not a controversial issue, and many Catholic organizations joined them. However, problems emerged when attitudes towards religion and national identity began to change. The increasing anti-clericalism of the ZPwK, in addition to the rejection of the Piłsudski government at ŚwiatPol (the international conference held for Poles abroad) was a symptom of the radicalization of the ZPwK and a source of contention. In response, the SPwK focused even more on gathering groups that were keen on maintaining their religious and national connections.

**THE “BIG THREE” EMERGE: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ZZPwK, ZPwK AND THE SPwK**

The rise of the federations began with the creation of the ZPwK, which was then followed by the ZZPwK, and lastly the SPwK. The ZPwK was established in Toronto in 1924 as a local organization, and by 1927, it had begun to expand as a provincial entity, establishing groups throughout Ontario. Originally, ZPwK was an amalgamation of three Toronto-based organizations: Synowie Polski (the official name was the Society of the Brotherly Aid of the Sons of Poland, under the Protection of the Holy Mother of Częstochowa, the Queen of the Polish Crownlands, est. 1907); Towarzystwo Św. Stanisława Kostki (St. Stanislaus Kostka Society, est. 1912); and Spójnia Narodowa (Postępowa) Polska [Polish National (Progressive)]

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Society, est. 1918. Synowie was an ostensibly secular organization created as a mutual benefit organization. Originally, its membership was limited to Polish and Lithuanian practicing Catholics, but by 1920, the society had opened its doors to all Poles regardless of religious affiliation, even accepting atheists. The society was highly active in preserving Polish culture and in the planning of national festivities. In its early years, it even combined national issues with religious services. The society also carried out educational activities, establishing a school in western Toronto.

The Towarzystwo Św. Stanisława Kostki was founded by Rev. Joseph Hinzmann at St. Stanislaus Kostka parish, and joined Synowie in 1921 creating the Związek Polaków w Kanadzie (Polish National Alliance of Canada). Prior to this union, the society provided financial assistance to members in cases of unemployment, illness and death; it established a library and a night school (1915); and it was an active participant in Polish national celebrations. The third founding institution to complete the ZPwK in 1923 was Spójnia Narodowa (Postępowa) Polska, a self-improvement organization, which also supported socialism and Piłsudski. It was the first to open its doors to women, along with providing educational services and promoting cultural and national activities.

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60 This organization was founded by the President of Związek Narodowy Polski w Chicago (Polish National Alliance in Chicago), Ferdynand Stefan Adalia Satelecki. Anna Reczyńska, “Związek Polaków w Kanadzie—Dzieje i rola w życiu kanadyjskiej Polonii,” in Studia nad organizacjami polonijnymi w Ameryce Północnej: praca zbiorowa, ed. Gregorz Babinski (Wroclaw: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1988), 167.


62 Shahrodi, 171.


64 Heydenkorn, A Community in Transition, 9.

65 Shahrodi, 174; Makowski, 96.

66 This organization was originally part of the Związek Socjalistów Polski (Alliance of Polish Socialists), which traced its origins to immigrants from the turn of the century. Reczyńska, “Związek Polaków w Kanadzie,” 167.

67 Shahrodi, 176, 179.
The creation of the ZPwK was rooted in a decreasing membership within the original three societies, declining finances, and an apprehension over the loss of language and culture. By coming together, they were hoping to strengthen the Polish community. However, it took a number of years before the federation began to establish groups throughout various urban centres throughout Ontario, with the first branch outside of Toronto emerging in Hamilton only in 1927, followed by St. Catherine’s in 1928. By 1939, ZPwK had 17 branches in Ontario along with its own newspaper (Związkowiec), auxiliary bodies and schools, and about 4,000 members. However, other institutions were welcome to join, and did enter the ranks of the ZPwK. Despite the fact that it began by striving to uphold the Catholic religion, supporting Polish parishes and celebrating Polish historical events, it quickly became liberalized, opening its membership to all persons with the exception of Communists. Already in 1931, the ZPwK proclaimed that membership was not in any way dependent on religious or political affiliations. Given this strategy, it is not surprising that varying socialist undercurrents would find a home in the ideological constellation of the federation. This became more evident during the Great Depression years when certain factions within the organization (please see chapter on newspapers) flirted with and spouted overt socialist ideology.

Women were permitted to join the ranks of the ZPwK, but only two years after its founding. With the amalgamation of the three initial groups, women members of Spójnia, in reaction to their exclusion from the new federation, created their own institution, the Związek

68 For a look at ZPwK membership applications based on gender, occupation, age and marital status, please see Appendix B.
69 Kmietowicz, 17.
70 In 1930, branches in Kitchener, West Toronto, Preston and New Toronto were created; in 1932 this was followed by Swansea, Toronto, Brantford; in 1933, Guelph; the following year in Welland; in 1936, Sudbury, Sarnia, Port Colborne were added, followed by Oshawa in 1938 and Delhi in 1939. Kmietowicz, 17; Radecki, Ethnic Organizational Dynamics, 71; Kołodziej, Dzieje Polonii, 241.
71 Rudolph Kogler, The Polish community in Canada (Toronto: Canadian Polish Research Institute, 1976), 22-3.
Polek w Kanadzie in 1923, with fifty members. Although it was to be a mutual benefit society, it became a progressive-educational society, basing its constitution on that of the ZPwK. Initially, membership was limited to Polish women, but that quickly changed, and any woman of “proper character” was permitted to join the society. The Związek Polek was finally incorporated into the ZPwK two years later in 1925. Yet, in its statutes, the women’s division affirmed their autonomy within the larger federation. Their motto was “learning and promoting the Polish language, while rejecting jealousy, egoism, pessimism, [while] let[ting] there be happiness, laughter and harmony.” The focus of activity within the women’s branch was to bring together all women of Polish heritage (regardless of their convictions), foster self-advancement and culture, and prevent the denationalization of youth. The latter was to be achieved by speaking in Polish to them and by encouraging them to participate in Polish events and sports clubs. As part of their mandate, the Związek Polek also directed their attention to teaching hygiene and health, needlework and focusing their energies on theatre productions and the ZPwK choir. Even after the amalgamation, the ZPwK still had difficulty incorporating women into its ranks. Just to reiterate, out of 634 applicants to the ZPwK between 1919 and 1939, only 135 were women (see Appendix B), despite the number of female immigrants nearly

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76 Towarzystwo Św. Stanisława Kostki had also established a women’s auxiliary body in 1917—Ladies’ Association—whose role was to contend with emigration matters, the moral behaviour of women, visiting the sick, and collecting money for the poor. However, by 1919 this association had amalgamated to the Polish Democratic Council, an organization concerned with the newly created Polish state. Apolonja Kojder, “Women and the Polish Alliance of Canada,” Polyphony 7, no.1 (Spring/Summer 1985): 40.
77 However, by 1935, a new proposal—which was ratified—grew out of Hamilton’s ZPwK Group 2, calling for the creation of a separate women’s organization within the ZPwK, called Klub Kobiet (Women’s Club). This organization would become known as Koło Polek, or Women’s Circle. Kojder, “Women and the Polish Alliance in Canada,” in A Community in Transition, 121; Kni etowicz, ed., Złoty Jubileusz Kół Polek, 17.
78 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 v55 vol.48, Women’s Association of the Polish Alliance File, Regulamin Koło Pań Związku Polaków w Kanadzie, no date, art.2.
79 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 v55 vol.48, Women’s Association of the Polish Alliance File, Regulamin Koło Pań Związku Polaków w Kanadzie, no date, art.3, pt.1-2.
80 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 v55 vol.48, Women’s Association of the Polish Alliance File, Regulamin Koło Pań Związku Polaków w Kanadzie, no date, art.3, pt.3.
doubling between 1932 and 1938. It was not until 1932 and 1933 that women’s membership more than doubled, raising from 45 to 110. Moreover, there is no mention of women ever assuming any significant positions of power within the ZPwK. In order to increase the participation of women within its social work, it coordinated a women’s convention in 1938. The convention was also considered an important step in furthering the “moral sentiment” of the ZPwK.

While the ZPwK was concerned with maintaining Polish culture and issues of self-improvement (i.e., education, moral betterment, insurance) within the community, it also called on Poles to become Canadian citizens, to consider Canada their new homeland, and to participate more fully in its political and economic life. Consequently, more emphasis was directed towards familiarizing the immigrant with Canadian laws and customs than on duties to Poland. In its earlier years, the ZPwK had focused on upholding Catholicism, but this was quickly dropped, as not all members were Catholic, with some belonging to Protestant denominations. By the late 1920s, ZPwK turned to Polish American organizations in order to request copies of their constitutions to be used as a basis for their own “kasa chorych” (Health Insurance). It did not even discriminate between socialist and non-socialist institutions, asking the Związek Socjalistów Polskich (Association of Polish Socialists) for a copy of their constitution. Throughout the 1930s, the ZPwK became more uncompromising in its anti-Poland and anti-clerical campaign, in part, due to the immigrants’ economic situation, unemployment, increasing

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81 Between 1926 and 1931, 34.5% of Polish immigrants were women. This number rises to 61.1% between 1932 and 1936, and to 58.8% from 1937 to 1938. Even though there is a significant increase in the number of women migrants, when it comes to comparing women to men, between 1926 and 1938, women comprise only 36.9% of the total migration. Reczyńska, *For Bread*, 60.
82 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 vol6, Communiqués Sent to All Groups File, Proklamacja, May 7, 1938.
84 Shahrodi, 185.
86 AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers (Correspondence), F1405, POL0013, MU 9118, Letter to Związek Socjalistów Polskich in New York, New York, October 8, 1928; Letter to Związek Narodowy Polski in Chicago, Illinois, October 8, 1928.
xenophobia in Canada, and a shift in leadership that reflected a leftist ideology.\(^{87}\) As a result of these changing attitudes, it faced much internal conflict. Eventually a large number of its members defected and created a new organization in 1937, the Polski Związek Narodowy (Polish National Union of Canada, ZNP), whose motto “God, Honor, Fatherland” reaffirmed the Pole-Catholic identity and the affiliation with the motherland.

This ideological shift is best revealed in the evolution of the ZPwK’s constitution. Its 1921 constitution laid out the main principles of the organization. According to Article II, it sought to improve the social and financial standing of the Poles through a focus on economic issues. It also emphasized advancing the education of members through cultural events such as lectures, amateur theatre productions, social gatherings and schools for both children and adults in an attempt to improve especially the latter’s skill-set. It was also concerned about increasing the number of Polish businesses and helping Poles find employment.\(^{88}\) In addition, it provided a clear mandate regarding the Poles’ role in Canada, stating in Article II, pt.7: “Aiding members in becoming familiar with the laws of the Canadian constitution, our adopted Fatherland, as well as helping each other in gaining naturalization papers.”\(^{89}\) Not only did the ZPwK stress the need for integration and adaptation into Canadian society, what seemed to be conspicuously missing was a need to maintain Polishness.

In 1933 and 1934, the federation made minor changes to its constitution. Thus, instead of just working on improving its members’ social and financial status, the 1933 constitution laid out its aim to “[c]reate jointly organized interests in respect to social, political, economic, physical

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\(^{87}\) Though the scope of this chapter does not permit a detailed account of the ideological and political position of each branch of the ZPwK, the focus will lay with the main administration of the ZPwK, and especially, Group 1, the largest branch to comprise the ZPwK, which held strong socialist leanings. In any case, all branches of the ZPwK were bound to the same Constitution espoused by the main administration.

\(^{88}\) AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers (Constitutions and By-Laws) [thereafter PACP], F1405, POL0013, MU 9164, Konstytucja Polaków w Kanadzie Towarzystwo Zajemnej Pomocy [thereafter KPKTZP], 1921, 1931.

\(^{89}\) AO, MHSO Fond, PACP, F1405, POL0013, MU 9164, KPKTZP, 1921.
and cultural-educational [matters].”

The following year, this statement was further refined: “Create a jointly organized Polish people’s front in Canada for the protection and the development of its vital interests in regards to social, political, economic, physical and cultural-educational [matters].”

The constitution again, gave little consideration to the preservation of Polish identity, a position reinforced by ZPwK’s refusal to take an oath of loyalty to the Polish state at Światpol in 1934. Lastly, the idea of a “Polish people’s front” reflected the left-leaning currents that were gaining ground in the ZPwK throughout the 1930s. The boldness of the 1934 constitution came at a time of growing conflict between the ZPwK and the other two federations, especially the ZZPwK.

In 1936, the ZPwK again changed its constitution, this time, accentuating its role in raising the social and economic position of the Polish community to be on par with that of Canadian society. Again, it showed greater concern for integration into Canadian society than on maintaining a relationship with the Polish state. Another indicator of ZPwK’s openness to Canadian society was its attitude towards potential members. Its 1921 and 1931 constitutions opened membership to all individuals “of Polish birth or heritage...regardless of religious or political preferences;” in 1934, it extended membership to non-Polish spouses. No longer would membership be limited by ethnic identity. Non-Poles, however, did not flood the ranks of the ZPwK, and it retained a predominantly Polish character.

Even though membership was extended to non-Poles by spousal privilege, not everyone was welcome to join the organization. In particular, and like with other Polish federations,
members of organizations that were deemed illegal by the Canadian government were barred from joining the ZPwK. The behaviour of members was also codified in the constitution, stipulating that “members shall…be tolerant towards the views of others” and that “no one shall be allowed to bring up his own or other people’s private affairs during meetings.” This specification pointed to four issues. First, it suggested that there was a lack of cohesiveness within the community when it came to both political and religious points of view. Second, it indicated that these differing viewpoints were a source of contention and conflict, and hence had to be avoided. Third, in some respects, the aims and duties of the federation were to take priority over any and all other issues faced by the membership. Therefore, if conflicts did arise as a result of conflicting views on identity and religion, they had no place in the confines of the organization. Lastly, this also indicated that there was no other forum outside of the organization where Poles could deliberate over these critical ideological questions. Ignoring such important issues in hope that they would go away was not a solution. Eventually, this attitude would create rupture in the ranks of the ZPwK.

The rising radical leftist trend in the ZPwK resulted in the organization’s involvement in what the consuls considered to be anti-Polish demonstrations. One such demonstration was led by the Ukrainian Communists and was attended by Group 1 and Educational Branch of Groups 1 to 9 of the ZPwK. This trend also coincided with the growing reorientation of the ZPwK towards Canada, which was reinforced with the start of the Second World War. The organization was quick to write to the Department of the Secretary of State, declaring their loyalty to

96 AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers (Constitutions), F1405, POL0013, MU9115, Konstytucja Związku Polaków z Zagranicy [thereafter KZPZ], 1937, article 4, pt.8.
97 AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers (Constitutions), F1405, POL0013, MU9115, KZPZ, 1937, article 6, pt.19.
98 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 vol.12, Polish Legation (Ottawa) 1934-48 File, Letter from Consul to the ZPwK, Central Committee, August 7, 1935.
Canada. It also asked its membership to be on alert for both the enemies of Canada and of Poland. However, priority was given to Canadian needs, which were only extended to Poland by the wartime alliance.

The fact that aims were centred on Canada and not Poland indicates a shift in the understanding of the Polish identity. Without overtly denying its Polish roots, the ZPwK saw this heritage in the broader Canadian context: the community’s loyalty must be to Canada and not to the Second Republic. The ZPwK stripped the identity of any political, economic and religious connotations. This, of course, struck at the core of the commonly held notion that Polishness and Catholicism were the two components comprising the Polish identity, and reflected the rising labour-oriented leftist trend in the organization’s executive board and its concern for the economic well-being of Polish immigrants. Whether all members and associated organizations held these views is a matter of debate. One thing remained certain: by attempting to become more Canadian, ZPwK was abandoning the religious roots of the traditional definition and understanding Polishness, and removing the link between the immigrants and their homeland.

For Polish consuls and most Polish clergy, this was a radical move as they propagated the notion that an active relationship with the Polish state was indispensable to Polishness. The consuls responded by creating the ZZPwK in Winnipeg in 1931, which received its charter in 1933. Recognizing that the Polish community in Toronto was growing, the organization’s first convention took place in that city. This not only pointed to a shift in the Polish community’s centre from Winnipeg to Toronto, but it also indicated the popularity and dominance of the ZPwK in Ontario. At its founding, twenty-four organizations joined the ZZPwK, and by 1934, its membership had swelled to thirty-seven, with its greatest support still remaining in Manitoba and

99 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 vol.12, Department of the Secretary of State 1939 File, Letter from the Assistant Under Secretary of State to the ZPwK, September 29, 1939.
100 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 vol.5, Announcement to the ZPwK Membership, September 25, 1939.
101 Radecki, 71; Heydenkorn, A Community in Transition, 210-11.
Montreal. Jan Pawlica reported to the Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MSZ) in 1934 that this represented about 6,000 individuals. By 1938, there were seventy-five member organizations. Yet, Benedykt Heydenkorn argues that the rank and file added to only about 3,089 people for 1938. The significant discrepancy in membership cannot be accounted for. Though there was a general drop in membership applications during the years of the Depression (see Appendix B as an example), it is difficult to assess whether these numbers are accurate because membership records are incomplete or non-existent. It is certainly not impossible that Pawlica inflated the numbers in order to over-exaggerate his successes to his superiors.

Women’s organizations played an important role in the struggle to preserve Polishness. The ZZPwK saw the creation of women’s groups as imperative in safeguarding the youth from assimilation. Women had a special function as agents of culture, education and philanthropy. Their role as vessels of culture was linked to the historical events within Polish history. At a convention for Związek Polek in Winnipeg (Associations of Polish Women), Jan Pawlica addressed the subject of women’s duties and the role of their organizations, emphasizing “prominent female activists within Polish history, within the Legions, in defending Lwów and during the Polish-Bolshevik War of 1918-1920, underscoring in particular the person of

102 In 1934, the president of the organization was B.B. Dubieński; the General Secretary, J. Sikora; and the organization’s delegates were K. Konarski and A. Wach. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.31-31a, Report from Jan Pawlica to MSZ, Departament Konsularny, 20 March 1934; Krystyna Romaniszyn, Chłopi polscy w Kanadzie (1896-1939) (Warszawa: Polska Akademia Nauk, Instytut Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa, 1991), 75; Radecki, Ethnic Organizational, 71; Heydenkorn, Organizational Structure, 14.
103 However, in a list of organizations and membership from 1934, the membership totalled at 3,401. Two of the organizations—St. Mary’s Parish, Toronto and Holy Trinity Parish, Windsor—provided the number of families (e.g., 110 families and 140 families respectively) and not the total number of individuals. By including a total count, the overall membership could have increased by at least another 250 members. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.31-31a, Jan Pawlica to MSZ, Departament Konsularny, 20 March 1934; AO, MHSO Fond, F1405, POL0236, MU 9066, Federation of Polish Societies in Canada Papers, “Wykaz Członków Zjednoczenia,” 1934; MHSO, POL Box 21, Poles in Canada: Their Contribution to Canadian Development (Montreal: Federation of Polish Societies in Canada, 1938), 4.
104 For a list of all organizations, which were members of the ZZPwK in 1938, please see Appendix C. Heydenkorn, A Community in Transition, 211.
105 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.166, Letter from Jan Pawlica, February 11, 1935.
Aleksandra Piłsudska, [her role] in women’s organizational life in the independence movement and within reborn Poland.”

According to Pawlica, having the Związek Polek in Winnipeg join the ZZPwK would help in consolidating and centralizing women within the community, bolstering their effectiveness as preservers of national and religious identity. Moreover, women were also ascribed the traditional female tasks of raising Polish children, and fulfilling charitable and educational responsibilities. It is difficult to determine female membership to the ZZPwK due to a lack of sources. However, according to Jan Pawlica, upon joining the ZZPwK, the membership in Związek Polek increased by 50%.

In addition to their roles within the nationalism process, women were also ascribed traditional female tasks of raising Polish children, and fulfilling charitable and educational responsibilities. The federation’s executive membership also reveals much about their attitudes towards women. The ZZPwK appeared to have a more constructive relationship with its female membership. Not only did they serve as vessels of nationalism (via culture and education), but they gained membership in the governing bodies of the organization. By 1938, the Rada Naczelna (Central Executive) was comprised of thirteen women (out of a total of twenty members), and by 1942, W. Szczygielska, had become one of the vice-presidents.

The ZZPwK was to maintain culture and preserve national and historic traditions through the creation of Polish schools, libraries, concerts and theatrical productions. According to the

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106 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.166, Letter from Jan Pawlica, February 11, 1935.
107 When joining the ZZPwK the board members of the organization consisted of the following: President: Katarzyna Rybakowa; Vice-Presidents: Paulina Prokopowa and Marja Drelenkiewicz; Secretary: Waleria Szczygielska; and Treasurer: Marja Palamarzówna. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.166, Letter from Jan Pawlica, February 11, 1935.
108 AN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.166, Letter from Jan Pawlica, February 11, 1935.
109 These were: A. Grocholska; Z. Polanska; P. Galdzinska; J. Andree; P. Kulczycka; M. Najder; S. Wach; SJ. Dybek; W. Murray; W. Szczygielska; Z. Rychwalska; H. Kropo; S. Warowa. MHSO Archives, Box 21, Federation of Polish Society of Canada, Poles in Canada, (1938), p.5.
111 LAC, MG28 v100, “Statut Zjednoczenia Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie,” Czas, November 29, 1932, 2; “Biuletyn Zjednoczenia Zrzeszeń Polski w Kanadzie,” Czas, 5 December 1932 and 13 December 1932, 7. The ZZPwK published all materials related to the federation in Czas. By the end of 1932, an entire section of the paper,
federation’s constitution, Poles were to remain Poles, recognize and support the Polish government, and ensure that future generations were not denationalized. Especially important was establishing close contacts between Poles in Canada and those back in the homeland. At its outset, the consuls wanted to model the organization on “a Roman Catholic or a national association, as these types of organizations are able to encompass a large group of Poles.”

Religion was an effective medium, which could bring together the dispersed Polish immigrants. After all, parishes remained a focal source of the Polish community in Canada. Consequently, for example, each convention of the ZZPwK began with a Mass.

Although the ZZPwK aspired to exploit the Polish-Catholic identity, it was not a religious organization. In an effort to gather all Poles under its leadership, the ZZPwK presented itself as a secular institution, which sought out all Poles regardless of religious affiliation. To appeal to non-Catholics, it accentuated statehood and economic progress as components of the Polish identity. Yet, it also highlighted language, history, culture and above all religion, specifically Catholicism, as elements comprising that identity. It hoped to welcome non-Catholics into its ranks without offending the Catholic Poles. Catholicism was welcomed and emphasized, but not overtly required. First, the federation included a provision in its constitution which acknowledged that a ZZPwK branch could have a chaplain, who could also be the local parish priest. In addition, this provision also recognized that if a branch did not have a suitable candidate to represent it at a national level, this function, by default, fell to the chaplain. At an executive level, the ZZPwK had named Winnipeg’s Archbishop A.A. Sinnott as one of its

Biuletyn Zjednoczenia Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie (Bulletin of the Federation of Polish Societies), was devoted to the organization and its policies and propaganda.

113 Archiwum Akt Nowych (hereafter AAN), Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.83, S. Zwolski to Consulate General in Montreal, 3 January 1932.
114 MHSO, POL D-13-4 Box, Polonia (Montreal), 1 December 1934.
115 AO, MHSO Fond, Federation of Polish Societies in Canada Papers, F1405, POL 0263, MU 9066, Regulamin Naczelnej Delegacji Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie, chapter II, art.5, no date.
honorific patrons.\textsuperscript{116} This suggested a positive and complimentary relationship between the two bodies, and at the very least, it was a recognition of religion’s permanence and influence within the community.

The consuls (and most Polish clergy) continued to emphasize the Pole-Catholic identity while underlining the importance of the relationship between the community and the Polish state. The ZZPwK’s constitution clearly defined these very goals:

\begin{quote}
(b) Wielding high the banner of national honour, strengthened by forces of an inexhaustible source of the nation’s ideals and the heroic past of the Fatherland, repelling the enemy’s attack on the Nation and the Polish State, while simultaneously utilizing our strength for broader Canadian progress.

(c) Organizing for its members effective and productive aid, spiritual and material, as well as, when necessary, defending the entire Polish community in Canada.\textsuperscript{117}
\end{quote}

The consuls’ agenda did not expect Poles to assimilate into their new homeland but to maintain their Polishness and allegiance to the Second Republic while at the same time being respectable and acceptable members of mainstream Canadian society so that they could affect Polish-Canadian relations to the benefit of Poland. Even the Central Committee, as part of its mandate, was required to take care of the material and moral needs of the Poles, in addition to organizing immigrants in places where no Polish organizations existed. Yet, the Committee also wanted to ease the transition of immigrants into good Canadian citizens to use their “strength for broader Canadian progress.”\textsuperscript{118} This did not necessarily imply assimilation. It involved calculated integration whereby the community would become a self-sustaining and functioning society paralleling the larger Canadian community.

ZZPwK also maintained strong contact with the motherland through Światpol since this would permit Poles to retain their Polish national culture, while strengthening it through


\textsuperscript{117} LAC, MG28 v100, “Projekt Statutu Zjednoczenia Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie,” \textit{Czas}, 12 January 1932, 3.

\textsuperscript{118} AO, MHSO Fond, Federation of Polish Societies in Canada Papers, F1405, POL 0263, MU 9066, Regulamin Naczelnnej Delegacji Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie, chapter III, art.1, no date.
educational materials such as literature.\textsuperscript{119} It also called on Poles to support local Polish businesses, and more significantly for Poland—to demand and purchase Polish products in Canada to remedy the trade imbalance since Poland was purchasing five times more from Canada than selling to Canada.\textsuperscript{120} The ZZPwK was able to gather both religious and secular groups into its fold (see Appendix C for organizations that joined the ZZPwK), but not the ZPwK or the SPwK. The SPwK was in discussions with the ZZPwK over the latter’s acceptance of Catholicism as the federation’s main religion;\textsuperscript{121} however, the outbreak of the war in 1939 interrupted these negotiations.\textsuperscript{122}

In a similar attempt to unify the Polish immigrant community, Polish clergy created the SPwK in 1934, in Winnipeg, Manitoba.\textsuperscript{123} Established a year earlier as a province-wide organization, Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Maniobie (Association of Poles in Manitoba) consolidated parish and church-affiliated groups throughout the province.\textsuperscript{124} As a popular organization in Western Canada, SPwK represented 35 parishes.\textsuperscript{125} During its first convention, the SPwK boasted of 100 delegates and 50 parish attendees.\textsuperscript{126} Consul Jan Pawlica, who believed that the SPwK should be forced to join the ZZPwK, however, disputed these numbers.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{119} Support for preserving national identity would come directly from the Polish state and would be realized through cultural events and productions, such as theatre, and the funding of Polish newspapers.

\textsuperscript{120} AO, MHSO Fond, Federation of Polish Societies in Canada Papers, F1405, POL 0263, MU 9066, Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie Report, 1938.

\textsuperscript{121} Romaniszyn, 	extit{Chłopi polscy}, 75.

\textsuperscript{122} Kołodziej, 	extit{Dzieje Polonii}, 241.

\textsuperscript{123} In 1934, the President of the organization was Rev. Dr. J. Kręciszewski; the Vice-President: Piotr Taraska; the Financial Secretary: Rev. Zielonka; Cashier: Franciszek Stochmal; Secretary and Editor of the 	extit{Gazeta Katolicka}: Jan Pazdor; Librarian: Rev. Wachowicz, the Vicar of Holy Ghost Parish, Winnipeg. The following directors were appointed for given areas: W. Wołoszyński, Cook’s Creek; P. Kawiatkowski, Tolstoi; M. Saborski, Meleb; Rev. K. Lulasik, Selkirk; Rev. Sajka, Beausejour. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.31-31a, Report from Jan Pawlica to MSZ, Departament Konsularny, March 20, 1934; AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.100-100a, Confidential Report from Jan Pawlica, May 23, 1934; Krystyna Romaniszyn, 	extit{Chłopi polscy w Kanadzie}, 73.

