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Directions and Results of Activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro in Strengthening the Position of Poland and the Polish Community in Brazil in the 1920s – Selected Manifestations

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Abstract: The paper aims to present the challenges in the form of practical directions and results of activities undertaken by diplomats serving at the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro as an institution representing the Second Polish Republic's interests in the largest country in South America.

The article analyses selected archival materials collected in the Archive of the Józef Piłsudski Institute of America and available literature. The documents used are in Polish. Some documents were translated from Portuguese.

It was shown that the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro contributed to the strengthening of diplomatic relations between Poland and Brazil in the 1920s. The results of the institution's activities included consolidating the foundations of economic cooperation between the two countries, including the support of the Brazilian Polish community. Moreover, activities in the field of press inspiration in the host country were carried out.

Key words: Brazil, Polonia, Poland, Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro

Introduction

The article focuses on selected directions and results of activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro related to strengthening Poland's position, and analyses the

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conditions of functioning and development of the Polish community in Brazil in the 1920s. Jerzy Mazurek (2020b: 194) noted that Polish-Brazilian relations in the interwar period were maintained at the level of the Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, the Consulate General in Curitiba, and the vice-consulates in Sao Paulo and Porto Alegre. The article aims to present and characterise the directions of activities undertaken by diplomats serving at a selected post representing the Second Polish Republic's interests in the largest country in South America (Lencznarowicz 2019: 79–90).

The selected topic is a part of broader issues concerning diplomatic security and emigration and Polish diaspora policy of the Second Republic, as well as the cultural security of the Polish state. The author of this article considers the perspective and selected manifestations of the activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro at the beginning and the end of the 1920s.

The time span adopted in the article is justified, first, by the obtained archival documents, most of which referred to the beginning or the turn of the 1920s and 1930s. Secondly, an attempt has been made to indicate the grounds of the activity of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro during the period of stabilised diplomatic activity of the Second Republic, and at the same time just before the reform of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the beginning of the 1930s (Skóra 2018: 446–447), which brought significant personnel and conceptual changes. Third, the timeline is the declining period before President Getúlio Vargas came to power in Brazil. The change in the Brazilian presidential office brought about far-reaching transformations in political, economic, and socio-cultural life. That event consequently affected the possibility and directions of the Second Republic's diplomacy, and to some extent, the situation of the Polish diaspora in Brazil (Kula 1978: 117–129). More information on the internal conditions in Brazil in the analyzed years was provided by Mariusz Malinowski (Malinowski, 2011; Malinowski, 2012).

Detailed aspects of the functioning of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro have not yet been fully elaborated in the current literature. Studies and articles address various issues related to Poles' presence and the functioning of the Brazilian Polish community. The study omits a broader description of the centuries-old tradition of Polish settlement in Brazil since it has already been developed in the literature. Jerzy Mazurek (Mazurek 2009: 13–21, Mazurek 2010: 1–20, Mazurek 2019: 176–196, Mazurek 2020a: 186–199, Mazurek 2020b: 191–224) undertook a detailed description of the topic. Such authors as Marcin Kula (Kula 1976: 311–327, Kula 1981, Kula 1983, Kula 2001: 118–129, Kula 2012), Andrzej Dembicz (Dembicz 2000: 23–29; Dembicz, Smolana 1993, Dembicz, Kula 1996), Edward Kołodziej (Kołodziej 1982), Jan Pitoń (Pitoń 1971: 137–141), Zdzisław Malczewski (Malczewski 2008