\textsuperscript{124} Heydenkorn, 	extit{Organizational Structure}, 9.

\textsuperscript{125} Romaniszyn, 	extit{Chłopi polscy}, 73.

\textsuperscript{126} AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.100-100a, Confidential Report from Jan Pawlica, May 23, 1934.

\textsuperscript{127} According to Pawlica, only 13 clergy attended with 6 coming from Winnipeg. No one had come from Alberta, Saskatchewan or Ontario. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.100-100a, Confidential Report from Jan Pawlica, May 23, 1934; Heydenkorn, 	extit{A Community in Transition}, 224-5.
The roots of the SPwK can be traced back to the creation of the Katolickie Zrzeszenie Polaków w Kanadzie Zachodniej (Catholic Association of Poles in Western Canada), which worked with the Zjednoczenie Polskich Kapłanów w Kanadzie (Alliance of Polish Clergy in Canada, est. 1927) and their creation, the Katolickie Biuro Imigracyjne (Catholic Bureau of Immigration), focusing their attention on helping new immigrants and directing them towards already existing Polish settlements in Western Canada. The federation also proclaimed its concern for the economic well-being of the community. Consequently, the SPwK presented itself as a place which was in tune with the needs of the “everyday” Pole. To that effect, it established a posthumous fund to help take care of families after the death of a parent (in most cases a male). It expanded its reach through parishes, and the running of bazaars to raise funds for schooling, churches and other worthy causes.

The central aim of the SPwK was to ensure that Poles remained loyal to the Catholic Church, its traditions and moral code. The federation was supported, in part, by the Opieka Polski nad Rodakami na Obczyźnie (Poland’s Aid for Compatriots Abroad), which supplied teaching materials, and by Winnipeg’s Archbishop, Alfred Arthur Sinnott. The establishment of the SPwK in 1934 was, partly, a response to the rise of the ZPwK, its acceptance of the Polish National Catholic Church and Polish Baptists, as well as the rise of left-leaning ideologies. It was also an attempt to halt the trend begun in the mid-1920s of some parish-affiliated

128 AAN, Akta Janiny i Kazimierza Warchałowskich, sign.244, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Polskie wychodźtwo i osadnictwo w kanadzie (Warszawa: MSZ, no date), 75.
130 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.21-2, Report from Jan Pawlica, January 17, 1934.
131 Radecki, Ethnic Organizational Dynamics, 73.
132 Opieka Polski nad Rodakami na Obczyźnie (Poland’s Aid for Compatriots Abroad) was a Catholic organization created in a collaborative effort between Józef Piłsudski and Cardinal August Hlond to ensure the religious and national identity of Polish emigrants and “engender as its general program aid to emigrants within a Catholic and national spirit.” Essentially, Opieka was to create a symbiosis of the patriotic with the religious. AAN, OPnRnO, sign.358/16, s.9, Booklet Sprawozdanie okręgu Zachodniego Stowarzyszenia “Opieka Polska” nad Rodakami na obczyźnie, 12 September 1929 to March 31, 1931.
133 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.100-100a, Confidential Report from Jan Pawlica, 23 May 1934.
organizations joining secular organizations because of their dissatisfaction with the limited possibilities at the parish level. It wanted to provide an alternative to the two growing secular federations, as neither of the two had formally acknowledged Catholicism. Yet, not all Polish parishes in Western Canada joined the organization. This may have been the result of regionalism and SPwK’s late entry onto the community’s organizational landscape. The SPwK fought to retain the allegiance of the groups that had not yet defected to the other federations. It was concerned that the accepted attitude of linking Catholicism to Polishness would disappear to the detriment of both identities. Immigrants would lose their sense of religious and national identity. Its goal was to gather all Catholic organizations and parishes and provide a network of mutual support. Even at its second convention in 1938, SPwK continued to discuss the school question and the involvement of women and youth in the organization.

SPwK was governed by the motto of “God and Fatherland” and hoped to unite all those for whom these remained a central slogan. Its goals were to promote the Polish language and to edify the community. Not only was each household to contain Catholic literature, but youth were also not to lose their Polish spirit—“God forbid that they feel ashamed of their Polish heritage and their mother tongue.” Faith and the national spirit were to be closely connected, as only faith could preserve the national identity. To increase its appeal, and to present itself as an organization that preserved the language, culture, traditions and faith that had accompanied the immigrants to Canada, SPwK addressed problems of denationalization, assimilation and discrimination faced by the Poles. Its call for members outlined the threats facing Poles in Canada:

134 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.89, Confidential Letter to the Rada Organizacyjna Polaków z Zagranicy, October 24, 1933.
135 Radecki and Heydenkorn, A Member of a Distinguished Family, 65.
136 LAC, BH Fond, Consulate General of Poland, Montreal, 1935 File, Confidential Letter from Jan Pawlica regarding the Second Convention of the SPwK, July 4, 1935.
137 LAC, CPC Fond, MG 28 V10 vol.47, Julian Topolnicki Collection, SPwK Manifesto, October 1938.
And yet, in cases regarding your spirit you encountered difficulties; your and your ancestors’ faith, national pride, native tongue, Polish traditions were drowned by foreign religions, faulty ideas and false patriotism—in addition, you brother, are frequently subjected to humiliation and oblivion because you are a newcomer and immigrant to Canada.\footnote{LAC, CPC Fond, MG 28 V10 vol.47, Julian Topolnicki Collection, SPwK Manifesto, October 1938.}

SPwK highlighted the various components of Polishness which it considered being threatened from the larger Canadian society. In many ways, the organization juxtaposed the Pole against his or her surroundings. Unlike the ZPwK which emphasized assimilation and contributing to the betterment of Canadian society, and unlike the ZZPwK, which saw the immigrant as an extension of the Polish state and who should integrate into Canadian society only as far as this would benefit the Polish state, the SPwK saw Polishness as existing outside the political and economic spheres (though it did interact with them). Identity was a cultural phenomenon with possible political overtones. For the SPwK, the “traditional” or “historical” understanding of that identity had to be preserved, and this could only be done through strengthening the bonds of Polishness with Catholicism. Discrimination, racism and assimilation were threats against which Polishness had to fight. Hence, the organization became a place where those who valued faith, national spirit and Polish-Catholic identity could come together, and where they could recall their “high culture”.\footnote{LAC, CPC Fond, MG 28 V10 vol.47, Julian Topolnicki Collection, SPwK Manifesto, October 1938.}

The federation’s concern was not exclusively religious in nature, for it spoke to national and ethnic identity as something that required preservation. Catholic values would be best protected if immigrants (and their children) retained their ethno-national identity. This appeared congruent with the Canadian Polonia which also wanted to preserve the Catholic-Polish persona. For the SPwK, it simply meant that religion came first and nationalism second—a close second. The leadership of the federation had realized that the rivalry between the federations also entailed a battle over the definition of Polishness. They did not want to be left standing alone out
in the cold. It helped that Archbishop Sinnott was a strong supporter of the organization and he emphasized the need for Poles to foster their faith, language and history. He urged Polish clergy to join the organization in order to further its popularity in the community. According to Jan Pawlica, Sinnott was disappointed with a poor turnout for the SPwK’s second convention. The organization admitted to the slow response in its appeals. In its call for members, it explained that even though its progress was slow, it wanted to ensure that the programs which it established were a realistic response to the needs of the community.

As the last of the federations, the SPwK, had difficulty making headway eastward. In part, this was a result of their delayed emergence—entering a territory where the other federations were quite active. Some people may have been put off by its overt religiosity. Still others had already come under the sway of radical political movements, most notably socialism. The popularity of ZZPwK among Catholic organizations in eastern and central Canada, the strength of the ZPwK in Ontario, and the quick support given to SPwK in western Canada suggest that regionalism, ideology and the timing of its formation affected a federation’s ability to attract new members.

**BEST FEDERATION FOR THE BEST POLES: ORGANIZATIONAL RIVALRY IN THE 1930S**

By the 1930s, competition for members was a prominent component of Polish organizational life. All federations made claims that they best represented the interests of the people. They also claimed that their principles and programs were the legitimate authority representing the Polish ideals in Canada. However, more than anything else, the rivalry between the federations spoke to a lack of consistency on matters of identity and religion, and how these issues were to be realized in the everyday life of the immigrants. Though there were many issues...

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140 LAC, BH Fond, Consulate General of Poland, Montreal, 1935 File, Confidential Letter from Jan Pawlica regarding the Second Convention of the SPwK, July 4, 1935.

141 LAC, CPC Fond, MG 28 V10 vol.47, Julian Topolnicki Collection, SPwK Manifesto, October 1938.

142 SPwK’s popularity in Western Canada was the result of a lack of Polish leftist organizations in this area. (Kołodziej, *Dzieje Polonii*, 239).
of disagreement, three took precedence: relations with Poland as illustrated through relationship with Światpol; role of religion; and the definition of Polishness. In many ways, the 1930s can be summed up as a clash of the Titans.

In the mid-1930s, the relationship between SPwK and ZZPwK was less volatile than between the ZZPwK and the ZPwK. In part, the problem between the former two stemmed from a question of religion’s role within each of the two organizations and their relationship to the Polish state. The SPwK’s desire to bring together all parishes and parish-related organizations was viewed as a potential threat by the ZZPwK. The latter had established its presence in the West and was concerned that the SPwK would be a formidable rival. It realized that “if [SPwK] possessed genuine members, who would give priority to national work before their work for the Church,” it could steal the limelight.\footnote{AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.128-132, Report from the Centra Committee (ZZPwK) to the Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy, October 9, 1934.} If it reoriented its focus away from church matters to nationalism, if it declined to join the ZZPwK, or if it even refused to co-operate with the consuls they would have to increase their activity in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.\footnote{AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.100-100a, Confidential Letter from J. Pawlica, to MSZ, Polish Embassy in London, England, and to the Consulate General in Ottawa, May 23, 1934.} Consequently, the ZZPwK had hoped that a cooperative relationship could be established between the two and that they would be able to make use of the SPwK’s networks to promote, among a number of things, Polish nationalism and ties to the homeland. But cooperation faced a number of challenges.

The SPwK was reticent in following the consuls’ lead on a number of issues. First, in its assessment of the SPwK, the ZZPwK stated that the former had focused solely on gaining funds for its own newspaper.\footnote{AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.128-132, From the Central Committee (ZZPwK) to the Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy, October 20, 1934.} Second, the ZZPwK found it difficult to accept criticism of Piłsudski in \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}. It even worried about a rising trend that focused more on Dmowski and the
Endencja. However, with the death of Piłsudski, the ZZPwK hoped for a change of heart and that the SPwK would be more positively disposed to the Polish state and Światpol. Third, the SPwK’s resistance to joining the ZZPwK was blamed on the clergy not wanting to join a secular organization. All of these incongruities also extended to a clash over who was going to control the education of Polish children. Here, the ZZPwK accused the SPwK of not wanting to work with them in order to provide a Polish education to the next generation, arguing that the SPwK had only one school in Winnipeg, while the ZZPwK had twelve throughout Ontario. Such an attack was an attempt at challenging and even discrediting the SPwK’s position on the issue of identity, insinuating that by disregarding the national education of the next generation, the organization was not interested in promoting it. The battlefield was fierce. Consuls such as Jan Pawlica actively sought to thwart SPwK’s aim of cross-country recruitment by undermining the federation of priests throughout Western Canada. In a report to the MSZ, Pawlica noted that “in this act of sabotage I was helped by the changing psychology of Polish priests in Saskatchewan...I was able to gain confirmation delaying the organizational action amongst the clergy in Saskatchewan, and with this is possible the non-participation of Polish priests in the upcoming Fall convention of the Association of Poles in Canada.” He even asked the MSZ not to deliver books sent to the SPwK from Opieka.

The ZZPwK and the consuls also feared that if the SPwK expanded into Saskatchewan and Alberta, it would become a competitor and undermine the former’s authority and legitimacy.
among the immigrants. Even when the two cooperated, the ZZPwK worried about the potential opposition of the SPwK towards some of the secular organizations within its ranks. When the potential for unification between the ZPwK and the ZZPwK arose, the latter was especially concerned about the reaction of the SPwK. However, the support of Rev. Guczyński of West Toronto, Rev. Dr. Tarasiuk of Hamilton, and Rev. Samborski of Kitchener among others, dispelled the fear of some consuls that if the ZPwK joined the ZZPwK, the Catholics would leave. An upcoming mission to Polish clergy led by Rev. Mazurkiewicz from New York reassured the consuls that that occasion would “increasingly transform the attitude of the Catholic sphere in regards to the Federation [ZZPwK] in favour of the latter.”

The ZZPwK also benefited from the conflict with SPwK, as more people had become interested in the organization because they no longer saw it as pro-clerical.

The consuls were fully aware of the power of the parishes within the community. This became evident over the issue of the weekly Czas. There was concern that the new editorial board had come under the influence of the clergy. The ZZPwK relied on Pawlica to approach the SPwK and get it to join the ZZPwK or at least establish a committee focusing on mutual understanding and cooperation. By mid-1937, the two parties were in serious talks: “The Association [i.e., SPwK] […] is waiting for encouraging signs from the Federation [i.e., ZZPwK] and it has completely halted its activities. The Federation, especially its Executive in Winnipeg has held a positive attitude towards the Association, but it has not taken any step to reach agreement, or perhaps even unity, which is possible.” A union was never realized as a result of the Second World War. The ZZPwK was equally unsuccessful in making headway with the

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152 Heydenkorn, A Community in Transition, 223.
153 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.76-83, Minutes of the Consular Conference in Ottawa, 24 March 1934.
154 LAC, CPC Fond, MG28 V10 vol.43, Julian Topolnicki Collection, Correspondence 1935 1 of 2 File, Confidential Letter from Jan Sikora to Julian Topolnicki, May 20, 1935.
155 LAC, CPC Fond, MG28 V10 vol.43, Julian Topolnicki Collection, Correspondence 1936-7, Letter from Jan Sikora to Julian Topolnicki, May 2, 1937.
ZPwK. Here, the latter’s criticism of Poland and the immigrant’s relationship to Poland was the main source of contention.

The consuls tried to bring the ZPwK into its fold, seeing this as the final gateway to creating a single strong national Polish organization in Canada, which would “garner all isolated organizations, church et al.” However, realization of such an endeavour continued to evade the consuls. Most often, the ZZPwK accused the ZPwK of being anti-Catholic, anti-Poland, and anti-Piłsudski. This essentially amounted to an accusation of national treason. The ZPwK was also critical regarding consolidation of efforts and cooperation with organizations from Poland. Though the ZPwK clearly stated that it desired to maintain contact with the homeland, it would consider close collaboration only if the working masses were given a more prominent voice in the ruling of the Polish state. The Związkowiec saw the ZZPwK as being at odds with its values, and not really being concerned about the real and immediate needs of the Polish immigrants in Canada. Consul General J. Adamkiewicz was disappointed with the ZPwK’s position, attributing their stance to a misunderstanding and miscommunication between the two institutions. According to him, neither he nor the ZZPwK were interested in “assimilating” the organization or disregarding the importance of the Polish peasant and worker within the community. A.J. Staniewski, the editor of the Związkowiec, outlined the crux of the disagreement: “[ZPwK’s] chief slogan...is Polishness. [But] this organization is not archpatriotic, as it is a highly tolerant organization, and into its ranks enter people of various political and

156 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.76-83, Minutes of the Consular Conference in Ottawa, 24 March 1934.
157 AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.49-61, Letter to the MSZ, Consular Department from the Consul General, Dr. J. Adamkiewicz, November 6, 1931.
158 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.128-132, Report to Stefan Lenartowicz, Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy from the Chief Council of the ZZPwK, October 20, 1934.
159 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.128-132, Report to Stefan Lenartowicz, Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy from the Chief Council of the ZZPwK, October 20, 1934.
160 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.7-9, Letter to MSZ, Consular Department from Chief Council of the ZZPwK, October 13, 1933.
161 AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.26-7, Letter to the ZZPwK from J. Adamkiewicz, January 11, 1934.
religious attitudes.” He then continued: “Every Polish man and woman...should belong to this organization, speak Polish, teach their children this beautiful language...Do not allow yourself to be swept and carried away by the assimilationist current.” Here two things become clear.

Staniewski saw the organization separating Polishness from patriotism, nationalism, and ties to Poland—an identity on which political affiliation or religious persuasion has no bearing. Polishness appeared to be associated with language and culture. Second, Polishness could also have been used as a means of couching leftist ideology. Nonetheless, ZPwK had provided an understanding of Polishness that was diametrically opposed to that offered by the ZZPwK and to the SPwK.

The merger was also rejected for other reasons that moved beyond the definition of Polishness. The ZPwK considered any merger with the ZZPwK an impossibility because it claimed that the latter did not arise from the people but was created and imposed by government officials. It was under heavy influence of the consuls. It did not help that Dr. J. Adamkiewicz claimed, at the first convention of the ZZPwK, that a person who is not a Catholic cannot be a Pole, and hence cannot belong to the organization. Lastly, the Związek Polaków did not agree with the ZZPwK’s oath of loyalty to Poland, which it considered a “foreign government.” The organization declared that 90% of its membership had Canadian citizenship and therefore could not accept such a pledge.

Invitations extended to the ZPwK to join the conventions of the

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164 This number may have been inflated. Between 1934 and 1939, only 49 ZPwK applicants listed their citizenship as Canadian (see Appendix B). However, many members may have gone on to obtain Canadian citizenship. LAC, CPC Fond, MG28 V10 vol.47, Julian Topolnicki Collection, Articles, Clippings (1/3) 1932-38 File, Julian Topolnicki, Sprawozdanie w wiecu A.J. Staniewskiego, redaktora “Związkowca”, September 13, 1936.
ZZPwK were declined, citing non-membership as the rationale. The filling out of declaration forms about the ZPwK’s membership was refused on the same basis.165

The rift between the two was further exacerbated by the Central Committee of ŚwiatPol, which declared the ZZPwK as the official representative of the Polish community in Canada.166 Additionally, the suspension of postal privileges for Związkowiec by the Ministry of the Interior became another source of conflict.167 These privileges were suspended as a result of articles that were overtly subversive and anti-government.168 The ZPwK wrongly assumed that the consuls were behind this action.169 It was not until two years later, in mid-1939, that postal privileges were restored to the newspaper.170 As well, ŚwiatPol’s Central Committee was very critical of the ZPwK’s attitudes. Though it recognized the federation as an invaluable asset within the Polish community in Canada, it also saw their defiance as leading to unnecessary discord.171

Talks continued in the late 1930s about conditions required for collaborative work between the two organizations. With a desire to create a committee representative of Poles in Toronto, the ZPwK turned to the ZZPwK with a list of its demands in a letter. First, the ZPwK required recognition of its work in Ontario as the province’s “largest and most deserving Polish Organization” and a return of its postal privileges. Second, the committee was to be based on a

165 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 vol.11, Federation of Polish Societies in Canada File, Communiqué IX to the ZPwK from the ZZPwK, August 5, 1932; Letters from M. Nedza to the ZZPwK, March 25, 1933, and March 11, 1933; LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 vol.58, Group 1-9 Correspondence July-Dec 1932 File, Report Nr. 15, November 1932.
166 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 vol.11, Federation of Polish Societies in Canada File, Letter from the ZZPwK to the ZPwK, May 28, 1934; Letter to the ZPwK Head Committee from the ZZPwK, March 23, 1933.
170 BH Fond, MG31 D237 Vol.7, Consulate of the Republic of Poland, Montreal-Ottawa, 1937-42 File, Letter from Consul Dr. Tadeusz Brzeziński to MSZ, March 10, 1939; Letter from the MSZ to the Consuls, June 27, 1939.
representation by population (i.e., membership) regardless of political or religious stances. Lastly, the committee was to focus on the needs of Poles in Canada, and this had to be achieved from the bottom up.\(^{172}\) Their price for cooperation was indeed steep.

Inter-federation rivalry aside, the ZPwK also faced serious internal problems over the very issues of Polishness and the immigrant’s relationship to Poland. The disagreement culminated in a clash between Group 1 and Group 9. Group 9 was unhappy with the rising influence of the Left in the federation, and it, in a broader sense, saw the ZPwK as being too critical of the Polish government, Catholic Church, and clergy.\(^{173}\) This conflict continued over a period of two years when public attacks emerged from both groups and their leaders, each accusing the other of breaching ZPwK’s constitution.\(^{174}\) Eventually, Group 9 defected in 1936,\(^{175}\) creating the Związek Narodowy Polski (Polish National Union, ZNP) with the Mutual Help Association of Polish Veterans by 1937. The ZNP’s motto became “Brotherhood, Equality and Progress,” was later changed to “God, Honour, Fatherland.”\(^{176}\) The ZNP went on to join the ZZPwK and Światpol.\(^{177}\) According to the consuls, by 1938 the organization had 450 members and had purchased land for a “Polish House.”\(^{178}\) The ZPwK, however, argued that the split

\(^{172}\) LAC, PAFSC fond, MG28 V55 vol.11, Federation of Polish Societies in Canada File, Letter from the ZPwK to the ZZPwK, July 28, 1938.


\(^{174}\) LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55, Vol.59, Group 1-9 Correspondence 1936—Jan-June File, Letter from ZPwK Grp 1 to Grp 9, January 27, 1936; Letter from ZPwK Grp 1 to Związkowiec, January 28, 1936; Resolution of Grp 1, ZPwK, no date; Letter from ZPwK Grp 1, no date; Letter from the Central Committee to Grps 1 and 9, April 28, 1936; Letter from Grp 1 to the Central Committee, April 23, 1936; Letter from the Central Committee to Grp 1, May 4, 1936.

\(^{175}\) LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55, Vol.59, Group 1-9 Correspondence 1936—Jan-June File, Letter from Grp 9 to Grp 1, May 13, 1936.


\(^{177}\) The governing council comprised of the following in 1937: President: S. Stasior; Vice-President: A. Piekarsz; General Secretary: Michal Nedza; Financial Secretary: M. Justin (Justyński); Organizer: F. Muszyński; in 1938: President: A. Piekarsz; Vice-President: S. Stasior; General Secretary: Michal Nedza; Financial Secretary: M. Justin (Justyński); Organizer: F. Muszyński; in 1939: President: A. Granat; Vice-President: A. Kasperek; General Secretary: Michal Nedza; Financial Secretary: M. Justin (Justyński); Organizer: F. Porębski. LAC, MN Fond, MG30 C118 Vol.1, Związek Narodowy Polski, Kanada 1930-1955: 25 Lat Pracy (n.p.: n.d.), 38, 42.

\(^{178}\) LAC, BH Fond, MG31 D237 Vol.7, Consulate of the Republic of Poland, Montreal-Ottawa, 1937-42 File, Confidential Report from a conference of the consuls that took place on January 27-8, 1938, no date.
occurred in part because of its refusal to join Światpol. Though that spoke to the broader issues between the diaspora and the homeland, a critical factor in this schism was ZPwK’s reorientation towards the Left.

The relationship of the three organizations to Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy (World Association of Poles Abroad, known as Światpol) further illustrates the disagreements over identity and religion. Światpol was the realization of Poland’s policies towards emigrants and their (political and economic) relationship to the homeland. As an organization that functioned on Polish territory, its significant remoteness from Canada, may have presented a perception of irrelevance to the immigrant situation in Canada. Yet, it clearly highlights the discussions on the religion-nationalism conflict on Canadian soil. Światpol served as a platform for the manifestation of the attitudes and policies held by each of the federations.

Established as a way of bringing together Polish settlements and communities, along with supporting ties between these and the Polish state, Światpol was a creation of the MSZ and the Rada Opieki Kulturalnej (Cultural Patronage Committee). It also had the support of the heads of Polish government and the Polish Catholic Church under Poland’s Primate, Cardinal Hlond. The organization was not just concerned with maintaining culture amongst Polish emigrants, but also wanted to ensure that they maintain close ties to the motherland and support the politics of Poland. The 1934 convention—the second after the first in 1929—had as its main focus the

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179 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 Vol.6, Communiqués Sent to All Groups File, Communiqué of the Central Committee, ZPwK to all members and groups of the ZPwK, no date.
180 LAC, PAFSC Fond, MG28 V55 Vol.59, Group 1-9 Correspondence Jan-June 1937 File, Open Letter to the Executive of the ZNP, no date.
182 Światpol was also a strong supporter of Polish clergy abroad. Canadian Polish Research Institute Archives, Rada Organizacyjna Polaków z Zagranicy, *Pięć Lat Pracy dla Polonji Zagranicznej* (Warszawa: Rada Organizacyjna Polaków z Zagranicy, 1934), 16, 24, 26.
183 The first convention was scheduled to take place in 1926, but was postponed until July 1929 as a result of the May 1925 coup d’état that saw Piłsudski assume power with Ignacy Mościcki placed at the head of government. The second convention took place in August 1934, and the third convention was scheduled for the Summer of 1939, but was suspended as a result of the precarious political situation in Europe. Bromowicz and Rzeczyńska, *Zjazdy*.
cultural-educational problems faced by emigrants and the need to maintain their Polishness.\textsuperscript{184}

The delegates were selected from countries with Polish settlements. The number of mandates (each delegate received one mandate) obtained by each country depended on the size of the Polish population, with Canada receiving four mandates.\textsuperscript{185}

In the Canadian case, each of the three Federations appointed delegates, and these were approved by the Consuls and the Organizational Committee of Światpol. ZZPwK received two mandates and the other two organizations received one mandate each.\textsuperscript{186} The SPwK was not satisfied with such a division and requested an additional one. To appease the organization, and to avoid the appearance of favouritism, the consuls recommended that the SPwK receive an extra mandate for their newspaper. However, both organizations were warned that because neither had a standardized relationship with the Organizing Council of Światpol, they would not be able to vote, making the issue of mandates irrelevant. Essentially, they would act as observers. Both groups showed interest in the cultural preservation program promulgated by Światpol. The emphasis on language, education and traditions were something that they could agree on and which they were also pursuing within their own circles.

Conflict emerged during the II Światowy Zjazd Polaków z Zagranicy (Second Worldwide Convention of Poles Abroad),\textsuperscript{187} with the question of diaspora-homeland relations. This was a line which the ZPwK was not willing to cross. The federation was not alone as


\textsuperscript{185} Kołodziej, Wychodźstwo Zarobkowe, 188.

\textsuperscript{186} AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.76-83, Minutes of the Consular Conference, Ottawa, March 24, 1934, no date, pg.2.

\textsuperscript{187} These conventions were held in Poland and were attended by delegates—usually coming from the largest organizations—from countries where Poles had settled. The number of delegates was based on the size of a given Polish émigré community. The purpose behind these conventions was to bridge the gap between the émigré communities and the homeland.
Polish-American organizations also refused to swear an oath of loyalty to the Polish State and Piłsudski.\textsuperscript{188} This oath was refused on the grounds that the ZPwK saw itself as a Polish organization loyal to Canada and its authorities. The ZPwK’s representative at the convention, Z.C. Mazurkiewicz, cited both Światpol and the ZZPwK’s continuous harassment and pressure to join the latter, and the government’s attitude towards workers’ organizations as additional reasons for not joining.\textsuperscript{189} He was also upset at what he perceived to be a lack of recognition by Światpol. In response to these allegations, Światpol defended its work as an organization aimed at consolidating all Poles abroad. In addition, it also reaffirmed ZPwK’s status within the organizational framework in Canada, while also urging the group to focus on cooperation.\textsuperscript{190}

Not all members of the ZPwK were satisfied with their organization’s belligerent approach towards Światpol, revealing the first cracks of discontent. Michal Nedza (prior to his split from the organization) spoke positively about Światpol and its agenda, arguing that Polish emigration gained moral and material power if it leaned on the homeland.\textsuperscript{191} He depicted Światpol as the bridge between the diaspora and the motherland, as an institution that embodied Polish cultural traditions and language and that was concerned with the interests of the emigrants, and would protect them within their respective countries of settlement. For Nedza and likeminded individuals, Światpol epitomized the immigrant Pole as an extension of Poland—he or she was to mirror the culture, religion, traditions and even economic policies found there. By declining to pledge an oath of allegiance, ZPwK was questioning this very relationship and challenging the “traditional” foundations of the national identity. According to this version,

\textsuperscript{188} Reczyńska, “Związek Polaków w Kanadzie,” 168.
\textsuperscript{191} LAC, BH Fond, MG31 D237 Vol.7, Consulate General of Poland, Montreal, 1935 File, M. Nedza, “Związek Polaków w Kanadzie a Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy,” no date.
Polishness was not linked to religion, economic interests, politics (of Piłsudski), or cultural traditions.

The 1920s and the 1930s illustrated the rise of Polish organizational life. Beyond the small regional organizations and associations, the call for consolidating and strengthening Polish culture and language through the institutionalization of these characteristics translated into hope of identity preservation. Even with a shift away from religious and church-based organizations to “secular” organizations, the question of defining Polishness and its relationship to Catholicism remained at the heart of the Polish identity in Canada. The SPwK saw Polishness as being realized within a religious framework. Religion and nationalism was closely intertwined as religion sanctified and preserved Polish history and culture—the loss of one would mean the loss of the other. The ZZPwK saw religion as a means of achieving legitimacy and authority in the Polish community. The support from Polish clergy would have meant a validation of their ideological stance: Poles were to preserve their Polishness (embodied in the Pole-Catholic identity) and remain loyal to the Polish state. The ZPwK, on the other hand, saw the triangulation of Polishness, Catholicism and Polish Statehood as an inappropriate manifestation of the Polish identity in Canada. The Canadian context created a divide that could never be bridged. Polishness was confined to language and culture, separated from the traditional ties to religion and the state. Hence, the federation’s anti-Pilsudski and anti-Poland attitudes went hand in hand with anti-clericalism. This and other issues came to define the inter-federation struggle for members. But the battlefield extended to internal policies, especially in the case of the ZPwK. The ZPwK’s anti-Catholic and anti-state position eventually led to the breaking away of Branch 9 and the creation of the ZNP.

Despite amalgamation and centralization, fragmentation continued within the Polish community in Canada. Rather than a single nationwide institution, three distinct entities
emerged. Moreover, a plethora of independent clubs, associations and organizations continued to protect their ideological, regional and administrative autonomy. All federations pursued these smaller enclaves of Polish settlements, which carefully considered amalgamation but, in various ways, feared that entering a larger institution would affect their socio-ideological foundations. Independent or amalgamated, all organizations faced the difficult task of defining Polishness. Centre stage in this discussion was the issue of Catholicism. Should it comprise an inseparable component of the national identity? To what extent should cultural, political and economic ties be maintained with a restored Poland? There is no doubt that the formation of the federations marked a shift towards secularization. But this did not necessarily lead to anti-clericalism or a rejection of the Pole-Catholic identity. Rather, it meant that power, authority and leadership in the community were placed in the hands of the lay masses.

The intense debates that ensued in the 1930s reveal that fluidity rather than rigidity defined the emergence of the Polonia’s organizational life. Despite disagreements and disputes over various issues, federations recognized the need for flexibility of attitudes. A federation aspiring to be secular would still draw on religious traditions to mobilize its members. A federation that demanded allegiance to the Second Republic of Poland could also call for positive contributions to the new Canadian homeland. The community’s organizational life became an expression of and a negotiation between the various, often contradictory, perceptions and definitions of the Polish national identity. Debates over Polishness at the institutional level would not be resolved until the post-Second World War period and the Communization of Poland.
Chapter 5: Read All About It!: Selling Religion and Nationalism in the Polish Press

The three chief Polish newspapers in the interwar Canada were the Gazeta Katolicka [The Catholic Gazette], Związkowiec [The Alliancer] and Czas [The Times]. Each of these newspapers represented, to various degrees, the views of the organizations that they were associated with, but the papers also represented the different currents of thought and values found within the Polish community. In particular, the question of Polishness found its way into the content of each of the newspapers; however, the issue of identity (i.e., Polishness) and especially its relationship to religion (i.e., Catholicism) was not uniform across the newspapers. At times, it was subtly discussed, while every so often, it burst into an overt synthesis.¹ For the most part, those papers which were more favourable to the notion of the Pole-Catholic, such as Gazeta Katolicka and Czas, closely connected Polishness and Catholicism; Związkowiec, on the other hand, a paper more critical of the relationship between Polishness and Catholicism, was concerned with class and labour issues.

Gazeta Katolicka most strongly and directly identified the relationship between Polishness and Catholicism, seeing the loss of one as symbolizing the loss of the other. The paper was particularly skilful at publishing articles that consolidated the affiliation between the two for the reader. Significant contribution in this regard was made by publishing materials on Polish-Catholic identity produced by the Polish episcopacy. In particular, emphasis was placed on the episcopacy’s endorsement of the relationship between identity and the Polish state. Nationhood, statehood, and religious identity were not only to be closely intertwined, but they were to provide the foundations for subsequent generations: “The faith of the Polish nation, the Roman Catholic religion, must occupy the position of the ruling religion, closely connected with the state and its life, as well as constituting the basis for the upbringing of the younger

¹ I have chosen random years on which to base my analysis; in particular, I wanted to focus on the everyday content of the papers and not on events threatening national security (e.g. Nazi Germany in 1939) during which the nationalist rhetoric would be stronger.
generation.”¹ This view was not only supported by clergy, but also by members of parliament (of the Second Republic)—it was the idea in which the Polish nation was rooted.

In *Czas*, a paper trying to unite all Poles under its umbrella organization, the ZZPwK, the call for maintaining Polish identity and its relationship with the Polish state was strongly associated with the need for the amalgamation of all Poles under this umbrella organization. As discussed in the previous chapter, since this organization was under the influence of the consuls, who wanted to further the Polish government’s economic propaganda and the preservation of the Polish-Catholic identity, the zealous attempts of promoting ZZPwK in *Czas* implied the newspaper’s pro-Polish-Catholic stance.² *Czas* was also exceptional in creating a forum for the discussion of Polishness in its correspondence section. It created an exclusive and open forum for a dialogue on identity. It contained a plethora of letters from Polish immigrants “enlightening” *Czas* readers about the definition of Polishness. The unwavering identity-oriented focus of this section points to the intervention on the part of the editor in selecting printing letters pertaining to identity. It also demonstrates the views of Polish immigrants on this very issue. One *Czas* reader, for example, persisted in his claims that giving up the Polish language amounted to the rejection of one’s national and self-identity (i.e., national characteristics):

Some ask what you need a Polish paper for since you can get much more in an English paper. I don’t agree with this—the dearest thing to me is language, which my mother taught me in childhood. Although in this country you cannot get away without English, and [if there is] anyone who wants to stay here they need to learn this language; but on the other hand, it is a crime to neglect one’s language. Each one of us should remember that it was in the Polish tongue that he first received knowledge, and in which he trained his mind. The loss of one’s own tongue in a foreign land is the first step towards denationalization and divesting oneself of national traits. The person who neglects his

¹ Roman Dmowski, the leader of Poland’s opposition party, is quoted as stating to the Polish government. OMIAP Archives, “Obóz Wielkiej Polski,” *Gazeta Katolicka*, February 2, 1927, p.4.
² Turek assessed *Czas* as an anticlerical paper, and this holds true for the period during which *Czas* was under Ukrainian ownership, which will be discussed later in the chapter. There are numerous references in *Gazeta Katolicka* about recurring attacks on the paper by *Czas*. See for example, OMIAP Archives, “Uwagi ‘Młota’ z Okazji ‘Kołtuńskich Napaści,” *Gazeta Katolicka*. September 24, 1927, p.3.
language is not worthy to be called a Pole. This is my opinion and I believe that each genuine Pole will agree with me on this point.³

Though the reader did not deny the value of learning English—only if permanent settlement was the objective—he asserted the importance of the Polish newspaper as a source for maintaining language (and hence identity).

In comparison to the previous two newspapers, Związkowiec was somewhat of a conundrum. Even though the paper would at times print articles that were positively disposed to Poles maintaining their language and culture, this stance was ever more overshadowed by the rising Leftist⁴ tenets in the paper, which stirred the reader towards the rights of labourers and to the Canadian context. The paper’s writers placed greater emphasis on remaining oriented on Canada, and not participating in the Polish political dramas that were being reproduced on Canadian soil: “Should we continue to remain the quarrelling avant-garde of Polish politics on Canadian soil or should we care to accept the principles of this society and as emigrants, as class-conscious Polish workers, fighting arm in arm with this society for better wages, [and] influence on Canadian legislation.”⁵ The paper increasingly placed greater importance on Poles joining the Canadian labour movement, while a political and economic relationship between the Polish immigrant community and the Polish state was vehemently rejected. As well, the paper excluded religion from a discussion on identity. Instead, within the Związkowiec, Polish identity was placed in limbo—it neither belonged in Canada nor was it any longer related to Poland—it began to take second place to class. For the most part, and especially compared to the amount of material written on the subject of labour issues, national identity was a non-issue; it was being replaced by class identity.

³ LAC, “Letter from Eatonia, Saskatchewan,” Czas, February 23, 1932, Correspondence Section, p.5.
⁴ This does not mean that the paper was Communist in orientation. Związkowiec was actually very critical of the communist press.
The aims of *Gazeta Katolicka* and *Czas* were similar: to preserve and educate language and the ties to the homeland (i.e., politically and economically) within Polish communities as a means of countering denationalization; to act as a means by which communities could keep in touch with each other; and to maintain a sense of national awareness and identity. Both papers understood religion to serve a utilitarian function—it’s purpose was to help in mediating nationalist values. It was to be at the service of the national ideal. *Związkowiec*, on the other hand, and unlike *Gazeta Katolicka* and *Czas*, saw Polishness in a completely different manner. Whereas *Gazeta Katolicka* attempted to define the parameters of Polishness, and *Czas* focused on its application (i.e., how Polishness was to be realized), *Związkowiec* did not pursue either of these two paths. Instead, the content of the paper illustrated greater focus on improving the lot of Polish workers on Canadian soil. The paper tended towards leftist ideology, anti-clericalism and the assimilation of Poles into Canadian society. Polishness was not denied, but it was made in many ways, irrelevant to the conversation.

Overall, the ethnic press in Canada did not have a large circulation; in 1931 that circulation came to 288,500, and in 1939 it was 314,500.\(^6\) Not only was ethnic press hampered by small circulation and the resulting small income, it also had to compete with a more developed ethnic press from the US. Despite the latter, popularity of newspapers in Canada was related to the area in which a paper was published. So, western Polish-Canadian papers had a higher distribution in this region in comparison to Polish-American papers, but the latter outsold Polish-Canadian papers from the east. The reverse was true for areas of Toronto and Montreal.\(^7\) According to Turek, the growth of the Polish-Canadian press was undermined by the ease by

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which Poles were able to access their own press from other countries—not only from south of the border, but also print media sponsored and shipped over by the Polish government, such as *Monitor Polski* (Polish Monitor) coming from Poland and *Tygodnik Polski* (Polish Weekly) from the Far East (China). (See Appendix D for a list of all Polish Canadian papers.) Subsequently, Polish ethnic papers in Canada were not as numerous as those found in other ethnic groups.

Prior to the interwar period, Polish ethnic newspapers experienced short tenures as they tended to be founded by private individuals or businesses. The longevity achieved by print media in the 1930s was partly rooted in the financial and social support these papers received from the newly established federations. During the interwar period, five major newspapers were supported by Polish readership: *Gazeta Katolicka* (1908-1940); *Czas* (1915/1932-2004); *Związkowiec* (1933-present); *Budzik* (Alarm) (1931) and *Głos Pracy* (Voice of Labour) (1932). The last two newspapers comprised the Polish Communist press. 

*Gazeta Katolicka*, a weekly paper, was the longest published periodical in the interwar period dating from 1908. The paper became the official organ of the SPwK in May 1934.

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9 In 1940 the paper changed its name to *Gazeta Polska*, and in 1950 it was joined with *Głos Polski*.
10 There were a number of Polish papers that surfaced during this period; however, their existence tended to be short-lived, e.g., Western Canada: *Prawda* (Truth) (1905-06?); *Gazeta Polska* (The Polish Gazette) (1906; 1908-51); *Echo Kanadyjski* (Canadian Echo) (1905-6 or 1906-8); *Gazeta Narodowa* (The National Gazette) (1913/4); *Nowe Życie* (New Life) (1919-22); *Nowiny Kanadyjski* (Canadian News) (1930); *Gwiazda Zachodu* (The Western Star) (1930); *Gonic* (The Polish Herald) (1932-3); *Bocian* (The Stork) (1932-3); *Wiarus* (Reliable Friend) (1935); religious papers: *Głos Prawdy* (The Voice of Truth) (1922-43?); *Tobie Ludu* (For You, My People) (1937); *Głos z Kalwarii* (The Voice of Calvary) (1935-44/45); communist papers: *Czerwona Jaskółka* (The Red Sparrow) (1931); Eastern Canada: *Słowo Polskie* (The Polish Word) (1930-4); *Polonia* (1934-5).
11 *Budzik* was published by the Polskie Towarzystwo Robotniczo-Farmerskie (Polish Workers’ and Farmers’ Association, PTRF), in Toronto, but moved to Winnipeg a year later and became *Głos Pracy*. *Budzik* had a circulation of about 500 subscribers, and with the move to Western Canada, the paper had hoped to expand its reach. *Głos Pracy* quickly expanded from a four-page paper in 1932, to six pages a year later, and finally to an eight-page paper in 1936. The first editor of *Głos Pracy*, remaining until 1939, was W. Dutkiewicz; he was joined by Albert Morski in 1935, and by Tadeusz Lewandowski a year later. According to Turek, the paper developed various sections that would appeal to a broad readership, such as a children’s section, a union section and a women’s section. The paper returned to Toronto in 1937, and after the war, it became the *Kronika Tygodniowa* (Weekly Chronicle), subsidized by the Polish Peoples’ Republic until its end in 1990.
Initially published by the Canadian Publishers Company of Winnipeg\(^{13}\) and owned by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the idea for a Catholic Polish paper was first broached by Rev. Wojciech Kulawy, a Polish Oblate working at Winnipeg’s Holy Ghost parish. Kulawy had requested permission for such an endeavour from Archbishop Abelard Langevin already in 1902, who along with Manitoba’s premier, Rodmond P. Roblin, provided a subsidy for the paper.\(^{14}\) His paper, and the forerunner to *Gazeta Katolicka, Głos Kanadyjski* (The Canadian Voice), began publication two years later, ending its run in 1905.\(^{15}\) The first issue of the *Gazeta Katolicka* appeared in March 1908, and in 1944, the paper merged with *Gazeta Polska* (which ended publication in 1951).

As Turek points out, given that the paper was published by a well-established company, *Gazeta Katolicka* had higher production standards than newspapers published by immigrants themselves. Its editorial policy was regulated by clergy and the editor tended to be a priest or a layman. At its onset, the paper was run by Adam Bloch (1908-1910), under the supervision of Rev. Franciszek Kowalski, OMI and Rev. Władysław Grochowski, OMI, and Maks Major (1910-11). This was followed by the long tenure of Jan Pazdor, a Polish schoolteacher and graduate of the Polish Training School in Winnipeg, who was the editor from 1912 to 1918, and again from 1922 to 1947. During his sabbatical, the editorship came under the only female editor in Polish-Canadian journalism, Zofia Rapalska (1918-1921) and J. Baderski (1921-22).\(^{16}\)

Like most papers of this period, very little original writing was supplied by contributors; instead, much of the content was either reprinted material from other Polish publications or

\(^{13}\) The company was originally called the West Canada Publishing Company, founded by an Oblate, Rev. Joseph Cordes, a German priest active in Winnipeg since 1904. In 1925, the company changed its name to Canadian Publishers Company of Winnipeg.

\(^{14}\) Makowski, *History and Integration*, 188.

\(^{15}\) The paper was purchased in 1906 by *Gazeta Polska* (The Polish Gazette), which was connected with the Liberal party. The paper only ran for a year.

works written by the editor.\textsuperscript{17} Assessing the paper’s circulation also poses difficulties as all Polish papers often reported inflated numbers to press directories. These figures ranged from a circulation of 4,750 to 9,250 between 1919 to 1939.\textsuperscript{18} Turek notes that the paper’s circulation would not have exceeded 5,000 copies. The paper also had difficulty in making headway in Ontario, which tended to be dominated by the \emph{Związkowiec}. \emph{Gazeta Katolicka} followed a large format with four pages, which were eventually increased to eight pages containing 7 columns.\textsuperscript{19} The annual subscription cost $2.00 within Canada, $2.50 for the US, and $3.00 for Poland. The paper retained a specific format throughout the interwar years: the first and second pages contained international news; page three had a correspondence, and humour and satire sections; page four comprised the editorial component of the paper; page five provided information of religious nature, such as biblical texts and their explanation and application; page six supplied information from Poland; page seven once again contained biblical stories; and page eight focused on local and national news reports along with events within the Polish community.\textsuperscript{20}

\emph{Czas} began publication in Winnipeg in 1915 as a weekly paper. Published by the Polish National Publishing Company of Winnipeg,\textsuperscript{21} the paper was originally owned by a Czech, Frantisek Dojacek.\textsuperscript{22} Eight years later, the paper was procured by a group of Ukrainians, who censored the paper’s editors. In particular, topics dealing with Polish-Ukrainian policies that

\textsuperscript{17} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada in Canada}, 107.
\textsuperscript{18} Outside of these sources, circulation numbers for each of the three papers are not available. According to the Canadian Almanac and Directory, \emph{Gazeta Katolicka} had a lowest circulation of 6,330 (1929) and a highest circulation of 9,213 (1932); McKim’s Directory of Canadian Publications provided a lowest circulation of 4,750 (1924) and a highest circulation of 9,250 (1930, 1931); Katalog Prasowy PARA (Press Catalogue PARA) recorded the paper’s lowest circulation at 5,000 (1928-31, 1933-4) and their highest circulation at 7,250 (1925); lastly, Canadian Advertising marked their lowest circulation at 7,055 (1937-9) and their highest circulation at 9,213. It must also be noted that the latter two received most circulation numbers only from the late-1920s, whereas the former two were provided with circulation numbers from 1911. Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada in Canada}, 106-7.
\textsuperscript{19} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 105.
\textsuperscript{20} In addition to these main sections, the paper would occasionally contain sections on horticulture, recipes, messages from the consuls, small advertisements for Polish-English dictionaries, and so forth. However, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss all components of \emph{Gazeta Katolicka}.
\textsuperscript{21} The company’s name was changed to the Canada North-West Publishing Company that same year, and later to the National Press Company in 1920.
\textsuperscript{22} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 110-1.
were critical of Ukraine or the Polish government’s position on Ukraine were prohibited.\textsuperscript{23}

According to Turek, as a result of the limits placed on the paper’s staff, a number of Polish organizations came together and formed the Polish Press Ltd. Eventually they acquired the necessary funds to purchase the paper in 1931.\textsuperscript{24} One year later, the paper became the organ of the ZZPwK, supporting the policies of the Polish government. The paper was published in a large format with six and seven columns; at its onset, \textit{Czas} had only four pages, but by mid-1915, the paper had increased to eight pages, which it maintained during the interwar period.\textsuperscript{25}

Throughout the tenure of the paper, \textit{Czas} retained a particular organizational format. The front page focused on events from Europe and Poland; page two contained a section entitled “z Polski” (From Poland), which provided information on various social, political and legal issues in Poland; page three of the paper consisted of news reports regarding Canada; page four was the editorial section of the paper; page five comprised the correspondence and humour sections; page six had a literature section; page seven had a “Rozmaitości” (Variety) section, which supplied information on entertainment events from around the world; and the last page—“Kronika Miejscowa” (the Local Chronicle) section—presented information on local events within the community. Once \textit{Czas} became associated with the ZZPwK towards the end of 1932, page seven came to include a new section called “Biuletyn Zjednoczenia Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie” (Bulletin of the Federation of Polish Societies in Canada), which put forward information from the ZZPwK. The paper would add various sections throughout the mid to late

\textsuperscript{23} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 111.
\textsuperscript{24} These organizations were the Polish Fraternal Aid Society of St. John Cantius, the Polish Gymnastic Association “Sokół”, the Polish Combatants Association, and the Polish St. Peter and St. Paul Society. Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 151, f.38.
\textsuperscript{25} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 111.
1930s. These included sections on “Poles Abroad,” “For Workers,” a section for women, and sections for youth, children and for Scouts.²⁶

It is difficult to determine who the first editors were of the paper, since this information was not published. Turek points to two possible individuals: an employee of Dojacek, who went by the name of Paśnicz and/or F. Chenik, a Detroit doctor who edited the paper as a student in Winnipeg.²⁷ Maks Major led the paper until 1919, when Julian Nowacki took over and held the chair, with few interruptions,²⁸ until 1935. During his sabbatical, the paper was run by Leon S. Garczyński (1931) and Jan Sikora (1932-4). Following Nowacki were Kazimierz Konarski (1935) and W.A. Drelenkiewicz (1935-40).²⁹ When it came to the paper’s circulation, as in the case of Gazeta Katolicka, it is difficult to determine accurate numbers. Accordingly, the circulation ranges from a low of 3,148 (1918) to 10,676 (1930/1) for the period of 1917 to 1939.³⁰

Związkowiec was first published as a monthly magazine in 1933,³¹ and two years later, at the end of 1935, the paper became a weekly. As a weekly, the paper ranged between six to eight

²⁶ Furthermore, the paper added a new component to page two called “Związek Polaków w Kanadzie” where information from the ZPwK was related. This last addition is quite interesting and probably denotes an attempt by the consuls to persuade the ZPwK to join the ZZPwK. Likewise, by providing the ZPwK with its own corner, the consuls would be assuring the ZPwK of their autonomy despite any future merger. This corner did not last more than a year, and it coincided with rising tensions between the two organizations. LAC, Czas, December 5, 1932, p.2; February 21, 1933, p.7; January 3, 1939, p.3; September 24, 1935, p.7; February 12, 1939, p.7; September 19, 1939, p.5; November 29, 1932, p.2.
²⁷ The first name for both of these individuals is unknown. Turek, The Polish-Language Press in Canada, 152, f.41.
²⁸ May-August 1931; October 1932-June 1934.
³⁰ As indicated by the Canadian Almanac and Directory, Czas had a lowest circulation of 3,400 (1920) and a highest circulation of 9,609 (1932); McKim’s Directory of Canadian Publications cited a lowest circulation of 3,148 (1918) and a highest circulation of 9,000 (1929-31); Katalog Prasowy PARA (Press Catalogue PARA) recorded the paper’s lowest circulation at 9,165 (1928) and their highest circulation at 10,676 (1930-1); lastly, Canadian Advertising marked their lowest circulation at 4,000 (1925) and their highest circulation at 5,000 (1928-31, 1933-4, 1938). As in the case of Gazeta Katolicka, the last two listings provide circulation numbers for the late 1920s and the 1930s. Turek, The Polish-Language Press in Canada, 114-5.
³¹ The newspaper was printed on 8½ x 11 sheets of paper and bound along the left margin, similar to that of a magazine, with an issue (as a monthly) averaging between 16 to 24 pages. During its first year, the paper presented a very simple and unprofessional image, as both the front cover and the advertising were hand-sketched; also, the paper was typewritten, with titles and subsections written by hand. It was not until 1934 that the paper achieved a professional image with linotype text. See for example, LAC, MN Fond, MG30 C119 Vol.2, Związkowiec, January 1933, no.1 and January 1934, no.1
pages in length with six columns, which were increased to seven columns in 1938. Like its counterparts, *Związkowiec*’s circulation is up for debate. For the most part, the paper had a lowest circulation of 600 copies (1934) and reaching its highest circulation of 7,500 copies (1939), for the period from 1933 to 1939.\(^{32}\) The subscription cost 50 cents for six months, or 1 dollar for a year.\(^{33}\) The paper also did not have a formal structure nor did it provide information on the Canadian and Polish political and economic state of affairs, and on international events. Instead, the paper had a very keen focus on educational-type matters, advice on self-improvement, expounding ZPwK’s principles, and numerous opinion pieces.

At the onset, the paper was headed by an editorial board with Andrzej Piekarz at its helm. In 1934, *Związkowiec* came under the editorship of Alfons Jan Staniewski, who led the paper until his death in 1941. Under Staniewski, as Turek explains, the paper maintained a social-democratic stance, criticizing both communism and the Catholic Church. Although there is much truth to Turek’s assessment, the paper went further left beyond social-democracy. For example, there were articles that positively referenced communism-related academic degrees in the Soviet Union (e.g., Doctor in Leninism; Doctor of Communist Party History; Doctor of Comintern History);\(^{34}\) that compared the structure of Harcerstwo (Polish Scouts) to Internationalism;\(^{35}\) and that cited that May 1\(^{st}\) celebrations were begun with children playing “The International.”\(^{36}\) These and other examples indicate a stronger affinity for labour and leftist worldviews.

Nonetheless, the issue of ethnic identity was not completely removed from the pages of *Związkowiec*. As Dirk Hoerder points out in the case of the communist press, and which can also be applied to the broader leftist press, communist newspapers experienced a loss of influence

\(^{32}\) As indicated by the MSZ, *Związkowiec* had a circulation of 600 for 1934 and for 1935; McKim’s directory of Canadian publications cited a circulation of 5,000 between 1937 and 1938, and 7,500 for 1939. Turek, *The Polish-Language Press in Canada*, 139.


when they emphasized internationalism over ethnic identity. Patryk Polec notes that the communist Polish press experienced increased popularity when it couched internationalism under the veil of patriotism. Consequently, a paper could present a leftist-socialist and a nationalist position in its pages.

*Związkowiec* was strongly Canada-oriented, arguing that immigrants needed to learn English, become Canadian citizens and actively participate in all aspects of Canadian life. According to Staniewski, *Związkowiec* was a Canadian paper written in Polish. Consequently, the paper’s criticisms of the Polish government’s policies resulted in a ban of the paper in Poland. Turek also points to *Związkowiec* as the only paper which presented an open forum for all differing viewpoints. However, upon examining a three-year period of the paper from 1933 to 1935, there were only a handful of articles that presented contradicting viewpoints (pro-religion or pro-communism). Instead, the paper’s content fell under the overall vision promoted by the ZPwK.

Unlike American Polish papers, which at that time were becoming bilingual papers, all three newspapers published their work, including advertising, in Polish. The only exception was *Czas*, which had some advertising in English prior to the paper’s takeover (by the Polish Press Ltd. and by the consuls), and which continued with this advertising until 1934, when all advertising was once again printed in Polish. The three newspapers also offered diverging views on identity and religion, relations with Poland, and assimilation into Canadian society. On ties with Poland, *Gazeta Katolicka* tended to focus its articles on political activities within Poland; *Czas* placed greater emphasis on the economic situation in Poland; *Związkowiec* focused mostly

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on Canadian issues (i.e., labour rights). Given that *Gazeta Katolicka* focused its articles on politics in Poland, the paper was oriented towards the theoretical constructs of Polish identity. *Czas*, on the other hand, presupposed the existence of this identity, and instead directed its attention to the application of identity in the form of economic nationalism. *Związkowiec’s* emphasis on the Left and especially the Canadian labour movement, by definition, excluded a religious and a pro-Poland point of reference. However, *Czas* and *Gazeta Katolicka* were the only two newspapers that provided in-depth discussion of Polish historical and political symbols, aspects of Polish identity (e.g., language), and Polish history. An examination of these themes by the papers further elaborated and reinforced a particular understanding of Polishness.40

Polish newspapers, like any other ethnic press, served a multitude of functions within the community.41 Leara Rhodes claims that ethnic press in its most basic form, kept the reader informed about the ongoing events within the community. Ethnic newspapers also provided the reader with information on the political and economic situation within their country of origin and in the country of settlement. Lastly, she argues that ethnic newspapers transmitted the news according to a particular (political) point of view, while placing the interests of the community in relation to the old-world and the new-world.42 However, as Joseph Kirschbaum points out, ethnic newspapers played a strong cultural role within the immigrant community. Newspapers were not just about supplying information, but they were a forum for cultural expression.43 Ethnic newspapers contained articles on cultural and historical matters; they published poetry, short

40 *Związkowiec*, on the other hand, did not place much emphasis on these themes, with, the majority of its content focusing on workers’ plight.
novels and epigrams. These papers devoted sections to the various cultural events conducted by the different ethnic organizations and parishes. Rhodes also argues that ethnic press was primarily centred on re-creating an “old world community” through a focus on culture, religion, political discussions and language preservation. Though that can be true for some immigrant groups, this does not necessarily apply to the inter-war Poles. The Poles were not so much interested in simply re-creating the old world, but bridging the “geographical” boundaries between the two countries. It is important to keep in mind that like most migrating groups from Poland (with the exception of the Kaszubs and Solidarity), this migration was (to be) temporary. As a result, the focus was two-fold: for immigrants to remain up-to-date concerning political and economic events in Poland and to ensure that immigrants did not feel disconnected from these events. There was no desire to recreate the old world, but instead, to guarantee that Poles did not, by accident, assimilate into the new culture; so their attention was continuously focused on the land they left behind.

The Polish ethnic newspapers gave access to information that otherwise would not have been possible owing to a language barrier and they kept Poles informed about the events within their community. This was particularly important in Western Canada, where Poles were dispersed. Not only was a newspaper a source of information, but it was the means by which immigrants were able to communicate. The newspaper functioned as a public sphere—where ideas could be presented, read, analyzed and discussed (in local communities and nationwide).

44 Joseph Kirschbaum, Twenty Five Years of Canada Ethnic Press Federation (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 129.
45 Rhodes, 3.
47 The newspaper as a source of strengthening and connecting the community is not particular to the Poles, but can be applied to most ethnic immigrant communities. See for example, Hans Krabbendam, Freedom on the Horizon: Dutch Immigration to Canada, 1840-1940 (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009).
48 Kirschbaum, 127.
What is also important to note, and Lawrence Epstein raises this point regarding Yiddish immigrants (and this is also applicable to Poles) is that newspapers were an educational tool— not only did they teach social norms, they also propagated nationalist and religious sentiment. David Dwan notes this very phenomenon when it came to the Irish and a young Ireland. Ethnic press was a means by which certain values were reinforced for a given community. In writing about the relationship between media and national identity, Sanna Inthorn notes that “media content itself signals what it means to belong to a nation...the selection of specific themes and images is central to the media’s imagining of national self and other. Presenting a highly selective assembly of characteristic elements...national past and future, a home territory, a national culture, national character traits...are imagined to build the national collectivity.” The Polish newspapers served as a means of reminding the community of readers what it meant to belong to their nation. As Robert F. Harney put it, “The arrival of a weekly newspaper in one’s own mother tongue in the outlying towns, the lumber camps, mines and railway sites was a reaffirmation of ethnic identity and ethnoculture.”

In assessing the influence of the ethnic press, consideration needs to be given to factors that affected the message propagated by Polish newspapers. The emergence of ethnic press comprised the third stage in the development of an immigrant community, after the establishment of parishes and associations, and as a result, ethnic papers tended to be associated either with a religious institution, such as the Catholic Church, and/or with an association or organization. This type of relationship permitted greater longevity of the

49 Epstein, 226.
51 Rhodes, 146.
52 Sanna Inthorn, German Media and National Identity (Youngstown, NY: Cambria Press, 2007), 21.
54 Rhodes, 45.
newspapers, and in turn, helped to support the ideals of a particular institution.\textsuperscript{55} Developments in journalism in the old country also influenced the format of the ethnic press within Canada. Victor Turek actually argues that the Polish American press served as a model for the Polish Canadian press.\textsuperscript{56} All these factors offer insights on the evolution of Polish ethnic press in Canada. Finally, there is need to also recognize journalistic developments in Poland and how this affected the understanding and execution of this profession.

It is interesting to note that despite journalism undergoing a process of professionalization and modernization in the interwar period, the process of commercialization (begun in the 1870s) stagnated due to a lack of capital and high levels of illiteracy. Consequently, Polish papers in the Second Republic tended to remain associated with certain political groups, organizations or societal movements.\textsuperscript{57} According to Katharina Hadamik, it was common to find a member of a political group who combined his political work with his journalist endeavours. In addition to this, it was also common practice for critics and intelligentsia to team up with the press.\textsuperscript{58} This led Polish journalism to have strong political, intellectual and literary connections. Polish-Canadian ethnic papers followed a similar trend in their relationship to associations and in their delivery of the news. In many instances, news events were accompanied by interpretations, opinions and annotations or explanations. Turek even acknowledges that unlike their American counterparts, who were more focused on transmitting information, Polish Canadian newspapers preserved an ideological character because these papers had less of a commercial character.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{56} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 28.  
\textsuperscript{58} Hadamik, 213-4.  
\textsuperscript{59} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 54, 61.
newspapers along political lines of a host country poses significant difficulty since ethnic papers tended to polarize according to the political developments in the country of origin.\textsuperscript{60}

For Poles in Canada, maintaining language and national traditions was of great importance. Turek argues that “[the] press help[ed] to emphasize the national consciousness and separate national identity of the immigrant."\textsuperscript{61} The newspapers—\textit{Gazeta Katolicka}, \textit{Związkowiec} and \textit{Czas}—became an integral part of defining and furthering the Polish identity, however each offered its own distinct definition of that identity. At the heart of the dialogue was the relationship between religion and ethnic identity. The more religiously oriented a newspaper, the greater its emphasis on maintaining national identity. Those newspapers which were better at promoting Polish identity were also more likely to discuss the following: political events in Poland; national celebrations; essays on the history of Poland (and her independence); and cultural events within the Polish community. Conversely, the more secular papers tended to promote issues outside the ethnic enclave, such as labour.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} went from overtly discussing and emphasizing Polishness and its relationship to Catholicism in the 1920s, to a more discreet treatment of this relationship by the mid-1930s, only to have it once again surge in the paper prior to the onset of the Second World War. For the most part, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} was explicit in its discussions of the parameters and values that defined Polishness. Direct links were made between national-ethnic identity and Catholicism. In addition, throughout the 1930s, the paper became strongly concerned with the rising popularity of communism. The focus on communism corresponded to a more discreet discussion of the Pole-Catholic identity in 1930s. Perhaps the definition of the Polish identity was no longer such a point of contention having been resolved in

\textsuperscript{60} Kischbaum, 130-1.
\textsuperscript{61} Turek, \textit{The Polish-Language Press in Canada}, 22.
\textsuperscript{62} I will be examining the following years of the paper’s publication: 1923/4, 1927, 1932, and 1939. I have chosen these years randomly in order to provide a more realistic portrayal of everyday life within the Polish community.
the 1920s, especially as the paper focused on the political situation in Poland which at this point had stabilized. The threat of communism, on the other hand, was perceived to be real, and therefore, more emphasis needed to be placed on presenting the dangers of this ideology. Negating communism seemed more important than overt attempts at promoting the Polish-Catholic identity.

Early in the 1920s, *Gazeta Katolicka* was already aware of the influence that a newspaper had on the dissemination of ideas, and as a result, the carefulness with which the paper chose materials for publication was an indicator of the views held by the editorial staff. The editors realized that the paper was an excellent medium for disseminating a specific definition of Polishness and Catholicism, and that the Poles could be educated on how to preserve both identities. What is interesting to note is that as a religious paper, *Gazeta Katolicka* did not feel bound to deal only with materials of a religious nature. The paper’s broad depth of coverage was due in part to a lack of Polish press within Canada. With its broad approach, it needed to serve a function that moved beyond the walls of the church.

The paper placed strong emphasis on the importance of Catholic homes possessing Catholic press, even going as far as highlighting in 1924, Archbishop Alfred Sinnott’s assertion that placed the Catholic newspaper over that of the pulpit. Reading an “inappropriate”—anti-religious, or anti-Catholic—paper was considered dangerous, since it could lead people astray.

The function of the newspaper became even more important when considering that a large portion of the Polish population did not have regular access to a (Polish) church (especially in the West). The paper then acted as a bulletin and a social network: immigrants were informed about areas where homesteads could still be purchased; where one could find good quality farmland; they were provided with lists of books and dictionaries to aid in learning English; they were

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64 MHSO, J.K.H., “Czytanie Złych Gazet,” *Gazeta Katolicka*, August 23, 1924, Correspondence sec., p.3.
warned of scams that promised paperwork and land to Poles willing to emigrate. They contained employment ads from both employers and potential employees; letters of gratitude for help in obtaining employment; educational articles on common farming mistakes; and even ads in search of potential spouses. The paper’s office also served as a post office and distribution centre where one could send and pick-up mail.65 The paper thus became a surrogate for the physical space that would have been offered by a parish building or Polish hall, and it underlined the role of the press as a means of linking dispersed Polish settlements.

The majority of articles concerning an overt evocation of not only the preservation of, but also relating the importance of the Pole-Catholic identity, were found in the section of the paper entitled “Dział Religijny” (Religious Section). This particular section contained reprints and exposition of Gospel texts, along with other articles educating the reader on the observation of Catholic values. The fact that the paper chose to discuss issues pertaining to ethnic and national identity alongside religious texts further illustrated the interconnectivity of religious identity with ethnic identity amongst the Poles. The two were perceived—and were presented—as united.66

By emphasizing the value of Catholic press over and above the pulpit, the paper suggested that the material covered by the press, especially that of a non-religious nature, increased in importance. The newspaper’s religious authority, affirmed the non-religious issues selected for publication as if the latter were being declared from the pulpit. This permitted, in the case of the Poles, for the raising of national awareness and identity as an issue comparable to that of religion. Although religion was never intended to be subsumed to nationalist fancy, there are

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66 It is also important to note that neither Czas nor Związkowiec criticized Gazeta Katolicka for pursuing this particular relationship. The period prior to Czas being purchased by the Polish Press Ltd., there was some conflict between Czas and Gazeta Katolicka; the latter would criticize Czas for the anti-Gazeta Katolicka stance it held in its paper.
certainly questions about the degree to which the nationalist identity was supplanting the religious identity. The paper presented the view that national identity found its completion in religion. The two components of the Pole-Catholic identity were so strongly intertwined that removing one from the other meant that each would somehow become incomplete. Consequently, Gazeta Katolicka was a newspaper that attempted to set particular parameters in defining the Polish identity. The paper was clear that Catholicism played a defining role in the national identity. Religion was a medium through which national and ethnic identity was realized, and it also became the best way of supporting identity and preserving its most genuine character. The paper was explicit in its claims that religion and nationalism were closely bound.

In attempting to promote an image of Polishness, the paper first turned to defining Polishness. This was done by comparing Poles to different ethnic and religious groups in order to delineate the specifications that made Poles distinct. Religion became the definitive marker of identity. The paper described the difference between non-Catholic and Catholic Poles as such: “in the best case scenario, this [i.e., the former] will be an incomplete Pole, so to speak, undeveloped, who is missing a certain intrinsic organ for gaining insight into all the secrets of the Polish soul.”

Religion also served another function: it was the prism through which one could understand the Polish identity. Hence, Catholicism was needed for “authentic Polishness” to be achieved. In much the same way as the consuls perceived the clergy as providing the best means of transmitting and maintaining Polish identity, the Gazeta Katolicka saw religion as a means of relating “true” Polishness.

This idea of “authentic” and “true” Polishness was used in determining who could be a Pole. Turning to F. Brodowski’s interpretation of Pope Pius XI’s praise of the religious zeal of Poles, the paper elaborated on how Catholicism could be viewed as the determining factor in

defining Polishness. Here, the discussion focused on the appropriation of Catholicism by Polish culture to such a degree that Catholicism was subsumed by the latter. Catholicism was not just a matter of belief, it had become a way of life for the Poles—an expression of Polishness:

One can imagine a Pole who is a traitor, a renegade who renounces his faith and nationhood for a full bowl—but to think of a Pole who is of the Moses or orthodox [sic] faith, even a lutheran [sic], you cannot...No, Catholicism in Poland is not only a confession of faith, since it grew into the root of our cultural soul, our soul embraced it, and this happened not just because of Catholicism, but because Catholicism became Polish...The appropriate goal of the Polish culture and of Poland in general, as the most faithful daughter of the Church, is to incorporate Catholic ideals into life. ‘Catholicism in Poland is not a confession of faith—but the inspiration of the soul.’

Polish identity had not only fused with Catholicism; but also made Catholicism its own. What is also clear from this text is that Catholicism went beyond fulfilling a religious function and was not limited to the religious sphere. Instead, it became a basis for a civic understanding of a national identity. Religion became intertwined with Polish culture—traditions, history, language, and self-perception, and as such, it also impinged on a political and civic understanding of Polishness. Such statements that defined Polish identity indicated to the Polish community in Canada, that Catholicism needed to be preserved and practiced because without it, immigrants would experience a loss of national identity, especially in a country whose culture and history differed from their own.

Religion was seen as the defining element that distinguished Poles from non-Poles—Jews, Protestants and Orthodox believers were presented as implausible Poles because of their religious affiliation. The use of religion as a bulwark against denationalization seemed almost natural, since the masses were familiar with Catholicism and it was a grassroots (i.e., parish-level) phenomenon. The parish provided a place within which Poles could actively participate as Poles and not as Canadians—“The Poles abroad, elsewhere as also here, organize themselves around a parish; for them churches are centres of national life; and priests are for them not only

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guides in religious matters, but they are the ones who maintain in them [i.e., the people] the polish spirit [sic].”

_Gazeta Katolicka_ utilized language as one of the criteria that distinguished Poles from other national and ethnic groups. Yet, even though the paper placed great emphasis on preserving language, especially amongst the subsequent generation, language was downgraded as a marker of identity at the end of the 1930s:

Not everyone, who speaks the english [sic] language is English. Hence, not everyone who speaks Polish is necessarily a Pole. In Krakow, for example, those who most probably speak the best Polish are Jews. In order to be called a Pole, one needs something more. One needs indeed to have a Polish soul. A person, who cannot speak a sentence in Polish, but feels for Polishness, is more of a Pole than one who as proof of his Polishness is only able to demonstrate Polish speech.

The knowledge (and use) of the Polish language were rejected as the _only_ criteria of identification. Outside of religion, emphasis was also placed on components of ethnic and federalist (Pilsudski-oriented) nationalism—an identity that was centred on tradition, history, ethnicity (or bloodlines) along with “feeling” Polish. Conversely, the paper also insinuated that Polish immigrants’ familiarity with the English language did not make them Canadian or British.

The question that remains was whether language ceased to have primary importance when determining identity. By the late 1930s, given that such a statement had been made in the political turmoil leading up to the Second World War, the paper may have been hoping to appeal to a broader audience, perhaps indicating to the Polish community that any individual who felt sympathy for Poland’s plight could be considered an honorary Pole. This change in attitude may have also signalled an attempt to place Poland’s geopolitical position within Europe in a more favourable light amongst Canadians, and especially the Canadian government—a message that would have been carried via the Poles. There can be no denying that up to this point, the Catholic

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70 OMIAP Archives, “Kto Polak?,” _Gazeta Katolicka_, April 12, 1939, p.8.
clergy had argued for language as a means of protecting religious affiliation, and that the Polish consuls had been emphasizing religion as a means of protecting language and Polish identity. This 1939 statement does not necessarily contradict the previously held views. Instead, it rejected Polish immigrant integration into Canadian society as being equivalent to denationalization. One could still be a Pole in Canadian society, with the “Polish soul” as the category which indicated belongingness to the ethnic group. Moreover, this statement took into account the difficulties faced by the next generation in their attempts at maintaining language. Lastly, the approach continued to reiterate culture—of which religion was a significant component—as the source in which Polishness was rooted. Even though language could be lost, religious affiliation along with cultural traditions would remain.

The Catholic faith was considered to be at the centre of the Polish national character: “the characteristic of Poland is faith, faith in God.” The paper’s editorial board was not the only one to reinforce this notion. Correspondence from the Polish community confirmed the same ideals. Some of the letters to the editors emphasized religion as the source of the society and their national identity, with God as the head of the Fatherland, and every Pole’s obligation to focus on God and Fatherland. The relationship between the two was so important that the argument was made that without the former, the latter could not exist. National-ethnic identity could only be realized through a religious medium.

Religion offered a means for the expression of the national and ethnic identity. According to Gazeta Katolicka, Catholic values were to set the standard by which Poles should govern their lives, and these values became an expression of Polishness: “Who is not a good person, is not a good Pole, [but] only a Polak...only Polaks are under the impression that they can be good Poles

72 OMIAP Archives, Reader from Timmins, Ontario, Gazeta Katolicka, September 21, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.2.
and also be godless, blasphemous, derisive and to swear, curse and lie about others.” A true Pole was to be free of sin, leading an honourable life untouched by deceitfulness and falsehood, which would ensure that each Pole was fulfilling his or her national duty. Catholic ideals then, were associated with obligations of citizenship, with religion functioning as a determinant for everyday nationalism. Above all, Poles were called upon to govern themselves by the motto of “God and Fatherland.” Examples of Polish patriots who espoused both religious and nationalist values were provided in order to reinforce the connection between identity and religion, while supplying the community with models to emulate. Rev. J. Cybart from Krydor, Saskatchewan was cited as a true servant of God and a great Pole who truly loved his nation. Rev. Dr. Kazimierz Lutosławski, a member of Poland’s parliament, was cited as being a great patriot—“this is a model of a true Polish patriot-Priest...he superbly unites his responsibilities as a priest with his responsibilities as a Pole and as a citizen of the reborn Poland.” Lutosławski was offered as an example of servitude to the Church and to the Fatherland. The paper wanted to assure its readers that there was no discrepancy between being a Catholic and being a Pole. Religion did not inhibit national identity, but instead it helped to channel it and preserve it.

When it came to the Polish nation, the primary duties of Poles included expressing loyalty to the Polish nation, aiding the Polish government in strengthening itself, and standing in defence of the state’s borders, along with helping to support the Polish economy by sending

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73 OMIAP Archives, “Polska nie będzie silną, dopóki w Polaku nie ulepszymy człowieka,” Gazeta Katolicka, February 23, 1927, p.5.
74 OMIAP Archives, “Polska nie będzie silną, dopóki w Polaku nie ulepszymy człowieka,” Gazeta Katolicka, February 23, 1927, p.5.
75 Everyday, or banal nationalism, refers to the process involving the collective forgetting and remembering of the past and present. This process takes place during the daily routines and is full of reminders that flag nationhood. Since these reminders are part and parcel of the social environment they function in a covert manner, and nationalism ceases to appear as nationalism. Michael Billig, Banal Nationalism (London: Sage, 1995), 38.
76 OMIAP Archives, Michal Borycki and Tomasz Talarski, Letter to the Editor, Gazeta Katolicka, June 8, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.3.
remittances. According to them, the duty of Poles was to rebuild Poland as a tribute to those who had come before them. Another way in which the paper reinforced Polishness was by continuously providing information about the homeland. For examples, articles informing Poles about the introduction of the new Polish currency or procedural changes in obtaining a passport were a means by which connections with the homeland were reinforced. The temporary nature of this migration dictated that Poles be kept abreast of developments back home educating them about the current political and economic conditions. One article even provided information about the appropriate amount of valuable goods that were permitted back into Poland, the requirements needed to obtain Polish citizenship, or the cost of sending remittances back home. These became especially important in the months leading up to the Second World War.

Maintaining contact with the home country was considered another duty of Polishness, and so was co-operation amongst Poles to build the greatness of the nation. Loyalty to the nation and its governing bodies was expressed through public statements or through open letters forwarded to Poland’s president. There were also religious-based expressions that affirmed one’s national identity, such as supporting one’s priest and attending church, as this demonstrated the honour of Poland. Secondary duties were centred on family and community life. Children were expected to know Polish, to have respect for Polish traditions and customs, and to have pride in their heritage. Moreover, organizations were to focus on the good of

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81 MHSO, “Z Tygodnia,” Gazeta Katolicka, April 9, 1924, p.4.
86 OMIAP Archives, Letter to Editor, Gazeta Katolicka, April 12, 1939, Correspondence sec., p.2.
87 OMIAP Archives, Szymon Ludwiczynski, Letter to the Editor, Gazeta Katolicka, April 6, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.3; Letter to the Editor, Gazeta Katolicka, September 21, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.2.
Poland\textsuperscript{88}: “our beautiful language is being killed, our faith, our religion and our Polish customs are being lost. Everything is not happening as it should. The names of our children are being twisted to drandzek [\textit{unclear}], megi [i.e., Maggie], pegi [i.e., Peggy], etc., though not one of them received such a name at their baptism.” \textsuperscript{89} It was imperative that Poles did not adopt Canadian ways of living—names, customs and religion were to be maintained.

Unlike its contemporaries, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} spoke to the reality of the Polish immigrant’s condition on foreign soil. The paper discussed the relationship between constructs of “shame” and of “identity”. In particular, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} called on Poles to persevere in their culture, religion and language, and not feel ashamed of their heritage.\textsuperscript{90} Poles were continuously reprimanded by the paper for being ashamed of their national identity. In citing an example of a glacier in Alsace named after a Polish Professor, Dr. Eugeniusz Romerali, the paper illustrated to Poles that their fellow brethren had made contributions to academia and concluded by stating, “Ashamed of their nationality should only be those who are nothing and do not stand for anything...because a person who is truly intelligent...will not be ashamed that he is a Pole and of his Polish heritage.”\textsuperscript{91} In calling on Poles to be proud of their culture, the paper connected these positive attitudes with the rise of the Polish state, arguing that Poles ought to feel pride in their heritage because Poland was a great state.

The paper also focused on Poland as a nation-state with tangible boundaries and heritage. Consequently, identity was not only to be associated with culture and religion, but also in the political and geographical reality of a state. The physical tangibility of a state gave further weight to Polishness since the paper argued that Poland’s statehood was just as important as the

\textsuperscript{89} OMIAP Archives, Szymon Ludwiczyński, Letter to the Editor, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}, April 6, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.3.
\textsuperscript{90} OMIAP Archives, Szymon Ludwiczyński, Letter to the Editor, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}, April 6, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.3.
\textsuperscript{91} MHSO, “Z Tygodnia,” \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}, February 6, 1924, p.4.
statehood of the imperial powers like England and Germany. Given the argument that the Polish state could be “great”, by extension, so could her people. So not only was the state directly related to national pride, but the paper went even as far to cite foreign press in support of this very idea:

“Every Pole’s pride is characterized by belongingness to the Nation, which has a great role in the history of civilization, [and] which made such a great contribution to human culture. This pride reverberates in the strength of the spirit, permitting one to carry high the banner of National Issues.

This is what is being written about the subject in the foreign press:

‘To be a Pole—is an honour. This is what they say and write today. And this has been proven more than once in present times. Because in previous years it was different. Then a Pole was disdained, laughed at and even hated. But times have changed. Today, Poland is free, [and] so the whole world must give consideration to Poland and Poles. Today, the thousand-year old Polish culture impresses the whole world, so much so that they want to know more and more about this country and this nation, which despite many years of imprisonment has become a power and an example for others. Yes, to be a Pole—this is an honour.—But one cannot be a Pole only in name, but one has to be a Pole in deeds, and above all, one should know Polish, because the Polish tongue is a masterly brush, which paints in bright colours that which we are, what we feel and what we pursue.”

There is no doubt that the greatness of Poland was related to the country’s history.

To highlight the importance of this historical greatness, the paper turned to the prominence of the Polish state within Europe and its role as protector of the Euro-Christian heritage. The Polish nation-state was compared to that of England—a reigning world power—in its size, populace, number of cities; number of schools (cited at 28,000); and in its number of senators and members of parliament. Gazeta Katolicka was clear that Poland was just as important to the politics of Europe (and the world) as was England. At the very least, its importance stemmed from its role as the protector of Europe from the expansion of communism. Moreover, the Catholic Church’s role in preserving western civilization was

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92 OMIAP Archives, “Być Polakiem—To Zaszczyt,” Gazeta Katolicka, March 1, 1939, p.4.
93 OMIAP Archives, “Polska to Potęga,” Gazeta Katolicka, April 6, 1932, p.4.
94 See for example, OMIAP Archives, “Polska Uratowała Europę przed Zalewem Komunizmu,” Gazeta Katolicka, June 1, 1932, p.1, 8.
expounded, with Poland serving as the latter’s bulwark.⁹⁵ In both of these cases, the paper highlighted the fact that these statements were made by two writers and a politician: Professor W.T. Allison from the University of Manitoba, and Englishmen, Hilary Belloc and “Augur” (author’s pseudonym). In referring to non-Polish sources, not only did the paper foster the legitimacy of Poland’s claims to greatness, but it also counteracted issues of identity-related shame that were common-place amongst Polish immigrants. In this respect, Gazeta Katolicka was asking the immigrants to reclaim the dignity of their identity as Poles. By referring to Poland as a “Great Power,”⁹⁶ one that even Germany needed to recognize, the paper spoke to the political and geographical reality that bound all Poles to each other and to their homeland. There could be no nation without a people who actively worked towards keeping their Polishness— their language, religion and traditions. Consequently, Poland’s geopolitical position was dependent on the people keeping Polish cultural traditions.

The greatness of the nation was also propagated by reminding Poles of important historical figures who made a contribution to the European literature, music and science. Mikołaj Kopernik, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Frederic Chopin, Maria Curie-Skłodowska, Jozef Conrad and Ignacy Paderewski were all cited as examples of Poles who achieved greatness.⁹⁷ They were also presented to the community as examples that were to be emulated. These individuals embodied two conceptions of nationhood: the first related their advancement to Western Civilization, as in the case of Kopernik, Conrad, and Curie-Skłodowska; the second, referred to epitomizing nationalist sentiment, as in the case of Chopin, Sienkiewicz and Paderewski. Citing these historical icons had a threefold effect. First, it counteracted the notion of shame experienced by the community by drawing on the international fame of these individuals. Second, it provided

⁹⁵ See for example, OMIAP Archives, “Polska—To Szaniec Cywilizacji,” Gazeta Katolicka, June 8, 1932, p.4.
legitimacy to the Polish state and culture as these individuals defined themselves as Poles. Third, it further reinforced the notion of Poland as the bulwark of Western Civilization, since these people made contributions to the fields of literature, chemistry, physics and music.\footnote{The paper even declared that Europe owed Poland a debt of gratitude for stopping the Turkish invasion in the 17th century and the Red Army in 1920.}

This idea of Poland’s greatness was not a new phenomenon of the interwar period. It had already emerged in the nineteenth century Romanticism which had powerful messianic undertones. In referencing the history of Polish messianism, the paper was bringing together the religious and civic (i.e., political) dimensions of the Polish identity. Given the context of the partitions, (in the late eighteenth century) Polish intellectuals sought to explain the disappearance of the Polish state and the persecution of its people under three empires. Messianism grew out of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, appealing to an image of the suffering Christ (i.e., Poland) who was to save and unite all sinners (i.e., all other European nations). Many of the Polish literary greats of the pre-1914 period, such as Adam Mickiewicz, were strong proponents of this outlook.

One of the key features of this ideology was the conviction that a person could only be fully realized within the confines of the nation, which manifested itself and was embodied in the spirit. The nation had a metaphysical meaning and it could be used as a means of reforming one’s life. This ideology did not necessarily conflict with the Roman Catholic tradition in Poland. Instead, it took this religious tradition and applied it to the nation-state. Accordingly, there was a particular relationship that was emphasized between the Church and the nation-state. \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} presented the Church as the protector and nourisher of the nation. Especially emphasized was the Church’s right to call itself “the Church of the Polish Nation [sic].”\footnote{OMIAP Archives, “Kościół i Państwo,” \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}, February 23, 1927, p.4.} This particular reference directed the audience’s attention to Poland’s baptism in 966, and reinterpreted Polish history in light of this act, which would have been regarded as the first step in Poland’s destiny as a Christ-
like nation. Furthering the legitimacy between nation and church, the paper maintained that the church had never betrayed the nation, but rather nurtured and protected it.\textsuperscript{100}

The enduring relationship between Church and nation was even utilized by politicians of the Second Republic, who corroborated the mutual dependency between Catholicism and the national identity. Roman Dmowski, for instance, promoted Poland’s greatness as being directly related to its religion and statehood. It was the Catholic religion that was to become closely associated with the functioning of the state and the education of subsequent generations.\textsuperscript{101} Whether it was the Church, politicians, or immigrants, the message that was being presented was the same: religion and the Polish nation were bound together; religion and Polish identity were compelled into a relationship of mutual support and dependency. The association between the two was argued to be rooted in Polish history, and hence it perpetuated the idea of something that had always existed, and which was not simply mythologized.\textsuperscript{102} Even Ignacy Mościcki, the republic’s president, gave recognition to the clergy as preservers of Polish language and culture.\textsuperscript{103} In emphasizing the religious foundations of the Polish national identity, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} sought out statements of the state’s representatives who gave further credence to the Pole-Catholic identity. Consequently, Polishness, in its historical formation and development was argued to be a fusion of Catholicism and nationalism.

To further strengthen the two components of the Pole-Catholic identity, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} also instructed how this identity was to be realized, preserved and displayed within community life. To that end, it consistently presented Polish religious and secular national holidays, and

\textsuperscript{102} Interestingly, the idea of the Pole-Catholic was much easier to apply to Polish immigrants as opposed to the Polish state, which had a large population of ethnic and religious minorities. Within Canada, the majority of Poles were Catholic; those minorities which had come from the Polish territories, such as Jews and Ukrainians, upon arrival to Canada, no longer identified with being Polish.
anniversaries. The commemoration tended to focus on military victories and political achievements—events that dealt with the status of the Polish state. The one thing that the commemorations had in common was Poland’s ability to battle, persevere and gain victory over its enemies (i.e., Germany and Russia). Even divine aid was referenced as a means by which victory was achieved.\textsuperscript{104} Consequently, “secular” events were imparted with religious meaning and relevance—Catholicism winning over Islam (1683 against the Ottoman Empire), Orthodoxy (1613 against Russia) or Protestantism (1655 against Sweden); Christianity winning over communism (Soviet-Polish War of 1920). Not only did secular events take on religious meaning, but also religious celebrations were associated with Polish civic nationalism. This permitted for a fluidity and flexibility that muddled the distinction between the two, making religion and national identity that much more difficult to separate. Such holidays and anniversaries were used to transmit feelings of national belonging along with values—both civic and religious—that were considered important to the Polish national identity.

An interesting case of this phenomenon was the paper’s treatment of the January Uprising of 1863 or the November Uprising of 1830. \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} described the battles and highlighted the notions of sacrifice and loyalty that were illustrated through the participants of the revolts. These were presented as the nation’s expression of protest against the actions or inactions of various European states and empires, reaffirming that the true Polish nation had not become extinct. The articles regarding these events were quick to point out that loyalty to the Polish nation meant upholding Polish traditions and customs, in particular those of faith and language.\textsuperscript{105} Also emphasized was Poland’s suffering and victimhood,\textsuperscript{106} which would have been

\textsuperscript{104} This was referenced in regards to the Miracle at the Vistula, and will be discussed later on.
related to Poland’s messianic mission within the history of Europe as a model of Christ’s suffering and crucifixion.

Other national holidays that were commemorated and which continued to reinforce the relationship between religion and national identity were May 3rd celebrations, which observed the establishment of Poland’s Constitution of 1791 and the feast of Mary, Queen of Poland, and the Battle of Warsaw (August 1920), otherwise known as the Miracle on the Vistula, whereby Polish forces halted the invasion of Soviet Russia. The former combined developments in the political and secular sphere of Poland’s history with those of a religious festival. This particular feast arose out of Poland’s ability to halt the Swedish invasion of 1655, and was attributed to Mary’s intervention. As a result, Poland’s king at that time, Jan Kazimierz, dedicated his throne to Mary. Poles in Canada considered this event with particular importance, as it referred to Poland’s modernity, democracy and enlightenment. It also became a means of demonstrating that religious and national identities were related. During these celebrations, the audience was informed of Poland’s history, nationhood, and great political leaders, and of fidelity to the Church. This latter was especially highlighted in the tradition of the Marian cult within the history of the nation:

that a Pole was always distinguished by zealous worship of the Holy Mother. The Polish nation, religious in general, carries within itself a specific reverence to the Queen’s land and heavens...Matins have become the property of the Polish nation...[and] in service to Mary[,] they [i.e., Matins] have become not only the architecture, not only the Polish poetry, painting and sculpture, but also the crown and arms of Poland.

Not only was the Polish nation presented as being inherently religious, but also religion had become infused with the culture, politics and history.

107 OMIAP Archives, “Brandon, Man.,” Gazeta Katolicka, June 1, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.3; “U Stóp Królowej Korony Polskiej,” Gazeta Katolicka, September 7, 1932, p.6.
The relationship between the constitution and crown (i.e., Mary, Queen of Poland) was further explored by Bishop Dr. Teodor Kubina. According to him, the constitution provided the law upon which the state was based, whereas the crown was a symbol of the state’s sovereignty and its glory.\textsuperscript{109} This meant that “the Church knows that religion and nationality are tightly intertwined, that bringing closer the truth of faith and spiritual care...may be effectively carried out through the native tongue and by taking into consideration the national character. On the other hand, nationality is reinforced and supported by religion.”\textsuperscript{110} Not only was it difficult to make a distinction between religion and national identity, the two were mutually self-supporting systems, and “nothing reminds fellow countrymen abroad of their fatherland....like hearing at a holy place the word of God in their native tongue, when in praising God they can sing songs brought over from the fatherland.”\textsuperscript{111} The best means of remembering and retaining one’s national identity was through religious practices. Even the Miracle on the Vistula was presented as the victory of the Polish spirit over barbarianism, under the banner of Mary’s patronage.\textsuperscript{112} Consequently, historical events became a means of enforcing a heritage that combined religion with nationalist ideals. The nation’s greatness, as the paper argued, could only be achieved if the nation continued to be bound to its religious legacy. Even those festivals that had no religious ties, such as the Święto Morza (Sea Day), that celebrated the recovery of Gdańsk from Prussian/German control and Poland’s access to the Baltic Sea, became a religious celebration.\textsuperscript{113}

The same could be said of religious festivities, which were nationalized by the writers and readers of \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}. The practice of “święconka”, for example, refers to Easter baskets that are filled with the figure of a lamb, ham, kielbasa, eggs, bread, horseradish, cake,

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and salt and pepper that were taken to church to be blessed on Holy Saturday. This custom was described by a Gazeta Katolicka reader as coming forth from the Polish spirit while at the same time preserving that spirit; that Poles did not only celebrate Easter, but celebrated a Polish Easter. According to the author, it was the blessing of the basket that provided a national element to a religious holiday. The fluidity between religious and national customs also furthered the notion that the parish was a source of national life. It was in this environment that Polish customs could be maintained and where national life could flourish. There was a mutual dependency between parishes and national life, but Gazeta Katolicka was also quick to point out that an immigrant’s everyday life was not exempt from remembering and maintaining Polish traditions.

The paper specifically called on the Polish community to ensure that children were raised within a Polish environment. This was to be achieved under the banner of “saving Polishness in the home.” Here, reference was made to the role of women as preservers of the nation. Women were seen as “guardians of Polishness” and were made responsible for the strengthening of Polishness and raising “good Poles”. The nation, then, would be preserved through the timeless work of both women and clergy. Particular importance was once again paid to the preservation of language. Key was avoiding the polonization of English terms, as in the case of “stritkary” (i.e., streetcars; Polish: tramwaje) or “sztory” (i.e., stores; Polish: sklepy). Children needed to be raised not only in the spirit of Polish tradition, which included a religious education

114 OMIAP Archives, “Kto Polak?,” Gazeta Katolicka, April 12, 1939, p.8.
115 OMIAP Archives, “O Utrwalenie Polskości,” Gazeta Katolicka, August 2, 1939, p.2; Jan Kempa, “Fort Williams, ON,” Gazeta Katolicka, December 28, 1927, Correspondence sec., p.3.
117 These English words were phonetically polonized and assumed a permanent place in the Polish language amongst Poles in Canada. OMIAP Archives, Letter from Narol, Gazeta Katolicka, April 13, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.3; OMIAP Archives, Szymon Ludwiczyński, Letter to the Editor, Gazeta Katolicka, April 6, 1932, Correspondence sec., p.3; OMIAP Archives, Letter from P. Dąbrowski, Gazeta Katolicka, December 7, 1932, Correspondence sec., 2.
and being sent to Poland for courses in Polish literature, history, geography, music, emigration matters, and economics, but also on the Polish school system, constitution and political system.\textsuperscript{118} Even if parents could not afford a parochial education\textsuperscript{119} or lived too far to make use of such a school, the paper was keen on this aspect of parental responsibility. One could even write the paper and purchase schooling materials in order to teach children at home. The many calls by the \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} for the preservation of Polishness amongst the youth were accompanied by numerous references illustrating youth’s interest in working on cultural events. In such instances, youth was called on to work towards the glory of everything Polish, operating under the banner of “one to oneself for oneself.”\textsuperscript{120}

Neither the younger nor the older generation was permitted to forget their past and culture. All members of the community were asked to participate and promote their identity as both Poles and Catholics. It is not surprising that \textit{Gazeta Katolicka’s} defining ingredient of national identity was religion. However, the paper also asserted that the Polish state had adopted Catholicism and incorporated it into the culture and mythology of the nation. Not only did the fusion of the two—culture and religion—define intellectual thought, they were also rooted in the historical tradition of Poland. When defining what it meant to be Polish, the writers of the paper turned to Polish religious history in order to provide legitimacy to nationalism. In one article, the author assigned certain characteristics to various nations, such as the Germans, the English and the Irish. To these he compared Poles, who, according to him, exhibited the most genuine form of faith in God. These qualities were reflected in the nation’s history, especially when it defended Catholicism on the European continent, protecting it from (Protestant) Swedes,

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\textsuperscript{119} This applied to the Holy Ghost parish in Winnipeg, which had its own school.
\textsuperscript{120} OMIAP Archives, Correspondence from Toronto, \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}, September 21, 1932, Correspondence sec., 2.
\end{flushleft}
(Muslim) Turks, and (atheistic) Bolsheviks. The author further argued that the Polish language and Fatherland were the most precious treasures left by preceding generations, who fought to preserve their nationality and native tongue. Though it was faith in God that ensured that Poles remained Poles. Finally, the author outlined the key three-fold aims of the Gazeta Katolicka: to preserve and educate Polish communities in their faith countering the isolationism experienced by small and distant settlements (and later hinder the spread of Communism); to act as a means by which communities could keep in touch with each other and be aware of the ongoing within different settlements; and to maintain a sense of national awareness and identity.

In many ways, Czas followed a similar path to Gazeta Katolicka in emphasizing national identity. The paper made use of the same resources—Polish historical and political icons, Polish history, the characterization of Polish identity, and the celebration of national holidays—to promote nationalism amongst the Polish immigrants. As mentioned earlier, Czas also added sections that targeted a specific audience—women, children, and young adults. These sections, along with editorials and correspondence from the community, aimed to further Polishness within those target audiences. Czas, however, faced a conundrum. As a secular paper, it wanted to attract all Poles regardless of religious affiliation while simultaneously, it wanted to hone in and exploit the traditional Polish-Catholic identity. The paper was thus set apart from Gazeta Katolicka by its ability to remain fluid and flexible in its definition and preservation of Polish identity. As a result, the paper tended to focus its discussion of Polishness on the issue of language. Learning and speaking proper Polish became the critical criteria that distinguished a Pole from a non-Pole. Language was also a safe choice, being free of religious and political

\[\text{Prior to the takeover of the paper by the ZZPwK, Czas placed greater emphasis on content dealing with immigration in Canada and Polish-Ukrainian relations. More importantly, there were accusations of censorship that came to light after the takeover. In particular, correspondence that did not look favourably upon Polish-Ukrainian relations or which emphasized Polish nationalism was not printed. See for example, LAC, Letter from Leopold Gola, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Czas, December 8, 1931, p.5.}\]
implications. At the same time, and because of its seeming neutrality, language could be adapted to serve the needs of any given interest group—Catholic, Baptist, Leftist, Jewish or Rusyn.  

Emphasizing language did not necessarily mean that other components which comprised the national identity were disregarded or minimized, since this would contradict the broader consular agenda (discussed in chapter two). Rather, language was perceived as a carrier of culture and as a transmitter of tradition—it was a symbol of identity.  

*Czas* was very clear that Polish customs and traditions had to be maintained if the community was to be saved from denationalization. Yet, it remained vague on explicating some of these key ideas and terms. In many ways, one can argue that officially, the consuls were not concerned with religious beliefs and associations of the Polish émigrés, as long as the community continued to be a loyal supporter of the Second Republic and the Piłsudski government, and active contributors to the Polish economy back home. *Czas* was not concerned with explicating a theoretical framework which defined Polishness. It assumed that the Polish immigrants were aware of their identity. Ambiguity meant that nobody would feel excluded. Imposing a strict definition would have certainly created disagreement and discussion which the consuls wanted to avoid, especially as they hoped to bring the entire Polonia into the fold of their ZZPwK. For the consuls, civic and cultural identity responsibilities could be fulfilled in the field of politics and economics. The consuls only became fearful when they saw the community—mainly, the subsequent generation, which grew in the 1930s—grappling with denationalization. This fear was compounded by rising

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122 The latter two groups play a significant role in consular materials. During the 1920s, when assessing the population of Poles in the different regions of Canada, the consuls tracked Jews and Rusyns. Based on the consular reports, it is safe to assume that the consuls were interested in the Jewish and Rusyn groups that had emigrated from Poland, and which the consuls perceived as Polish. Unfortunately, the question remains whether or not this attitude towards non-ethnic Poles continued into the 1930s. Interestingly, the paper did mention that during a Sea Day celebration, the Polish community was joined in its celebration by Polish Jews, who for the first time had participated in such festivities. LAC, “Co Słychać w Zjednoczeniu?,” *Czas*, July 11, 1933, p.7. AAN, Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, sign.964, s.19-28, A Report of the Consulate General on Polish Emigration in Canada, June 14, 1923; AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.889, s.47-51, Report to the Emigration Institute, March 29, 1922; AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.889, s.54-57, Report to the MSZ regarding Polish emigrants, August 5, 1922.

interest in communism and its internationalist viewpoint. Hence, it was only in the mid-1930s that the paper’s cry to maintain and legitimize the identity (through history and national celebrations) reached full force. Even in this context, the paper was quick to emphasize religious neutrality. Nonetheless, its new focus on the traditional and commonly accepted notions of Polishness, indicated a more conventional approach and understanding of identity, more in line with the image of Polishness presented by the *Gazeta Katolicka*.

Like *Gazeta Katolicka*, *Czas* also understood the value of the newspaper as a medium for propaganda. In particular, it envisioned the preservation of language as one of its main goals. Without a Polish newspaper in the homes of immigrants, there was an increased risk for denationalization. The reality that there were numerous small Polish settlements and even individuals who were isolated from the larger Polonia further reinforced the idea that the Polish press was a key preserver of language. For many, it remained the only source of the Polish language. *Czas* also argued that the press functioned as a means of informing Poles about life back home, keeping them connected to the homeland. To further illustrate the importance of the press, *Czas* equated the latter with religious literature. The newspaper was not to be a substitute for religious texts, but its value in preserving the Polish spirit was equivalent to how religious literature preserved spiritual and moral values: “It [i.e., the press] is often next to the prayer book, the only reading material of our emigrant masses[,] reading materials, which does not allow [us] to forget [our] native tongue, which reminds [us] that Poland is our loving mother [who] wants to gather/draw all of her sons to into her fold.”

The Polish press was to be a provider of all elements required for the promotion of national life.

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124 LAC, Correspondence from Eastonia, Sask., *Czas*, February 23, 1932, p.5.
126 The fact that *Czas* had to compare itself to a prayer book indicates that religious texts were highly regarded (and utilized) by the community. It also underscores the religious nature of the community.
Czas’ attempt to offer a cursory definition of Polishness surrounded the discussion about language. Language was presented as the key feature of the national identity. According to the paper, the degree of Polishness depended strictly on the lingual affinity. Consequently, it was also portrayed as a “national treasure” that was to be preserved from denationalization in a tradition reaching back to the eighteenth century. Language was the basis for differentiating Poles from non-Poles. But it also broadened the definition of Polishness by extending it beyond ethnicity. In order for language to be legitimized as a medium for identity, the paper focused on the former’s role within Polish history, especially during the partitions era. In particular, Czas emphasized the attempts by Russia and Prussia to ban Polish from all public places in the hopes of increasing assimilation. The editor attributed the survival of the language to the household, and according to him, language was the reason why the nation survived, and eventually gained independence. The loss of language was articulated as “a grave sin against the memory of the forefathers.” It was equated with disrespect for the family unit (e.g., parents) and their ancestors, and even as a betrayal of the nation.

Czas took the issue of language seriously. For instance, the Department of Colonization and Agriculture’s (Edmonton, Alberta) announcement in Polish to the Polonia came under fire because of the incorrect use of grammar and syntax. The paper encouraged the community to make demands that future translations respect the purity and integrity of the language. Language preservation was so essential, that Czas continuously called on the community to establish schools, libraries and organizations where it could be propagated. These institutions would provide an environment whereby the language could thrive. The onus was placed on people to

132 The announcement was written on behalf of the Canadian National Railway informing the community on lectures pertaining to agriculture for new immigrants. LAC, “Kaleczenie Języka Polskiego,” Czas, June 21, 1932, p.4.
establish these places wherever they lived. The size of the community and its dispersal
throughout various regions of Canada dictated that immigrants had to go beyond their original
aim of just establishing parishes. These were important, but they had to also create cultural
centres that would help the community conserve their cultural life. Although learning English
was acknowledged as an important skill, the community was always reminded that their native
tongue was not to be forgotten. Such calls for the preservation of Polish did not only come from
editorials, but also from the letters of readers, especially from those who had settled in the West
and were more isolated from their compatriots:

   In my opinion—a Pole emigrant should earnestly learn English but should not forget his
   own tongue, which is the tongue of the nation with an old culture. Hence, compatriots let
   us stick together when abroad, read Polish books and newspapers, establish societies and
   libraries, and then our Fatherland, which looks across the sea at the progress of our lives
   abroad, will not be ashamed.\textsuperscript{133}

   There is no doubt that language was one of the primary ways in which Polish immigrants
could prove and reassert their loyalty to the homeland.\textsuperscript{134} It was the most concrete medium,
according to \textit{Czas}, through which the “Polish spirit,” would be realized. Nevertheless, it had to
be complemented and grounded in knowledge of Poland’s history, literature, geography,
domestic and foreign affairs, and political image.\textsuperscript{135} By the mid 1930s, according to \textit{Czas} both
language and culture were now necessary components of Polishness. All of these were to build a
solid foundation for the connection between immigrant and his homeland. Hence, the realization
of the Polish spirit, and everything that came with it in the form of language or culture, was
recognized as a sacrifice—an offering—that was to be executed for the fatherland.\textsuperscript{136} The motto
which Poles were to govern themselves by, and which \textit{Czas} encouraged, was “Everything for

\textsuperscript{133} LAC, T. Bryłka, “Masefield, Sask.,” \textit{Czas}, February 28, 1933, p.5.
\textsuperscript{134} LAC, A.S., “Verigin, Sask.,” \textit{Czas}, March 21, 1933, p.5.
\textsuperscript{135} LAC, Correspondence from Toronto, Ontario, \textit{Czas}, February 19, 1935, p.5.
The Polish immigrant was to be at the service of the Polish state. His life was to be imbued with a living Polish identity—homes were never to be without a picture of a great Polish leader or a history book. Even visiting the fatherland was an obligation that if not met, questioned the loyalty to one’s ancestors and to one’s nation. All of these reinforced ties with the homeland, asserting “Poland is everywhere, where there are Poles.”

The consuls and *Czas* were strongly concerned that Polonia would fail to remember the past and would not keep abreast of issues related to Poland. Beyond ties to Poland to prevent the loss of national identity, there was another agenda at work here. Familiarity with the history and current events would ensure that the immigrants could represent Polish interests in Canada. Yet such an approach also served two other functions. First, it assured that the immigrants were able to counteract negative propaganda about Poland. In essence, the weekly perceived the community as part of a civilian army which was asked to defend Poland in culture, history and everyday life. Second, it counteracted feelings of shame by stressing the country’s various political, economic and social achievements, including, but not limited to its geopolitical position, army, currency, and healthcare system, which according to the paper, had raised Poland to a status equivalent to that of other international powers. Polish immigrants were thus called on by *Czas* to consider themselves as equals with Canadians (and other such nations).

Conversely, rejection of one’s culture and national identity were highly criticized, and seen as futile:

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137 LAC, Leon Garczynski, “Strzeżmy się!”, *Czas*, April 1, 1931, p.4.
With a heavy heart we must accept that not all Poles abroad are proficient in the Polish language.—Let them learn Polish, let them become familiar with the language of their grandfathers if they are brave people. They have the opportunity to fight and rectify falsehoods spread about Poland by people whom are our enemies. Let them realize that they cannot hide their national origins. If they are not betrayed by their changed surname, then they will be betrayed by their lineage, by which every cultured person is identified.¹⁴³

Someone’s national heritage could not be easily abandoned or dismissed. Yet, Czas’ editors realized that it would be the daily activities that would ensure the strengthening of national values.

Polishness was to permeate every aspect of daily life. Even the Anglicization of a child’s name was deemed unacceptable by the paper. Accordingly, Czas suggested that parents turn to the Catholic calendar in choosing a name for a child to lessen the possibility of denationalization.¹⁴⁴ Parents were asked to even teach their children the significance and history of their names. The weekly also highlighted the role of women as guardians of Polishness. If denationalization of children did occur, it would be the woman who bore full responsibility.¹⁴⁵ The teaching of the next generation rested on a woman’s ability to raise her children in Polish, with love for the nation and its civic virtues. Here, Czas aligned with Gazeta Katolicka’s emphasis on a close connection between morality and the national identity. Denouncing or neglecting one’s identity, as an article in the Gazeta Katolicka explained, could be attributed to questionable morality: “A bad person and a bad citizen is one who is ashamed to admit to his national heritage, to his native land from where his ancestors came.”¹⁴⁶ Proper morality was a source of true patriotism, and a true patriot was an individual who actively contributed to the advancement of western civilization.¹⁴⁷ But Czas also asserted that neither emigration nor religion could interfere with Polishness. Paradoxically, Poles had to demonstrate loyalty to the

country of settlement as this was also a component of civic virtues associated with patriotic duties. Nonetheless, immigrants were reminded that they were essentially “on loan,” and such circumstances could not affect one’s relationship with the homeland or one’s national identity.\textsuperscript{148}

When it came to the issue of Catholicism and its relationship to the Polish identity, the paper was clear that it was not an impediment to Polishness.\textsuperscript{149} Though it made the link between religion and identity infrequently, the paper was not negatively disposed towards religion. For \textit{Czas}, national identity could be encouraged through a variety of mediums, including religious beliefs. Even in its secular approach, the argument could not necessarily be made that identity, in and of itself, was non-religious or that it did not constitute religious components. The weekly utilized the very same features—Polish history, historical icons and national festivities—that \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} used in defining Polishness. The difference between the two lay in that \textit{Gazeta Katolicka} took that extra step and connected these features to the messianic philosophy, which was pervasive in the secular Polish political and cultural thought of that period. \textit{Czas} took a slightly different approach by reinforcing economic nationalism and territorialism. The former was grounded in intellectual culture, while the latter was grounded in the tangible, geo-political situation of the Second Republic. Beyond cultural affinity, preservation of language, or ties to the homeland, \textit{Czas} had little to say about the role of religion. The editors and consuls were aware of the importance of religious affiliation, but preferred to remain silent, lest they would create unnecessary fissures within the community. They preferred to emphasize the connection to Poland as a much safer medium for promotion of national identity and interests.

According to the paper, the economic and political well-being of the Polish state was a priority and an obligation. To those ends, it provided extensive information on Poland’s foreign


\textsuperscript{149} LAC, J.K. Flis, “Tolerancja?,” \textit{Czas}, March 28, 1933, p.5.
and economic policies and priorities. In many ways, such editorials could be considered reports on the progress the government was making in social, political, and economic spheres.\(^{150}\) *Czas* kept the community abreast of the situation in Poland, internalizing Poland’s affairs in the lives of immigrants abroad. In part, such editorials satisfied the consular agenda: becoming knowledgeable about Poland was one of the obligations of a Pole living abroad, and would serve not only the immigrant, but also the Polish state. Consequently, familiarity with the state and its policies would enable each Pole to become a source of information about Poland for foreigners.\(^{151}\)

This latter feature was very important to the consuls. *Czas* was adamant that Poles were to take on British citizenship\(^{152}\) so that they could vote in Canadian elections, in order to shape the economic relationship between the two countries. For example, there were many products which could be imported from Poland, improving its economic situation.\(^{153}\) Even items such as Polish tobacco and cigarettes were advertised for purchase in the community.\(^{154}\) Improving the economic situation was also extended to local Polish businesses. The paper strongly advocated that Poles make purchases in shops owned by other Poles.\(^{155}\) The purpose behind such advice was twofold: first, it was to reinforce the idea of solidarity amongst the Poles—not only were they to come together within organizations, but they were to support each other’s economic ventures; second, it was portrayed as being part and parcel of the national identity, and an obligation that fulfilled the immigrant’s duty towards his or her identity. Even women, as part of

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\(^{150}\) See for example, LAC, “Ku Czemu Polska Zmierza,” *Czas*, April 9, 1935, Editorial section, p.4.


\(^{152}\) The paper actually acknowledges the lack of desire amongst Poles to adopt Canadian citizenship by allaying the fears of these Poles that if they become Canadian citizens, they would lose their Polish citizenship. The paper is clear that if an individual returns to Poland, there would be no difficulties (or costs) in regaining Polish citizenship. LAC, P. Budzik, “Od Naczelnnej Delegacji Zjednoczenia,” *Czas*, March 15, 1932, p.3.


\(^{155}\) LAC, J.P., Correspondence from Toronto, Ontario, *Czas*, February 3, 1932, p.5.
their maternal and national duty, were called upon to shop and make use of services that would support other Poles economically. As a result, *Czas* was quite concerned with the application of nationalist sentiment to aspects of daily life.

Underlying all of this nationally-minded consumerism was the existence of the Second Republic. The paper strongly advocated the relationship between identity and territorial boundaries. Access to the sea, became an important component of this discourse. *Czas* wanted to assure its readers that Polishness was rooted in the settlement of the “Polish territories” (undefined by the editor) in the early ancient period. Additionally, the weekly reinforced the difference between the Germanic and the Polish peoples, and the territorial legitimacy of the latter. By focusing on these two factors, the paper reaffirmed Polish rights to the territories which it inhabited and it also reaffirmed Poland’s legitimacy to nationhood. Regaining access to the Baltic Sea was considered a symbol of a reconstituted Poland. Polishness, therefore, had a tangible component related to land and water.

By placing attention on territory, *Czas* reinforced the idea that Polish émigrés should be concerned with the well-being of the nation-state as a whole. This was especially important considering that during the years of the partitions, the state had not existed, and a nation was created without a territory. In this way, *Czas* extended identity to go beyond language and culture to include a physical space. Simultaneously, the paper connected land, and especially the sea, as symbols of “unity and intrinsic values of the entire nation.” The sea was equated with the nation. Without it, the paper argued, Poland could not exist. The weekly called on the immigrants to take interest in the sea. Consequently, celebrations such as the Sea Day became a

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means of reinforcing the connection between immigrants and their homeland. In one such celebration in Coleman, Alberta, the community pledged their loyalty and allegiance to Poland:

We Poles, Canadian citizens of Polish heritage, gathered for the celebration of the Polish Sea in Coleman, Alberta on the 29th of June 1933, solemnly declare our solidarity with the entire Polish nation in protecting the integrity of the Republic’s borders [; and] we especially underline the unbreakable bond of Poland with the Polish sea, which has become for thirty-two million Poles the only guarantee of progress, and political and economic independence of the Polish State.\(^{160}\)

The same pledge of allegiance was carried out throughout various Polish communities in Canada.\(^{161}\) One’s Polishness, therefore, was to be satisfied by advancing the political and economic situation of Poland. The celebration of the Sea Day became such an important event that if a community did not observe it, their Polishness and Catholicism were called into question as noted by Tomasz Bryłka in his letter to \textit{Czas}.\(^{162}\) Immigrants themselves reinforced the notion that Polishness meant the involvement in and recognition of such an anniversary. Letters of criticism were sent to \textit{Czas} over \textit{Gazeta Katolicka}’s silence related to the Sea Day and a lack of involvement by Catholics.\(^{163}\) Active community involvement in promoting the integrity of the Polish territory was strongly advocated by the newspaper.

Despite \textit{Czas}’ emphasis on language and knowledge of culture as factors of Polishness; and even though the primary goal of the community was to realize the economic and, to a lesser degree, the political advancements of the Polish government, \textit{Czas} did not veer away from a traditional legitimization of Polish identity. The paper turned to Polish history, icons, and national events and celebrations to increase nationalist sentiment amongst the community members.

The May 3\textsuperscript{rd} Constitution celebrations represented the means by which Poland’s political sovereignty was reinforced within the community. The significance of the constitution was

\(^{160}\) LAC, Correspondence from Coleman, Alberta, \textit{Czas}, July 18, 1933, p.5.
\(^{162}\) LAC, Correspondence from Tomasz Bryłka, Masefield, Saskatchewan, \textit{Czas}, April 15, 1933, p.5.
\(^{163}\) LAC, Correspondence from Ludwik Posyniak, Stenen, Saskatchewan, \textit{Czas}, July 25, 1933, p.5.
threelfold. The first dealt with the history surrounding the creation of the constitution; the second was related to the developments achieved in proceeding constitutions (i.e., 1921 and 1931); and the third emphasized the connections between all Poles and their “living” heritage. Accordingly, Czas engaged the immigrant in a dialectic between remembering and forgetting. In recalling the circumstances that surrounded the creation of Poland’s first constitution in 1791, the paper wanted to remind the community that though Poland had once been a great nation (e.g., Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), the poor decisions made by the elites resulted in the partitions. The constitution, therefore, became an attempt at saving the nation, albeit unsuccessfully. This historical narrative served as warning to the immigrants: the nation’s survival and advancement had to be their priority; otherwise, not only would the nation-state be weakened, but also their identity would be endangered. The constitution became a rallying point—then and now—“awakening the popular national spirit, igniting hearts with true love for the fatherland.” Consequently, it became a source for uniting the nation both morally and politically, and it also assured that all members of the nation were now equal.

The Constitution of 1791 was considered by the paper to function as a turning point in the history of the nation. It suggested ideas of modernization, advancement, renewal and reconstruction of the nation, and as Czas argued, it propelled Poland into one of the leading nations internationally given that it was the first nation in Europe to introduce a constitution. Subsequently, its “function” did not cease in the late eighteenth century, but the constitution was

164 After the first partition of Poland in 1772, the Polish aristocracy attempted to initiate radical and wide-ranging reforms to prevent another partition. One of the key reforms focused on the political structures of the state. The May 3rd Constitution was incredibly radical for its time. It would place power in the hands of the middle classes, restructure the government, and eliminate the abuses of the existing parliamentary system.
to continue to serve as a “living” reminder of past achievements while also becoming a point of renewal for immigrants—a renewal of their history and identity.

To strengthen the relationship between the past and the interwar period, Czas rooted the constitutions of 1921 and 1935 in Poland’s first constitution. However, the paper also stipulated that the later constitutions were improvements that spoke to the changing needs of the nation-state, in particular, the equality of all citizens regardless of creed or ethnicity. Moreover, the 1935 constitution demonstrated two interesting factors. The first addressed the relationship between the state and its citizens, and the second, pertained to the state’s attitude (and relationship) to religion. In the first case, the constitution clearly outlined the contract between state and citizen; the latter was duty-bound to be faithful to the state and to fulfill the obligations as laid out by the state. Czas was clear about presenting the state as the common good of all citizens, and as a result, they were to support the state and increase its authority. Geographic limitations of living abroad were not to be a barrier that absolved the immigrant from his and her duties.

When it came to the issue of religion, Czas did not provide any overt commentary. This did not necessarily mean that Czas did not see the value or role that religion played in the formation of identity. Again, the May 3\(^{rd}\) Constitution is a good case in point. This constitution was closely associated with the Feast of Mary, Queen of Poland. This was not something that was emphasized by Czas perhaps in its attempts to reach a broader audience or to distinguish itself from Gazeta Katolicka. However, in reprinting the 1935 constitution, specific commentary was made in regards to religion. The constitution made clear that the president of the state had an obligation—the good of the state; the protection of the state; and the state’s international

position—to both God and the history of that state.\(^{172}\) This obligation was reinforced in the oath given by the president prior to taking office:

> Being aware of the responsibility to God and to history for the fate of the state, I swear to Almighty God in the One and Only Holy Trinity on the Office of the President of the Republic to defend the rights of the nation, protect its dignity, carry out the constitutional law, be guided by justice in regards to all citizens, turn away evil and threats from the nation, and concern for its wellbeing I will consider as my utmost duty. Help me God and the holiness of His Son’s Suffering. Amen.\(^{173}\)

Religion did not need to be overtly discussed by *Czas* since the paper could have presupposed its existence and influence within Polish traditions.

Catholic traditions were so closely intertwined with secular traditions that the two could not be easily separated. Even though the constitution spoke of the governance of the parliament, senate and president and not of religion, the fact that the president entered into a contract with the divine indicates religion was part and parcel of the national identity. As Michael Billig argues, national identity persists because it has its roots in the patterns of the everyday.\(^{174}\) By including the entire constitution in its pages, the weekly was not just updating its readers about political events; it was reinforcing the commonly held notions about nationalism and religion. Consequently, even by remaining silent or speaking sporadically about the latter did not necessarily demonstrate that *Czas* was vague or indifferent. Billig alludes to this very idea—the sacred was not confined to a place or particular celebration, it had become a part of everyday life.\(^{175}\) *Czas* accepted this reality but simply chose not to promote it overtly, to avoid excluding Poles outside of the Catholic Church.

It was in the everyday life that immigrants celebrated the May 3\(^{rd}\) Constitution, and in their celebratory activities, religion was an important component. For the most part, these


\(^{175}\) Billig, 51.
celebrations took place in churches and/or community centres (i.e., Dom Polski—Polish Home), included a procession, mass, religious national hymns (e.g., Boże coś Polskę/God Save Poland—the unofficial national anthem), cultural and theatrical presentations, and discourses—both religious and secular—on the subject. Religious, secular leaders and consuls spoke of this anniversary, and at times, even directly related it to the immigrant’s responsibility in maintaining their identity. The newspaper even divulged that when Poland created its 1791 constitution, the Pope, in celebration moved the feast of Poland’s patron saint, Stanislaw, to the third of May. In remembering and commemorating such a historical event within a religious context, the community was partaking in a re-enactment that empowered immigrants to act on behalf of the nation. Hence, responsibility for the welfare of the nation was to become an intrinsic characteristic of every Pole, even if they lived outside of Poland. In addition, commemorations in Canada were paralleled with the same events in Poland. Pointing out such parallels further reinforced the idea of continuity between immigrants and their homeland, strengthening the bond between the two.

According to Czas, history was a source of strength for Poles and it directed them to focus on God, honour and Fatherland. Through focusing on history, Polishness could be awakened. However, community commemorations did not only involve historical events, but also focused on celebrating current political figures such as Józef Piłsudski. In this particular

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176 LAC, K. Jakubiszyn, “Z St. Catherine, ON Uroczysty Obchód Konstytucji 3 Maja,” Czas, May 20, 1931, p.5; Correspondence from Brandon, Man., Edmonton, Alta, and Brantford, Ont, Czas, May 31, 1932, p.5; P. Mickiewicz, Correspondence from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Czas, May 23, 1933, p.5; Mieczysław Skórzański, Correspondence from Vancouver, B.C., Czas, May 23, 1933, p.5; M. Cichy, Correspondence from Brantford, Ontario, Czas, June 13, 1933, p.5; Jan Ziolo, Correspondence from London, Ontario, Czas, May 28, 1935, p.5; “Polonja w Winnipegu Uczciła Uroczyście Pamiątkę Konstytucji 3-go Maja,” Czas, May 9, 1933, p.1, 3; J. Pańczyk, Correspondence from West Toronto, Ontario, Czas, June 11, 1935, p.5.

177 LAC, Stanisław Stojanowski, “Obchód 3 Maja w Brandon, Man.,” Czas, May 12, 1931, p.5.

178 The Feast of St. Stanislaw actually fell on May 8th. It is possible that the claim made by Czas was a typographical error. LAC, “Obchody Narodowe,” Czas, April 29, 1931, p.4.

179 LAC, “Obchód Narodowy w Katowicach” and “3-go Maja w Polsce,” Czas, May 12, 1931, p.2.

180 LAC, “Polonja w Winnipegu Uczciła Uroczyście Pamiątkę Konstytucji 3-go Maja,” Czas, May 9, 1933, p.1, 3.”
case, Poles observed the name day\textsuperscript{181} of Piłsudski.\textsuperscript{182} Such an occasion called for a mass and an exposition of Piłsudski’s contributions to the nation. This event had a two-fold purpose. First, it encouraged the idea of the nation as a large family, whereby all members of the nation were invited to celebrate Piłsudski’s name day. Second, it provided a forum whereby Piłsudski was praised as a historian and an educator of the Polish spirit, further reaffirming his authority and leadership as the head of the nation. Such commemorations, including those related to Poland’s independence or the November insurrection\textsuperscript{183} were designed to increase the active involvement in the continuous re-creation of the national identity. As a medium which recapped these commemorations, Czas was keen on (re-)educating, reminding, and re-instilling core historical and current features of Polishness. The gathering of the community in memorializing past and current events comprised a key component of identity maintenance. Focusing on a common past could be used as a means of passing on the cultural values not only from Poland to the immigrants, but also from one generation of émigrés to the next.

Within this context, Czas turned to history and to specific historical events that supported the idea of Poland as a messianic nation, and which depicted Poland as a contributing member to Western Civilization. Again, the paper saw history as a source of strength which centred the immigrant’s attention on God, honour and fatherland. As with Gazeta Katolicka, Czas was interested in creating an image of Poland that expounded the nation’s glory and greatness, and which also showed the nation as strong, resilient and phoenix-like (rising from the ashes of the partition in 1918). To achieve its aims, the paper demonstrated that the Polish nation could be traced back to the first and second centuries. Czas was clear that Poles, as Slavs, belonged to the

\textsuperscript{181} Name days (i.e., imieniny) are celebrated in a similar manner as birthdays, and are based on the Catholic calendar and the names of saints associated with particular days.


\textsuperscript{183} LAC, “Święto Niepodległości,” Czas, November 19, 1935, p.4.
larger Aryan group that included Celts, Germans, Italians and Greeks.\textsuperscript{184} By drawing on the ancient period, the weekly insinuated that historical accounts justified the existence of the Polish nation, and that these accounts also countered any propaganda which suggested that Poland was an artificial invention. As well, the paper was keen on placing Poland within the same group that comprised the founding societies of Western Civilization, mainly the Greco-Roman and Germanic societies. An article actually alluded to a new interpretation of the Sarmatian myth, which had originally claimed that the Polish nobility were descendents of the ancient Sarmatians.\textsuperscript{185} Now, all Poles—and not just the elites—were considered part of that heritage regardless of social class.

In this manner, \textit{Czas} asserted Poland’s role in advancing Western Civilization. The paper went as far as listing specific individuals and their contributions in discovering the new world, architecture, art, literature and the sciences. Accordingly, the weekly claimed that Jan from Cologne, a Pole in Dutch employment had arrived on the shores of Labrador prior to Columbus. The article’s headline claimed that he was the first to discover America.\textsuperscript{186} Others like Mateusz from Kraków were cited as being heavily involved in spreading print culture throughout Europe and the new world.\textsuperscript{187} The University of Krakow was named as one of the best universities in Europe in the fifteenth century, on par with Bologna, Padua, Salamanca, and Sorbonne, producing greats such as Mikołaj Kopernik, Wojciech Brudzewski,\textsuperscript{188} Miechowita,\textsuperscript{189} or Rev.

\textsuperscript{185} The Sarmatian myth was popular between the 15\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} centuries in Poland amongst the nobility. It refers to the idea that Poles (the nobility in particular) were descendents of the ancient Iranian tribes around the Black Sea, influencing the behaviour, culture and politics of that time. More importantly, this myth was connected with Poland as a place of true Christianity and its protector against Muslims, Protestants and Orthodox.
\textsuperscript{186} LAC, “Polak Pierwszy Odkrył Amerykę,” \textit{Czas}, August 8, 1933, p.4.
\textsuperscript{188} Brudzewski was a Polish astronomer, mathematician, philosopher, pedagogue and diplomat in the fifteenth century. Though he was not a supporter of the geocentric system of planetary travel, he was the first person to argue that the moon travelled around the earth in an elliptical orbit without rotating on its own axis. Consequently, the same side of the moon faced the earth at all times.
Stanisław Chołoniewski.\textsuperscript{190} By highlighting Polish contributions to science and the arts, \textit{Czas} was reinforcing the notion that Poland’s history was intimately bound up with the history, culture and preservation of Western Europe. The latter was especially highlighted as frequent references were made to Poland halting the Tatar and Bolshevik invasions,\textsuperscript{191} and protecting Christianity from the invading Turks.\textsuperscript{192} Such struggles underlined the nation’s messianic mission and simultaneously countered the propaganda of the former three partitioning powers, which questioned Poland’s existence. Such articles became a rallying cry for the community to actively uphold and promote their history and identity. In the paper’s eyes, the tragedy of abandoning or neglecting one’s national identity and heritage would have two implications. Firstly, denationalization would dismiss the years of struggle for independence. Secondly, would reinforce the notion that Poland should not exist as an independent state.

This also meant that \textit{Czas} was concerned with portraying Poland both as a victim and victor of its circumstances. The partitions were a recent reminder that culture and language had been under attack. Immigrants were asked by the weekly to remember the struggle undertaken by parents against the foreign gendarmes, spies and even teachers who wanted to assimilate Poles into Russia or Germany.\textsuperscript{193} This process was presented by the paper as “snatching from the heart the most sacred feeling next to a love of God—love of the Fatherland.”\textsuperscript{194} In commemorating the partitions, \textit{Czas} also made reference to the environment faced by immigrants—an environment

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\bibitem{189} A professor at Jagiellonian University, Miechowita was a historian, chronicler, geographer, medical doctor and canon. Among his numerous contributions, his \textit{Treatise on the Two Sarmatias} is recognized as the first accurate geographical and ethnographical description of Eastern Europe.
\bibitem{190} Chołoniewski entered the seminary in Rome at the age of 36 and two years later was ordained as a priest. At this time he befriended Adam Mickiewicz having a great religious influence on the poet. Upon his return to Poland, Chołoniewski became a significant contributor to Polish philosophy and literature in the nineteenth century. LAC, “Choloniewski,” \textit{Czas}, April 8, 1931, p.4-5.
\bibitem{194} LAC, Marceli Nalecz-Dobrowolski, “Szkola Polska,” \textit{Czas}, April 15, 1931, p.4-5.
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that made the preservation of identity that much more difficult.\textsuperscript{195} \textit{Czas} was tapping into collective guilt, whereby Poles of the interwar years were asked not to waste the sacrifices made by an earlier generations and to make sure that their national identity was preserved both at home and abroad.

The history of Poland was an incredibly important instrument for \textit{Czas}. A discussion of the events surrounding the January Uprising of 1863 is a good case in point: “76 years—such a long span of time and yet the dust of oblivion has not covered it. Yet, the Deed of January is alive amongst us and in difficult moments, it rises with all its dignity and eloquence before us, pointing the way to the temple of chivalrous and heroic virtues...And there exists a great lesson in the January insurrection, which is the memory of sacrifice that lives in us now and forever.”\textsuperscript{196} The memory of this and other such historical events was to be experienced on a daily basis. In this way, identity had less of a chance of disappearing. A discussion of the uprising also served another function—it illustrated to the people that the nation was resilient, permanent and alive. Consequently, regardless of where the Polish immigrants settled, the nation would always be with them. This assurance of sorts that the paper maintained, also reinforced the idea that the immigrants were active participants in propagating their history and heritage, but also being involved in the life of their homeland.

Not only did historical icons illustrate excellence, they became models of sacrifice for the nation and service to the nation. By citing the role that these “national heroes” played in the preservation of the nation, the paper pointed out to the immigrants that they emerged from this lineage, and that consequently, they needed to continue actively contributing to the survival of Polishness and Poland. These individuals could be divided into two categories: cultural and political figures. When citing the former, such as Maria Curie Skłodowska, Ignacy Paderewski,

\textsuperscript{195} LAC, “Walka o Polskość,” \textit{Czas}, April 22, 1931, p.4.
Mikołaj Kopernik and Henryk Sienkiewicz, the paper spoke overtly of the nationalist fervour that these individuals combined with their professional lives. Sienkiewicz, for instance, was presented as an individual who educated his audience in love for the fatherland, faith, the nation and state. His works spoke of solidarity, national awareness, as well as service and sacrifice to the nation. Maria Curie Skłodowska and Ignacy Padarewski were epitomized for promoting their Polishness. Mikołaj Kopernik was reaffirmed as a Pole and not a German. Józef Wybicki, a poet and soldier of Napoleon, was honoured for creating the first Polish national anthem in the late eighteenth century. Its wording, according to Czas, called on Poles to rely on themselves to achieve independence. The paper turned to cultural historical figures that reiterated identity amongst the immigrants. This provided a continuity of identity for the community, and it reconnected them with the homeland. All were supposed to imitate these national heroes.

The weekly also pointed out individuals of an exceptional political standing. People such as King Jan Sobieski III, Tadeusz Kościuszko, Ignacy Mościcki, and Józef Piłsudski were highlighted as examples of individuals who fought and sacrificed for the nation. By citing such examples, the paper wanted to reinforce the history of resistance against and victory over foreign domination. The aim was to motivate and mobilize Polish immigrants to protect their identity from foreign domination and influence. Although Poland was free and independent, Poles abroad had to remain vigilant against assimilation. Though they did not have to raise the sword to defend their national identity, they had to continue to struggle to retain that identity. Sobieski, for example, represented the victory of Christianity and Christian culture over the invasion of Islam into East Central Europe. Tadeusz Kościuszko, as the leader of the 1794 insurrection against Russia and Prussia, was a symbol of freedom. The paper even raised Kościuszko to the status of

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198 LAC, Correspondence from J. Lajkowski, Czas, March 28, 1933, p.5.
201 LAC, “Jan III Sobieski Pod Wiedniem,” Czas, September 12, 1933, p.4.
a saint, stating that his picture hung between the pictures of saints in Polish homes. The principles that he held, such as humility, simplicity, sincerity and love for the nation were to be emulated by the community. By defending the nation from Prussia and Russia, the paper also insinuated that by extension, Kościuszko was also trying to liberate Polish tradition and religion. Historical figures were not the only ones used as models emulating national fervour. Current political and religious leaders provided a lineage of continuity that connected past national heroes with contemporary heroes of the 1920s and 1930s. In many ways, these current figures embodied and emulated past heroes.

Rev. Bishop Władysław Bandurski, a military chaplain and head of the Vilnius chapter of Polish Scouts, was eulogized in *Czas* as a great patriot and servant of the nation. His life illustrated to the immigrants that religion was not an impediment to national service, but instead, it went hand in hand with patriotism. Accordingly, religion was a component of what it meant to be a Pole. Even Józef Piłsudski seemed to embody the national-religious framework. In a celebration of him, the paper noted the following: “This is not only my celebration but yours as well[;] the Nation will never forget that you have preserved love and loyalty, that you have nurtured your forefathers’ tongue and religion.” Interestingly, in this particular case, the author, L.G. (most likely Leon Garczyński) cited these words as an interpretation of what Piłsudski would have said to the people. This spoke to the tradition with which Poles were familiar. Given that *Czas* was the flagship paper of the consuls, who wanted to push forward the agenda of the Polish government, Piłsudski was given much attention. Foremost was his

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204 Bandurski was also an honorary chaplain of the Polish Legion and the chief chaplain of the Central Lithuanian Army; he was the recipient of Poland’s highest honour, the War Order Virtuti Militari.
contribution to the resurrection of Poland. But the editorial staff also explained how Piłsudski’s first attempts were not geared towards insurrection and war, but rather enlightening Poland’s plight to the masses via pen and paper—associating him with the cultural renewal found in Organic Work. He wrote for Przedświt [Predawn] and founded Robotnik [The Worker]—both socialist papers. He needed to re-educate the public about their national roots and identity, and he wanted to expose the active Russification of Poles. The desired effect here was to awaken the nationalist sentiment of the people and to motivate them to action, if that only meant the preservation of their language, culture and religious traditions—all elements that were counter to the cultures of the partitioning power. Despite having belonged to the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.), Piłsudski remained a nationalist and that was what he became known for. The Polish community actively celebrated his achievements in building an army and bringing independence to Poland. Piłsudski’s death on May 12, 1935 gave Czas the impetus to further immortalize him, referring to him as “Renewer of the Fatherland” and “Teacher of the Polish Nation”. By presenting Piłsudski in a positive light, the weekly encouraged loyalty to him, his government and his policies. Conversely, loyalty to Piłsudski and his government denoted loyalty to the fatherland and to the national identity.

Polish historical figures were so important within the nationalist discourse that all homes were expected to decorate their walls with portraits of Polish heroes. The paper went even so far as to distribute images of Józef Piłsudski; Ignacy Mościcki; Juliusz Słowacki; Henryk Sienkiewicz; Adam Mickiewicz and the Polish Primate, Rev. Edmund Dalbor. In addition to the poets and writers, religious texts could also be procured through the paper. All of these served as proof of Polishness. Moreover, by displaying a picture of these individuals, the

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208 LAC, Correspondence from P. Mickiewicz, Czas, March 21, 1933, p. 5.
community was honouring their place within the history of the nation’s development. They became daily reminders of a continued struggle for Polishness, which was to be sustained by the every individual.

Even though Czas asserted itself as a paper maintaining objectivity and secular perspective, in reality that was not always the case. Religion crept into the paper’s content, and it also reinforced the traditional notion of the Pole-Catholic identity. Whether the paper was secular and utilized religion as a tool of propaganda, or whether the paper was inherently religious, but presented itself as being secular in order to gain greater acceptance within the community, is still debatable. Czas was not anti-religious, but it also did not overly promote religious issues. There existed a relationship between religion and nationalism. The main goal was for Poles to remain loyal citizens of the Polish Republic, and religion helped push forward this agenda. There is no doubt that Czas’ concern with furthering support for Poland’s economic situation and the ruling political party was a key factor in decreasing emphasis on religion.

Local rivalries were also at play here. The longevity of Gazeta Katolicka would have been difficult to challenge, and could have easily resulted in (increasing) conflict between Polish priests and the ZZPwK. In many ways, Czas spoke to the complexity surrounding religion and national identity amongst Polish immigrants, avoiding excluding any one faction or group. At times, the paper became a forum where clerics and parishes were critiqued by immigrants for not doing enough in promoting Polishness within the community. On the other hand, articles recounted national celebrations that took place in Polish parishes, and praised clergy that emphasized the need to maintain Polishness and loyalty to Poland. Even a discussion about the newly established SPwK—which was a potential threat to the ZZPwK—was praised for its pro-Poland and pro-Polish stance, with the editorial going as far as stating that “[a]ccording to us, the Program of Catholic Centre does not stand in any way in opposition to the program of the central
polish emigrant organization in Canada, the Federation of Polish Societies in Canada...”

Religion had to play a particular role—to help in the preservation of national identity. If it did not rise to this occasion or if it interfered with the fostering of Polishness, then its usefulness was questioned or heavily criticized. Thereby, religion’s place within the immigrant community was to assure that identity would not perish.

Catholic parishes were recognized as places where language and the Polish spirit were taught and maintained. The paper warned that if Poles attended English parishes or shunned Polish-parishes altogether, the immigrants faced complete denationalization. Even teaching children their prayers in Polish was considered a crucial component of the national identity. Arguments were also made for the building of parish halls. These were perceived as safe places where young people could enjoy their youth, while simultaneously developing their Polish national spirit. There were fears that if youth attended non-Polish and non-Catholic settings, they would be assimilated.

Parishes were environments where the community could gather and celebrate official holidays, such as the May 3rd celebrations, but they also presented a forum for furthering cultural development through, for example, theatre productions. Religion entered such commemorations through the physical space of a parish or its clerical leadership. Even when national holidays were celebrated outside the parish walls, religious leaders were in attendance. Organizations and individuals were able to comment on religion’s role within the community on the pages of Czas. Rev. J.J. Dekowski of St. Stanislaw Kostka parish in Toronto was praised by the veteran society S.W.A.P. for giving them the use of the parish, saving them

213 LAC, Letter from Polonia, Man., Czas, March 29, 1932, p.5.
214 LAC, Letter from J. Pańczyk, West Toronto, ON, Czas, June 11, 1935, p.5.
from charges of high rent requested by other organizations. In Vancouver, British Columbia, an unofficial visit from Consul Dr. Adamkiewicz to the Kamieński family was also attended by Rev. Przybyłka (the pastor of the local Polish parish) at the invitation/request of the family. Religion permeated the lives of the Poles, and even *Czas* could not neglect this reality. Religious figures like Bishop Józef Gawlina and Bishop Władysław Bandurski who embodied the *Polak-Katolik* ideal, were epitomized in the paper. Above all, it indicated that service to God, to the fatherland and the public good needed to become the central organizing principle for the Polish community. It even recognized the importance of messianism and especially the idea of the “martyr nation” in helping and mobilizing the nation to resist cultural assimilation under the partitioning powers.

Despite *Czas*’ call for serving both God and nation, religion and its institutions did not escape criticism of the paper’s editorial staff and its readers. Though religion and the parish were considered vital components in defending identity, they became only the first line of defence. *Czas* argued that attending a parish once a week would not be enough to imbue the young with Polishness. There was need for Polish language schools. Schools, along with parishes and organizations were to function as complementary institutions collaborating together to preserve the community. Nevertheless, the interconnections between the secular and the religious were complex and challenging. The case of J.K. Flis reveals much about the role of religion in the immigrant community, as it appeared on the pages of *Czas*. Flis, a Polish teacher and organist at Hamilton’s Stanislaw Kostka parish, argued for the necessity of Polish language schools. According to him, without the latter, Polish parishes, priests and newspapers would cease to

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216 Stowarzyszenie Veteranów Armii Polskiej or Society of Polish Army Veterans.
217 LAC, “Kronika z Vancouver,” *Czas*, April 5, 1932, p.3.
219 LAC, “Strzeżmy się!,” *Czas*, April 1, 1931, p.4.
Consequently, he openly criticized *Gazeta Katolicka’s* disapproval of ZZPwK’s financing of Polish schools from remaining funds originally intended towards the purchase of bison as a commemorative gift from the Canadian Polonia to Piłsudski. Flis’ critique also spoke to a broader issue plaguing the community, and the struggle over who had the authority to define the national identity. In his letter, he condemned all parties—secular and religious—for breeding disunity and intolerance within the community. He discussed the issue of religion as the source of discord, arguing that religion did not necessarily inhibit national identity, he also questioned the relationship between Catholicism and Polishness: “Should we Poles not have tolerance towards each other, that a Pole who is not a Catholic and a Pole-Catholic are both Poles and nothing more? Why do we make a distinction? Be tolerant sirs and priests. Not only a Catholic can be a good Pole. We were born Poles and later we became Catholics or something else.”

By printing such statements, *Czas* was contending that religion was not the determining factor of identity, but one of many determining factors. This certainly fit with the views of the Piłsudski government, which saw identity within the heterogeneity (as opposed to homogeneity) of Polish society. However, this did not stop the consuls from using religion as a means of propagating Polishness amongst the community members.

_Związkowiec_, upon its inception in the 1930s, functioned more like a bulletin. It was interested in promoting and expounding the outlook and activities of the ZPwK. Outside of this focus, there was little consistency in the paper’s content. There is no doubt that the monthly began to shift away from the traditional Pole-Catholic identity. Yet, the paper’s distinct understanding of Polishness was not overtly defined. In part, its notion of national identity

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223 In much rarer instances, the paper would also touch upon some Polish national holidays, the importance of schools for both children and adults, and the value of the Polish language. These were supplanted with discussions on the Canadian political system, Canadian history, women’s roles, critique of the Polish government, and anti-clericalism.
diverged into four directions: assimilation into Canadian society; workers’ rights; language maintenance; and rejection of direct ties with the homeland. Of these, workers’ rights became the lens through which all other themes were interpreted. What were not included in the discussion were religion, Polish history, historical figures, and current events in Poland. In many ways, Związkowiec engendered a transition state between retaining the national identity and assimilating.

Though the Polishness of the community was not rejected, its ties to religion and the homeland were dismissed. Like Czas, on the one hand, it placed emphasis on the need to maintain language. But, on the other hand, it did not speak of maintaining Polish culture and traditions. Polish immigrants were to become Canadian, even though no definition of what that meant was ever provided. There was only an action-guided explanation: Poles can become Canadian by participating in the economic and political system, and by supporting workers’ rights. Hence, the immigrant community was to be at the forefront of all activity and not the Polish government or the Polish state. Unlike Czas and Gazeta Katolicka, Związkowiec no longer saw the Polish immigrants as an extension of Poland. They were to create a self-sustaining community that was Canada-oriented. Polishness, consequently, was not an issue of importance; living conditions and helping the immigrant adjust to the Canadian way of life were more relevant. Polishness was defined by ethno-lingual affiliation and not religion or ties with the homeland. Clinging solely to a language-based ethnicity allowed them to assume a Canadian identity.

During a three-year period from 1933 to 1935, only four articles in Związkowiec directly addressed the topic of Polishness. Even within these articles, the question over identity indicated much. In some cases, the authors of the articles referred to identity using a more traditional approach, arguing that the “Polish spirit” along with raising good Polish citizens were key
imperatives of the community (and by default of the ZPwK).\textsuperscript{224} Hence, although there was a rejection of close affinity with the homeland, \textit{Związkowiec} even on rare occasions, did mention the ties to the homeland. The paper explained that being a good citizen denoted a degree of responsibility to the Motherland. Also emphasized was the idea that the organization, and by extension, the community worked for the Polish nation.\textsuperscript{225} Consequently, there was some type of relationship that was being established between the immigrants and the homeland. Nonetheless, ties to the homeland were not the key objective of maintaining Polishness.

The ethnic identity was a main ingredient in bringing together Poles. A.R. Spryngielski pointed out an unnecessary concern over the possible termination of the \textit{kasa chorych} (health insurance) as a means of gathering Poles. According to him, “we are left with Polishness! We are Poles! This is very beautiful and sublime, no one will prevent us from being Poles and maintain our traditions, tongue, our work, etc.”\textsuperscript{226} The author continued with a critique of the more recent Polish immigrants who, according to him, had become Anglicized at a faster rate, imitating the life and traditions of Canadians, with sixty-five per cent having Canadian citizenship.

Into the 1930s, a dual agenda emerged on the pages of the \textit{Związkowiec}. Firstly, as already indicated, very few articles spoke of Polishness. Outside the traditional framework, Polishness was relegated to a state of feeling and something that was assumed only within certain places or contexts. This concept of “feeling” in effect had the ability to exclude other determining factors of nationalism: history; geography; and blood lineage (which was especially prominent within the East Central European development of nationalism). By reducing the components of Polish nationalism, \textit{Związkowiec} made it much easier on the immigrants to interact with and become full participants in Canadian society. One could become a Canadian

and still “feel” Polish. Secondly, and more importantly, the paper was informing its readership that there was something beyond their identity as Poles, and that was their identity as workers. It inferred that Polishness was not the only identity by which Poles were to identify. More pertinent was their identity as workers. This rise of the workers’ consciousness posed a challenge to the traditional Pole-Catholic identity, which was now being replaced by the notion of a Polish-Worker. The editorial staff of the paper also went on to explain the new “adoptive fatherland”:

Here come together under its banner all Polish wanderers. All those who feed from the same impoverished workers’ spoon. Here, it does not matter whether you are a catholic [sic], baptist [sic], or a libertarian. All you need is to feel is Polish, my brother. Your way of praising God belongs to you and to the care of your pastor. But here, when it is necessary for you to be a Pole, be with us, be a conscious worker aware of his mission.  

Consequently, Związkowiec asked the immigrants to come together as Poles but to see themselves as Canadians and more importantly, as workers.

For the most part, the paper presented workers’ culture within a political, social and international context, and it also became a prism through which local and international events were perceived. Though Związkowiec never claimed to be a supporter of Communism, the fact that the monthly spoke of matters related to the Left (e.g., internationalism; the USSR as a model for emulation, etc.) indicated their support for that movement. Unfortunately, the paper never fully defined how it understood the Left. In its quest to assert the cause of the worker, information was provided about the rising wave of socialism throughout Europe. This coincided with a call to fight dictatorships, which the paper associated with capitalism and its abuse of workers. All European countries, even Poland, were not spared from these charges. The monthly also related the educational possibilities in the USSR, with particular attention given to

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doctorates in “Leninism”, “Communist Party History”, and “Comintern’s History”. Individuals who exemplified the struggle for the working class were presented as heroes to be emulated by the community.

The paper’s pro-worker stance was also related in its discussion of the Canadian political system. In particular, the monthly underlined the importance of Poles supporting the Canadian labour movement, and working with them to better workers’ rights. It provided commentary on the political landscape of the 1930s, taking great care to explain the inadequacies of Richard B. Bennett’s government and praising the work of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. Particularly smitten with the policies of the CCF, editors recommended that the Polish community support the party at the polls. The paper also defended the CCF against accusations of socialism made by the Catholic bishops in Canada. One author, Jacek Rolnik (most probably a pseudonym), epitomized the approach by attacking the Bennett government on its labour policies. Even thought Bennett was cited as speaking like Karl Marx, Rolnik indicated that this was a smokescreen to win the elections. The issue at hand concerned poor pay (8 to 10 dollars a month) and work conditions for clearing land of forests, and the harassment, imprisonment and deportation of individuals who refused these conditions. Underlying these exposés on the CCF and specific workers’ issues, it is clear that Związkowiec was preoccupied with everything socialist. The paper also took a critical approach to the Canadian political scene. Educating the Polish reader about the political environment, it was clear that Canada was the new adoptive homeland that needed the attention of the Polish community. To help immigrants

adjust to their new reality, articles were included on Canadian politics, history and society. Teaching Poles Canadian history became a method for promoting Canadian identity amongst the Poles, and engaging the community to participate in the building of the future.

To facilitate this process, Związkowiec provided information about the history of Polish emigration to Canada. In this way, it attempted to ease the transition between Polish and Canadian identity by indicated a sense of rootedness and (immigration) history with which the Poles could identify. Focusing on the history of Casimir Gzowski, or other Polish political émigrés who belonged to the aristocracy or the intelligentsia would have allowed Poles to feel as insiders and long-time contributors to the Canadian society. This was further fostered by discouraging re-emigration. The paper highlighted the dropping land values in Poland and the decreased value of the American dollar. Związkowiec’s editor, A.J. Staniewski, stressed the permanence of this interwar migration: “...because of political reasons, 85% of Poles will not be returning to Poland, and they should become aware of the country they are living in.” He insisted that Polish workers adapt themselves to the objectives of Canadian politics and society.

As previously mentioned, ties and responsibilities to the homeland were not discussed by Związkowiec. Yet, stress was placed on the types of responsibilities the Polish government had towards the emigrants. If Poland was considered—and this was done on rare occasions—the

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focus tended to be everyday news items in cities throughout Poland or about the conditions facing workers in the Second Republic, and not the political situation because it was deemed irrelevant\textsuperscript{239}: “Today, Poland is a large country! It has a strong army, a grandiose future of talented people, good diplomats; currently it does not need us. Who is going to rule over Poland, Witoś Piłsudski or Dmowski is also indifferent to us, since we do not gain anything from this.”\textsuperscript{240} Unlike for Czas and Gazeta Katolicka, the political situation found in Poland was of little interest to Związkowiec. It was more interested in the challenges facing the immigrant community on Canadian soil. Issues on Poland extended to the immigrant conventions. The immigrant, therefore, was not to put forward the interests of the homeland. Polishness had been stripped of its association with the political and economic well-being of Poland.

Polishness was also redefined in relationship to the Republic’s heroes and history. Once again, very little space was offered to highlighting the contributions of important historical figures. Even Tadeusz Kościuszko and his attempted rebellion against the partitioning powers, were perceived in light of the failed peasant reforms. Even though the szlachta had fought for Poland, they never wanted to improve Poland’s economic well-being.\textsuperscript{241} Here, the paper reinterpreted the role of the partitioning powers, and instead of placing them within a negative light (i.e., as oppressors of the Polish nation and peoples), they viewed the governments of the partitioning powers as freeing the peasants from serfdom and giving them land ownership. Reinterpreting the history surrounding the partitions presented a serious blow to the understanding of Polishness. First, it undermined the notion of messianism that arose in direct


response to the conditions related to the partitions. Second, it contested an important component of the foundations on which a unified national identity was created—that the partitioning powers worked actively to suppress Polish self-determination. Consequently, Związkowiec was also stripping Polishness of its historical roots. A common history need not necessarily be a component of the national identity. In this particular instance, the focus was being redirected to class identity—the peasant freed from the land was the predecessor of the worker, who was now involved in a class struggle. This was the identity with which immigrants needed to associate.

According to Związkowiec, education was an a-national and a-political issue. It did not denote lectures on the Bible, or praises for General Haller or Piłsudski; it was meant to “open their eyes”. Education meant self-empowerment, which would drive the Polish worker to shake off the yoke of the capitalist oppressor. In this regard, the paper was a strong supporter of the freethinking movement which it saw as going beyond class, race or nationalism, recognizing only humanity. The monthly advocated its secular and democratic nature, paying particular attention to its relationship with religion, which it saw “operat[ing] on authority and dogmas, meaning on statements, not supported by any proofs, [and] not allowing free thinking or freedom of conscience, or freedom of belief because it based ethics on orders and on a non-existing ethereal authority...” Consequently, education also meant removing the yoke of religion. In one instance, Związkowiec complained about the plight of the Polish American worker who wanted to educate himself but was prevented by Polish state officials who confiscated books

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242 In the Księga Kolekt Niedzielnych [Sunday Book of Collections], a collection of such lectures along with their presenters was recorded together with donations. These lectures pertained to a number of topics: “International Relations and China”; “Emigrants and their Native Tongue”; “Get to Know Yourself”; “Peasant=Poland!”; “Heavenly Comedy”; “Agriculture and Industry”; “Raising our Youth”; “Religious Conflicts in Poland”; “Polish Affairs”; “The Meaning of the Polish Tongue”; “Poland’s International Importance”; “Academy in Honour of Marshal Piłsudski”; “Unemployment”; “Workers’ Day May 1st”; “Achieving Enlightenment and Prosperity”; “War in Europe”; “Canada’s Constitution”; “About Propaganda”; “Civilization”; “Revolution to Happiness”; “World Politics”. The topics dealt with political, social and economic issues (with those pertaining to unemployment and civilization being repeated). LAC, MN Fond, MG30 C118 Vol.2, “Wydział Oświatowy Gr. 1-szej i –tej,” Związkowiec, April 1935, p.18.


being sent to him because they were anti-religious. According to the paper, this was yet another example of the worker being told to “be silent” and “listen to some Italian” (i.e., the Pope). The monthly claimed that the worker had moved forward and “[was] now citing Słowacki”, and he was not there to build a Poland for Rome. Education had freed the worker from all that was religious, and even all that was national.

Związkowiec was not a paper where the topic of religion and nationalism were nuanced issues. The paper was strongly anti-clerical, but at the same time, it did not like being criticized by the clergy. Under these conditions, and probably to avoid an all out war, contributors to the paper quickly asserted their positive and friendly relations with clergy back in Poland. The monthly began its tenure by affirming that it was not an enemy of religion. However, by the mid-1930s, these attitudes began to change. Criticism appeared regarding the authority of the pope and his influence among the masses. As well, this criticism was also directed at specific local priests. The economic situation in the 1930s and the preoccupation with labour issues had a significant impact on Związkowiec’s position towards the Catholic hierarchy. The paper strongly disapproved of the hierarchy’s inaction in times of financial need, calling for moral and financial aid for families in poverty, veterans, those who were ill and for the funding of Polish schools. Bishops, according to the monthly, were not needed. Even the pope was reprimanded for not helping Poland recover from serious flooding. According to one of the monthly’s contributors, Jacek Rolnik, America, Hitler and Mussolini had given some money to Poland and the Bolsheviks gave wheat, but the pope was accused of taking millions of złoty (Polish currency) each year under the pretext of “święto papierza” [sic] (pope’s holiday).

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In its attempts at extracting religion from the everyday, the paper sought to present religion in a negative light, and to counteract comments of Catholic clergy regarding social and political matters. It was quick to defend the CCF against accusations related to it being a workers’ party with socialist tendencies.\(^{249}\) Even more revealing was the publication of a case before the courts in Poland about a priest who was accused of hitting children during catechism classes.\(^{250}\) The paper insinuated that this type of behaviour was prevalent amongst the clergy and could be stopped by parents coming forward. The clergy were also presented as being inconsistent and hypocritical. A case in point was *Gazeta Katolicka*’s criticism of Piłsudski despite the fact it considered him a venerator of Our Lady of the Gate of Dawn (M.B. Ostrobramska),\(^{251}\) and upon his death, praising him.\(^ {252}\) For *Związkowiec* religion was a point of contention rather than of unity. Given this attitude, it is reasonable to conclude that by rejecting Catholicism, the paper was also rejecting the idea of the Pole-Catholic. At best, the paper was attempting to recreate this identity, and at worst, it no longer considered Polishness an important component of the immigrant’s self-identification. During the mid-1930s, the paper was in the midst of a transition. The Pole-Catholic identity was being replaced by a secular Canadian-worker identity.

Though the paper may have written articles on the history of Christianity\(^ {253}\) this was done within the context of enlightening and educating the masses, and not to propagate religion. The peasant turned worker was not only emancipated from the land, but now he had to emancipate himself from the Church, its clergy and ideals. The key principle which *Związkowiec* sought to

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\(^{251}\) This refers to the icon of Mary found in Vilnius, Lithuania, whose religious and cultural status is similar to that of the Lady of Częstochowa in Poland.


enforce was the unity and action of all workers. For the paper, nationalism and religion were ideas of a by-gone era and with this went the Pole-Catholic identity.

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Polish newspapers were the communications network that stretched out and brought distant members of the community together. They informed the dispersed communities of the various events and happenings at a local level. But this also extended to keeping the immigrant informed of international and Poland-related news reports and of the activities of the larger federations. However, newspapers did not only serve the function of an information bulletin. They were an important tool in disseminating specific views on various issues. Not only did they educate their readers, but they also offered a window on the community—its thoughts, beliefs and ideals. The three main Polish papers, therefore, present an interesting commentary on national identity and its relationship to religion.

First, these newspapers were associated with three different federations, which had their own party lines, and which also affected their outlook and context. Second, not all papers saw national identity as a significant issue of importance for and within the community. Unlike Gazeta Katolicka and Czas, Związkowiec was neither a supporter nor a propagator of the issue. Instead, it focused on labour issues. Gazeta Katolicka and Czas saw nationalism as a vibrant and essential issue of the Polish immigrant community. Both were concerned that the immigrants would assimilate too quickly into the larger society and lose their language, traditions, customs and even religion. To prevent such likelihood, the two reinforced Polishness by emphasizing particular Polish historical events and political and cultural national heroes in an attempt to provide historical legitimacy and continuity of the national identity. Gazeta Katolicka also tended to focus its efforts on defining Polishness, of which a large component was religious identification. Religion was a medium that was utilized to transmit nationalist sentiments while
reinforcing components of nationalism. *Czas*, on the other hand, rather than overtly defining nationalism (which might be problematic) centred its attention on the application of Polishness, which meant political and economic support of the Polish government and state. The latter also assigned more importance to maintaining language, which the paper saw as a tool for cultural preservation and a carrier of national values and symbols. *Czas* never rejected religion as a possible medium for the transmission of national sentiments, but it wanted to provide a broader appeal with which non-Catholic Poles could identify.

Third, the newspapers demonstrated that the relationship between religion and nationalism was complex and challenging, fluctuating between complete acceptance and complete rejection. This was particularly evident within *Związkowiec* and *Gazeta Katolicka*. *Związkowiec*, at its onset, was positively disposed to religion, but as the years of the Depression lagged on and the editor changed, religion came to be perceived as an oppressive force. This same line of thought applied to nationalism. Both “systems” were to be replaced by labour culture and Canadianism. This would be achieved through an active participation in the political, social and economic life of the new homeland. Language was the only remnant of Polishness that seemed to have significance.

*Gazeta Katolicka* was a prime example of how religion could be utilized to further the construction and maintenance of national culture and identity. Consequently, religion could not be relegated to the private sphere or for the edification of morals and beliefs. The Pole-Catholic identity was to be mutually reinforcing in the everyday life of the Polish immigrant. According to the paper, religion and nationalism were so closely intertwined that they could not be separated without eradicating each other. Religion was also a convenient vehicle because it offered a forum and a (physical and ideological) framework that already existed in Canada and did not need transplanting. To a certain degree, there was continuity between the old land and the
new land; all that was required was a Polish priest. Within this religious-national context, historical commemorations took on both religious and national meaning, further reinforcing the relationship between the two.

*Czas*, with its emphasis on the political and economic situation in Poland, wanted to ensure that Polishness was tied to the Second Republic. The paper was greatly concerned with the “living out” of identity—the daily choices made by Poles which could either reinforce or weaken their Polishness. As for religion, *Czas* did not criticize its function within society, but neither did it overtly promote Catholicism as one of the main ingredients of Polishness. It also did not need to be explicit in furthering a Pole-Catholic identity. By speaking to the same individuals, historical events and commemorations as *Gazeta Katolicka*, the paper was not undermining the implicit religious associations that were made by people. Overtly, supporting the Pole-Catholic identity would eventually exclude some Polish immigrants so there was no need for such limiting definitions. At the same time, the paper’s “neutrality” in these matters would have also been assured. For the most part, those papers which (directly or indirectly) supported the Pole-Catholic identity—such as the *Gazeta Katolicka* and *Czas*—were also strong promoters of the Polish state; those which oriented themselves towards Canada and the Left—such as *Związkowiec*—rejected loyalty to the motherland. Though the relationship between religion and nationalism would rise and fall in the pages of the three papers, it remained an important and lively issue in the community.
Concluding Remarks: The Ties that Bind

In a December 1929 issue of the *Kurier Poznański* [Poznań Courier], one of the articles discussed the situation of Polish emigrants. The author stated the following: “The Catholic religion and the pastoral work of clergy are the strongest foundations which confirm polishness and a national spirit among emigrants.”¹ That same year, a representative of the Polish Primate Cardinal August Hlond, Rev. L. Gostylla, upon his visit to Chipman, Alberta, encountered 48 Polish families celebrating mass in English.² Fearful that Polishness was endangered in this new land, he called for permanent Polish priests as a means of preserving Polish religion and culture.³ Although his fears were not unfounded, many Polish immigrants retained strong connections to their homeland. In a memoir contest held in the 1930s by the Polish government, the Polish Canadian participants spoke of their migratory experience and their identity. One writer from Krydor, Saskatchewan, who migrated in 1926 signed off by making the following statement: “Long live a free independent Poland! Long live the Polish government! Long live the President of the Republic, Ignacy Mościcki!...Long live the Polish Army Commander, General Rydz-Smigly!”⁴ Another writer stated that he “is and will be a Roman Catholic…[and] that you really find out your Polishness outside of Poland’s borders.”⁵ Their Polish Catholic identity was alive and well. But anxieties about the continuation of this identity never abated. The calls for its preservation were not reserved solely for the Polish episcopacy. The same sentiments were expressed by the Second Republic’s government. Even more importantly, they were shared by the Polish immigrants themselves. Not only did the Poles remain bound up with the fate of their homeland, they saw religion as the bridge by which their identity and their connection to their

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¹ AAN, OPnRnO, 358/I, s.42, “Religja Katolicka i akcja duszpasterska duchowieństwa są najsilniejszą ostoją i twierdzą polskości i ducha narodowego na emigracji;” “Przeciw przedstawicielowi episkopatu Polskiego.” *Kurier Poznański*, December 1929, n.p..
³ AAN, OPnRnO, 1929-1937, 135, s.82, “Ks. Dr. L. Gostylla wraca do Polski,” n.p., April 1929.
native soil could be maintained. Religion was considered the best bulwark against
denationalization, and it would permeate the life of the community through its organizations,
print media, parish life and the relationship the Poles had with their consuls.

The interwar years in Canada brought with them a large influx of Polish migrants who,
upon arrival, were dispersed throughout the expansive regions of the country. Entering as farm
labourers, and affected by the instability of seasonal employment, these immigrants became a
part of the unskilled labour market, choosing to settle in urban centres and eventually bringing
family over from Poland. Deeply affected by limited communication with their homeland,
inadequate access to the Polish consulates, lacking knowledge of the English language and
experiencing economic instability, immigrants often turned to religion and its institutions. The
parish became a means through which national identity could be maintained. It created a space
within which language, culture and history could be celebrated, preserved and related—both on a
grand scale and in the banality of the everyday. Given that the Poles approached this migration
as temporary in nature—a quick opportunity for making money and improving their lot back
home—it is no wonder that they continued to live in two worlds. The first was familiar to them
with traditions they recognized and with ties to their ancestral homeland—their “Little Poland.”
The other was foreign and inaccessible—the mainstream Canadian society—a world in which
they felt marginalized. A.A. Mackinnon’s\(^1\) complaint to R.B. Bennet about Polish applicants for
naturalization further illustrates Polish attitudes to their migration:

> I have always been surprised by the number of applicants who have wives and children
still in foreign lands…Is it fair to Canada that a citizen who has a wife and 3 children in
Poland should have employment in this country while another citizen with a wife and 3
children here should be on welfare! Is it fair to Canada that a Pole who came to this
country 22 years ago at the age of 52 leaving behind him a wife and five children to
whom he has sent money ever since, should now at the age of 74 apply for naturalization
so that he may receive an old age pension paid by the taxpayers of this country? While

\(^1\) Mackinnon was the local Registrar of the Supreme Court of Ontario in 1933.
across the street there is another man 74 who is supported by his children who were brought here when he entered.²

Besides questioning Polish loyalty and value to Canada, the quotation demonstrates the difficulty Poles had in considering themselves permanent residents of Canada. As one Polish immigrant from Toronto aptly asserted, despite having become a citizen of the commonwealth, his dream was still to make money and go back to Poland, “to live amongst his own kind, and not to seek out fortune in foreign lands.”³ Given that this migration was to be temporary in nature, the Church became the bridge connecting the immigrants to a homeland that they believed they would shortly return to.

Polish immigrants turned towards the notion of Pole-Catholic as a basis for community development and identity maintenance. They were familiar with this ideological constellation from the period of the partitions, during which this view had gained popularity, and during which the churches were the only centres of Polish identity and culture. Moreover, the newly re-established Polish state was too new and too weak to create its own form of civic nationalism. Consequently, the notion of Pole-Catholic persisted in the collective memory and history of the nation. The Poles who came to Canada wanted to retain this familiar national-religious framework. But without secular institutions afforded in the Second Republic, the Polish immigrants had to find other mechanisms that would allow for the preservation of their traditions in Canada. The Catholic religion and the parish became the surrogate home for that identity.

For the wave of interwar Polish immigrants—a group of mostly young and middle-aged men, with a modest level of education and some organizational experience—religion became the means by which nationalism and national identity could exist. The immigrants were not alone. The Polish government had an even more grandiose plan. The consuls envisioned a creation of a

³ SGH, Sekcja Zbiorów Specjalnych, Memoir #17, Toronto, Ontario, June 16, 1936.
unique Polish colony within Canada that would function along the lines of Quebec—a nation within a nation. The establishment of such a colony left much to be desired as the Great Depression and the Second World War changed the trajectory of Polish immigrant community. Nonetheless, the interwar period marked an important stage in the evolution of the Canadian Polonia. It was a moment when the Polish Canadian identity came to be shaped by various forces: the realities of the Canadian environment; the interests of the Polish government to preserve ties to their emigrants; and the struggle of the Canadian Catholic Church which fought to retain the loyalty of their faithful in a Protestant society. The common Polish immigrant responded to all of these pressures in a variety of ways. To avoid losing his national and religious identity, he reasserted his Polish Catholic roots by gathering around the parish, which offered not only spiritual solace, but also a place that was familiar in traditions and values. The alternative was assimilation which was sweepingly rapidly through the Polish community in the United States.

The issue of identity and assimilation plagued Polish immigrants on both sides of the 49th parallel. However, a distinction must be made between the two groups. According to Roman Mazurkiewicz, by the 1930s the Poles in America called themselves “Americans of Polish heritage,” whereas Poles north of the border referred to themselves as “Poles in Canada.”

Subsequently, the Polish government via the consuls sought to prevent another situation in Canada similar to what had happened in the United States. Not only did the interwar Polish migrants differ from their American counterparts in their self-identification, this group was distinct from previous waves of Polish immigrants to Canada. Preceding groups had little or no sense of national identity. In these cases, a sense of Polish national identity was developed post migration. The interwar wave of immigrants arrived identifying with the nation and not

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necessarily with a region or an ethnic group. The lack of competency in English made it challenging to clearly ascertain the (ethnic) identity of incoming immigrants from Poland. Canadian officials tended to assign “Polishness” to all migrants from this region, regardless of whether or not these immigrants were ethnic Poles, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, or Jews. Self-identification by ethnic minorities from Poland was also hampered by confusion between ethnic identity and citizenship, with many of the immigrants re-identifying themselves with their ethnicity post-migration.\(^5\) The question of ‘who is a Pole’ and more notably, ‘what is a Pole’ tended to be resolved quite quickly after arrival, and was utilized as a basis for community formation and development.

The issue of identity and its fluid nature is at the crux of the Polish immigrant narrative. What did it mean to be Polish? Regardless of whether the answer came from consuls, priests, or the people, Polishness meant a particular religion (i.e., Catholicism), language, history and culture. Religion, by effect, was in a constant dialogue with the latter three. In order to ensure that Polish language and culture would be maintained in Canada, the first course of action for the Poles was to use the familiar mechanism—a church. A parish became the space within which Polish nationalism and identity would thrive—it is in the parish that the Poles felt at home. It was also a place that served as a network hub for the entire community.\(^6\) The building of parishes led to the creation of religious and secular organizations as the community began to expand. In all areas of Polish community life, the question of Polishness and its relation to Catholicism persisted, continuously defining and redefining the identity of the Polish immigrant.

The question of nationalism has traditionally been associated with the politicization of the nation or questions of statehood. Nonetheless, it has tremendous bearing on the study of

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6 An immigrant writing from Pickering, upon his arrival to Canada, waited for Sunday because he was told that going to church would help him in finding a job. That is exactly what transpired, with him obtaining a job in construction. SGH, Sekcja Zbiorów Specjalnych, *Memoir #19*, Pickering, Ontario, no date.
immigrant identities. As a modern phenomenon, nationalism was generally defined as both an ideology and a form of behaviour—it provided a plan of action (whether it was cultural, economic or political) based on a people’s self-awareness as a nation.\(^7\) Nationalism related the nation to issues of common identity, culture, language, myth and memory, history and territorial claims.\(^8\) These factors gave the nation legitimacy: language became a means of transcribing culture and transmitting specific values and beliefs; it also linked the people to an authentic past and it became a marker of differentiation from “the other.”\(^9\) Myth and memory became a means of understanding and articulating the development of the nation while relating the nation’s uniqueness from other nations through its practices, customs, and conventions. A unified past spoke of a string of specific events that was common to a specific group of people and which resulted in a given nation, with a territory that now had acquired sacred prominence.

Given that the Poles had reacquired their own state in the interwar period, the nationalism that thrived amongst the Polish immigrants was tied to that territorial homeland. However, given the immigrants separation from the actual state, the entire national construct rested in culture and traditions that could be replicated outside the motherland. This cultural framework would make sure that the nation’s history, traditions, customs, and language were not forgotten. This was achieved in various ways: through the establishment of Polish language schools by parishes and secular organizations; through the celebration of national events, such as May 3\(^{rd}\) or the Sea Holiday; and through the continued references to the greatness of Poland’s history and its role in preserving Western Civilization, as in the case of staving off Bolshevik advancement in the


\(^9\) Spencer and Wollman, 74-6.
Miracle on the Vistula (1920)—all these and many other means were developed to reinforce the uniqueness of Poles in Canada.

Nationalism also speaks to relationships between people—how they perceive themselves connected over time and space, and how they are were perceived by others. Accordingly, this perception of self is not an automatic, spontaneous or organic process that occurs within a vacuum. This process involves the use of agencies, messages and symbols which are utilized in constructing and maintaining boundaries of identity. For Poles in Canada, religion became the prism through which they perceived and formulated their identity. They did this either by affiliating with Catholicism or rejecting it. Many Polish immigrants turned to religion as a means of distinguishing themselves from Jews, Protestants and Orthodox who also had a long history on Polish territories. The ease by which Polish immigrants were able to achieve this was in part a consequence of the ethnic groups coming from Poland and re-identifying with different religious and ethnic groups (as was often the case with Ukrainians and Byelorussians). Beyond self-identification, Catholicism helped Poles formulate other aspects of their identity as well. Catholic symbolism was fused with the history of the Polish nation, as in the case of Poland’s messianic mission within Europe—Poland as the “Christ of nations.” To borrow from Benedict Anderson, the Poles imagined themselves an intricately linked to the Divine. Hence, much of the struggle over the definition of Polishness has revolved around the role of religion. In the 1920s, for example, *Gazeta Katolicka* spoke of the intimate link between Catholicism and the national identity—a true Pole was a Catholic, and only a loyal Pole could fulfill his Catholic duties.

The definition of a national identity was one key challenge in the struggle for the construction of a nation, but not the only one. The success of nationalism rested in the convergence of state, nation and society through the creation of traditions. Every community is

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10 Spencer and Wollman, 57-60.
bound together by a local high culture which often appropriates heavily from local low culture of the masses, to become a nation’s main point of reference or source of cultural identity which is then promoted nationally. The creation of such traditions through the processes of formalization and ritualization inculcates specific values and norms of behaviour that imply continuity with a historic past. In order for these to be successful, the state utilizes and emphasizes the educational system to achieve its aims, while the rise of print media improves communication and the transmission of ideas. It is not surprising that immigrant Poles reached so readily for familiar traditions and customs to shape their identity in Canada. These formulated powerful connections to the homeland. The Sea Holiday (Święto Morza) is an example of a newly created tradition that reinforced Poland’s access to the Baltic Sea. Despite the fact that it was a secular holiday and that it was invented after the Great War, it quickly became a component of the repertoire of the Polish immigrants. Moreover, the holiday was celebrated with heavy religious undertones. Catholicism was reinforcing the Second Republic’s ties to the Baltic Sea. The national-religious symbiosis made this process natural, as if it had always been a part of the Polish tradition.

Though statehood is a requirement of nationalism, in the case of Poland the rise of nationalism followed a different order than the one experienced in Western Europe. In the West, the creation of a nation was often preceded by the existence of the state, whereas in Eastern Europe, those lands which had been under foreign occupation established a nation prior to creating a state. According to Hans Kohn, Eastern Europe also experienced a different form of nationalism—one that was cultural (or ethnic) in nature as opposed to the political (or civic)

12 Hobsbawm, Invention, 1, 4.
13 Spencer and Wollman, 34-5.
14 Spencer and Wollman, 37-8.
nationalism that was common in Western Europe. This specific form of nationalism arose in a context where both the political and economic systems were relatively weak—a fragile middle class; a nation divided between feudal aristocracy and rural proletariat. Cultural nationalism focused on turning inward—it tended to look toward emotion and imagination as opposed to reason; it centred on tradition and history instead of on the present and future. What is unique about the case of Poland is that during the rise of political nationalism in the interwar period, the country experienced a simultaneous rise in economic nationalism. This strongly informed the policies of the Polish government toward migrants, who were encouraged to support the Polish economy by establishing interest groups in Canada, and eventually pressuring the Canadian government into pursuing an economic relationship with Poland—national economic interests were invoked as a crucial element of nationalism. Polish immigrants still had a duty to support their homeland.

Considering that Polish nationalism was first associated with the nation as opposed to a state, the national identity had a long history of existing outside statehood. It had been built on language, culture, religion and history which could persist regardless of the environment. For many Poles, who had survived through various oppressive and foreign political systems, preservation of the national identity was critical. Hence, many Polish immigrants continued to hold on to traditions and customs. In the United States, the re-establishment of Poland had led to a complete reorientation towards their new homeland. In Canada, the pattern was not repeated. The Canadian Polonia used parishes, theatre associations, sports groups and Polish schools to promote the traditional national identity. All ethnic “others” were excluded. These associations mirrored similar organizations found within Canadian society but these were intended not for

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15 Spencer and Wollman, 99.
assimilation but rather for the protection of Polishness. But for nationalism to persist in a foreign environment, something else was required to take over the functions—education, tradition, culture—of the Polish state. In this instance, religion and the Catholic Church stepped up. The parish became the centre of Polish national life in Canada, and in the majority of cases, organizations and associations grew out of the parish or were responding to perceived limitations of the parish. The Polish federations\textsuperscript{17} that arose during the 1930s, for example, either saw the parish (and religion, in a broader sense) as being too lax in its stance on nationalism and on Polish interests, or as having too strongly emphasized these very matters and should instead refocus on the adopted homeland.

Culture is the vital component of nationalism, and its expression in the mundane rituals and activities of the everyday ensured that they continued to flourish. Michael Billig calls this banal nationalism—the formation of national identity through everyday social events and habits.\textsuperscript{18} Being national and acting in national ways without even knowing it. For the immigrant Poles, it was natural to fuse the national and the religious in their community. There was no contradiction in the hanging of religious icons next to pictures of political leaders (e.g., Piłsudski, Mościcki) in Polish homes. Nationhood, then, became a background for both political discourse and cultural expression. Nationalism ceases to appear as nationalism as national identity becomes embedded in the routine of life. But it is important to keep in mind that this process is ongoing. Nationalism is not static, but rather continuously changing and evolving. It is always contested. Nowhere was this more visible than in the debates within and between the three main federations that emerged in the Polish immigrant community. Their flagship newspapers became critical mediators of the everyday nationalism and of their vision of the national identity.

\textsuperscript{17} These two organizations were the Zjednoczenie Zrzeszeń Polskich w Kanadzie/Federation of Polish Societies (ZZPwK) and the Zjednoczenie Polaków w Kanadzie/Polish Alliance Friendly Society of Canada (ZPWK).

\textsuperscript{18} Michael Billig, \textit{Banal Nationalism}, (London: Sage, 1995), 5-6, 10.
Continuously reliving the ancient and recent Polish past, along with keeping the Pole up-to-date on the economic and political current events, the print media were gateway to the past and a promoter of a specific vision of how the Pole should formulate his identity.

Culture, like national identity is fluid, in a constant process of becoming and can be negotiated depending on the context. In this manner, an investigation of the culture and identity of the Canadian Polonia in many ways articulates these very notions of fluidity, context and negotiation found within spaces, ideas, discourses and practices of the everyday experience of the immigrant life.\(^{19}\) Turning to religion as a means of achieving their cultural and national aspirations was not a foreign concept to the immigrant Pole. It was the context of the Partitions and the achievement of Polish independence that had set the foundations for this type of interaction between culture, people and nationalism. Immigration did not mean the severing of ties with Poland, but in this new land, it did forced the immigrant into a discussion with himself. What did Polishness mean and how was it to be realized and preserved? To what degree was it connected to religion? The interwar Polish immigrants set out on a journey to try to ensure that they did not lose themselves in a country that only saw them in economic terms. With a desire to return home, Poles saw their chance at national and cultural preservation in the walls of the Polish parish and religious practices. These they took with them to the organizations and federations that they established and the articles they printed, always discerning and modifying their understanding of Polishness. The two decades between the wars do indicate one thing: identity was organic and ever-changing. Though the majority of the Poles agreed on the Pole-Catholic dynamic, the importance of the two ingredients and the living out of this dynamic were always in contention.

\(^{19}\) Edensor, 13-7.
Appendix A: List of Subjects Taught at Holy Ghost Parochial School, 1932.

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<th>Grade 1</th>
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<th>Grade 5</th>
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*Beginning in Grade 4, Polish language is divided into grammar and reading.

Source: OMIAP Archives, DKB Winnipeg, Holy Ghost, Plan Nauk dla Szkół Osmioklasowych Parafialnych.
Appendix B: ZPwK Membership Applications

Number of Applicants according to Gender and Age (in years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>&lt;20 Male</th>
<th>&lt;20 Female</th>
<th>20-35 Male</th>
<th>20-35 Female</th>
<th>36-50 Male</th>
<th>36-50 Female</th>
<th>&gt;50 Male</th>
<th>&gt;50 Female</th>
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<th>Unknown Female</th>
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<th>Total Female</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>1927</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>4</td>
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* No applications were found for this year.

Source: AO, MHSO Fond, Polish Alliance of Canada Papers, F1405, POL0093, MU 9142, Membership Applications 1919-1939, 1929-1936.
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Number of Applicants based on Occupation and Gender:

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<th>Skilled Labour Female</th>
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<th>Farmer Female</th>
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*This individual was born in the United States.
## Appendix C: Member Organizations of the ZZPwK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Organization</th>
<th>Year Est.</th>
<th>Membership at Time of Joining the ZZPwK</th>
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<td>Polski Związek</td>
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<td>Polish Youth Club</td>
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<td>Year(s)</td>
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*P: Franciszek Jasinski; VP: Franciszek Wisnik; T: Jan Rybka; Substitute: Bolesław Wesołowski; Secretary: Józef Krzyżanowski

**P: S. Olszański; VP: S. Sikorski; T: J. Janowski; Secretary: Lunkowski; Librarian: J. Śnieżek; Supply staff: B. Sikorski; Correspondent: J. Żychowski; J. Skoczyn**
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**Manitoba**

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<td>Klub Polskich Naukowców (Winnipeg)</td>
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<tr>
<td>P: J. Górowski; T: Dra. Polca; Secretary: Taraski</td>
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<td>P: Antoni Pająk; VP: Tomasz Jadryn; MS: Franciszek Pawłowski; FS: Aleksander Gidzinski; T: Paweł Gładysz; Director: Stanisław Gniedziejka; Manager: Michał Wołowski</td>
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<td>Polish Branch of Canadian Legion (Winnipeg)</td>
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¹ This is the earliest reference to this organization. AAN, Ambasada RP w Londynie, sign.898, s.21-23, Letter from Jan Pawlica to the Ambasada RP w Londynie, January 17, 1934.
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2 According to the records from 1933, this organization was listed as stationed in Winnipeg, MB. Records from 1938 show that the organization was located in Kirkland Lake, ON. It is possible this difference in location is a reference to different branches of the organization. As for the information provided in the above chart, it refers to the Winnipeg location.
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<td>1934</td>
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<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stowarzyszenie Polskich Obrońców Ojczyzny (Winnipeg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Women’s Alliance</td>
<td></td>
<td>1935</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Związek Polek (Winnipeg)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society of St. John Kanty</td>
<td></td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. św. Jana Kantego (Winnipeg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Eagle Society</td>
<td></td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. Białego Orła (Flin Fon)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Drama Association</td>
<td></td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. Dramatyczne (Kitchener)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraternal Aid Society ‘Ulga’, Nr. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stowarzyszenie Wzajemnej Pomocy ‘Ulga’ (Toronto)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraternal Aid Society ‘Ulga’ Nr. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Wzajemnej Pomocy ‘Ulga’ pl. 2 (Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Year Founded</td>
<td>Year Established</td>
<td>Membership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Jesus Association</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>20³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Trinity Mutual Benefit Society (Windsor)</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>300⁴</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Trinity Parish Parafja św. Trójcy (Windsor)</td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>300⁴</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Alliance Związek Polski (Oshawa)</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Athletic Club Polski Klub Atletyczny (Toronto)</td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Canadian Citizens Club Klub Polsko-Kanadyjskich Obywatelów (Sandwich)</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Canadian Club Organizacja Polsko-Kanadyjskiego Klubu (Toronto)</td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>80⁵</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ In 1921 the membership was at thirty persons. AAN, MWRiOP (1919-38), sign.439 (B9433), s.177-182, Report to the MWRiOP from the Polish Consulate in Montreal, December 27, 1921.
⁴ In 1921 the membership was at one thousands persons. AAN, MWRiOP (1919-38), sign.439 (B9433), s.177-182, Report to the MWRiOP from the Polish Consulate in Montreal, December 27, 1921.
⁵ Based on the transcription of the letter of application, membership was calculated as follows: school children, 130; drama circle, 54; choir, 40. The application does not mention that they had a membership of 80 individuals. This number, however, appears on a summary report of all organizations and their membership dues.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish Canadian Club</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td>Klub Polsko-Kanadyjski</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klub Polsko-Kanadyjski</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Ottawa)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Canadian Students Club</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Zjednoczenie Młodzieży Polskiej</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>25 paid; total 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Windsor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Choir ‘Hejnal’</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td>Polski Chór ‘Hejnal’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hamilton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Citizens Club</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Hamiltoński Klub Obywatela</td>
<td></td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hamilton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Club</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td>Klub Polski</td>
<td>1934*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sudbury)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Fort William)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Gymnastic Association ‘Sokół’</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Polskie Tow. ‘Sokół’ (Windsor)</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Windsor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Radecki, “Polish Immigrants in Sudbury,” 51.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish Holy Trinity Parish</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td>P: J. Stempski; VP: F. Pajaczkowski; Secretary: S. Habras; T: A. Habras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parafia św. Trójcy (Windsor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Merchants Association</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>23/43†</td>
<td>P: J. Stempski; VP: F. Pajaczkowski; Secretary: S. Habras; T: A. Habras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Polskich Kupców i Przemysłowców (Hamilton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***ZNP</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish National Alliance in Canada</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Związek Narodowy Polski w Kanadzie (Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish National Alliance Nr. 2</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Związek Narodowy Polski, pl. 2 (New Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish National Society</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Polskie Narodowe (Kirkland Lake)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary’s Polish Parish</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>Pastor: Rev. Władysław Gulczyński</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parafja Narodzenia Matki Boskiej (Toronto)</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Catholic Benefit Society</td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>P: Franciszek Wysocki; MS: Piotr Czerwinski; T: Wawrzyniec Pobrobniczak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. Polsko-Katolickie Wzajemnej Pomocy (Kirkland Lake)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† There is a discrepancy in the number of members. The transcription of the application states 23, but the summary report of all the organizations lists 43 members.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polish People’s Home Association</th>
<th>1933</th>
<th>63</th>
<th>P: Jan Kaniewski; VP: Wiktor Sobotkiewicz; MS: Franciszek Leszczuk; FS: Jan Budzynski; T: Misko [sic]; Control Committee: Franciszek Burek; Stanislaw Lewandowski; Jozef Rogowski; Manager: Albin Halas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish Society of Third of May</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rector: Rev. Dr. Tomasz Tarasiuk; P: Antoni Patrzalek; VP: Andrzej Monczka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Polskie Trzeciego Maja</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sault Ste. Marie)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish St. Stanislaus Parish</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>300 school children; 40 choir members; 40 drama club members; unknown number of hockey and baseball team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parafia św. Stanisława Kostki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hamilton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Students’ Club</td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klub Polskich Studentów</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Association</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stowarzyszenie Weteranów Armii</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polskiej Placówka 135 (Oshawa)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stowarzyszenie Weteranów Armii</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polskiej, Pl. 126 (Windsor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Year Diff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Association Nr. 114</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placówka 114 Weteranów Armii Polskiej (Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Association Nr. 133</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Weteranów Armii Polskiej w Ameryce Nr. 133 (Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Association Nr. 162</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Weteranów Armii Polskiej, pl.162 (Kirkland Lake)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Association, Nr. 163</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Weteranów Armii Polskiej, pl. 163 (Hamilton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Club</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klub Weteranów Armii Polskiej (Fort William)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Mutual Aid Association</td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow. Wzajemnej Pomocy Weteranów Polskich (Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

8 According to the transcribed letter of application, the location of the organization is noted as Montreal; however, on a summary sheet of all organizations that joined the ZZPwK, this organization is located in Toronto.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Dissolved</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish Youth Club</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klub Polskiej Młodzieży (Toronto)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John Sick Benefit Society</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. św. Jana Kantego (Kitchener)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Joseph Fraternal Aid Society</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. św. Józefa (Kitchener)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Stanislaus Mutual Benefit Society</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>80(^{10})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. Bratniej Pomocy św. Stanisława Kostki (Hamilton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Stanislaus Youth Club</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>83 (athletics club)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klub Młodzieży św. Stanisława (Hamilton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Eagle Society</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. Bialego Orła (Timmins)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch of Friends of the Polish Sea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koło Przyjaciół Morza Polskiego (Montreal)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Lutnia’ Polish Choir</td>
<td>1933+</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polski Chór ‘Lutnia’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 In 1921 the membership for both organizations was listed at one hundred persons. AAN, MWRiOP (1919-38), sign.439 (B9433), s.177-182, Report to the MWRiOP from the Polish Consulate in Montreal, December 27, 1921.

10 In 1921 the membership was at sixty persons. AAN, MWRiOP (1919-38), sign.439 (B9433), s.177-182, Report to the MWRiOP from the Polish Consulate in Montreal, December 27, 1921.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish Catholic of White Eagle Society</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polsko-Katolickie Tow. Białego Orla (Rouyn)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish National Unity Association</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polski Związek Narodowej Jedności (Lachine)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Patriotic Brotherly Aid Society</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polsko Patriotyczne Stow. Bratniej Pomocy (Montreal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans Association/Polish Branch (Quebec Nr.2) of the Canadian Legion B.E.S.L.</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>P: K. Czapaski; VP: T. Kociszyn; P. Wąsacz; MS: J. Pokorny; Substitute Secretary: A. Dus; T: J. Topolnicki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Związek Weteranów Polskich (Montreal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Youth Club</td>
<td>1938*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klub Polskiej Młodzieży (Montreal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The White Eagle Association</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow. Białego Orla (Montreal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Organizations that appeared on a membership list of the ZZPwK in 1938, but their actual year of membership is unknown due to a lack of documentation.
+ Organizations that appeared that applied for membership in 1933 or in 1934, but were no longer on the membership list in 1938.

## Appendix D: List of all Polish publications from 1919-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place of Publication</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Semi-Weekly</th>
<th>Bi-Weekly</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Semi-Monthly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bocian (The Stork)</strong></td>
<td>Winnipeg, MB</td>
<td>Dec 1932-Aug 1933</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Budzik (Alarm)</strong></td>
<td>Toronto, ON</td>
<td>Jan 1931-April 1932</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nowiny Kanadyjskie (The Canadian News)</strong></td>
<td>Winnipeg, MB</td>
<td>June 1930</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Czas (The Times)</strong></td>
<td>Winnipeg, MB</td>
<td>1913/1915-2004</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Czerwona Jaskolka (Red Sparrow)</strong></td>
<td>Winnipeg, MB</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gazeta Katolicka (Catholic Gazette)</strong></td>
<td>Winnipeg, MB</td>
<td>1908-1949</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glos Pracy (Voice of Labour)</strong></td>
<td>Toronto, ON</td>
<td>April 1932-Aug 1940</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glos Prawdy (The Voice of Truth)</strong></td>
<td>Toronto, ON</td>
<td>June 1922-1943(?)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glos z Kalwarii (The Voice of Calvary)</strong></td>
<td>Candiac, SK</td>
<td>1935-1944(?)</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Goniec (The Polish Herald)</strong></td>
<td>Winnipeg, MB</td>
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<td>Montreal, QC</td>
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<td><strong>Tobie Ludu (You, The People)</strong></td>
<td>Sifton, MB</td>
<td>January 1937</td>
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<td>1933-Present</td>
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Appendix E: Images

Image 1: Feast of Corpus Christi Procession, Skaro, Alberta, 1917.¹ Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla.© Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 2: Feast of Corpus Christi Procession, Skaro, Alberta, 1917. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla.© Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

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¹ Even though this picture is not from one of the three parishes under discussion, I have included this photo as an example of such a procession that would have been found in Winnipeg and Toronto between 1918 and 1939. Unfortunately, I was unable to locate Corpus Christi photos from Winnipeg and Toronto in the OMI Archives.
Image 3: Feast of Corpus Christi Procession, Skaro, Alberta, 1917. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 4: One of the altars built for the Feast of Corpus Christi Procession, Skaro, Alberta, 1917. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 5: Girls in their Communion outfits. Corpus Christi Procession, Skaro, Alberta, 1917. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 6: Carolling in Canmore, Alberta, 1915. Included were musicians, a goat “puppet” and an individual dressed as a Jew. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 7: The goat is sold and then slaughtered. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image

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These photos are an example of carolling within the Polish community. Source: OMI Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla.
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Image 8: After the slaughter, the money is used fund a drinking party. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 9: Jaselki. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 10: This is an example of a Christmas card sent by mail. A broken-off piece of the Opłatek is found in the bottom left-hand corner, attached to the card by a red and white sash representing the Polish flag. Source: LAC, MG28 v55 vol.12. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder.
Image 11: The committee created at Holy Ghost Parish for the Polish National Exhibition in Poznań, 1929. First row (L-R): K. Wojna, Vice President; Rev. J. Solski; Rev. Dr. L. Gostylla, honorary member; Rev. F. Pander, President; Dr. F. Sędziak; Rev. A. Sylla. Second Row (L-R): L. Majchrowicz; Miss M. Czyż; Mrs. J. Czyż; Mrs. E. Polec; Mrs. M. Grabowska; Miss F. Czujak; W. Głowacki. Third Row (L-R): F. Kagan; M. Solski; W. Puchniak; B. Kanonowicz, Secretary; M. Kropo, Treasurer; E. Nieroda; M. Majchrowicz. Fourth Row: P. Nieckarz. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 12: A picture of a play at Holy Ghost parish, undated. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 13: Play at Holy Ghost, undated. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photos. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 14: Youth play, Holy Ghost, undated. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 15: Cinderella play put on by St. Cecilia Choir, Holy Ghost parish, undated. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 16: Picture of gymnastics/sports club, undated, Western Canada. Source: OMIAP Archives, Fr. Anthony Sylla Photo album. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 17: Junior and Midgets CYO teams from the Track and Field Athletics Club at St. Stanislaus Parish with Fr. Puchniak in the centre, Toronto, 1938. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photos. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 18: Girls volleyball team, St. Stanislaus Parish, with Fr. Puchniak in the centre, Toronto, undated. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photos. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 19: Scouts, no date. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.

Image 20: Scouts, no date. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
Image 21: Scouts, no date. Source: OMIAP Archives, Photo Album of Fr. Sylla. © Permission to use this image has been granted by the copyright holder. This image cannot be altered and/or reproduced without the written consent of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Assumption Province.
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Michal Nedza Collection
Polish Alliance Friendly Society of Canada Fond

Multicultural History Society of Ontario
   Ethnic Group POL Box 1, 4, 5, 9, 21
   Polish Immigrant Interviews
   Polish Research Box Uncatalogued

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   DOC St. Stanislaus Toronto
   DOE St. Mary’s Toronto
   DKB Winnipeg, Holy Ghost
   HSB Polish Pastoral Work in Canada (General)
   Gazeta Katolicka

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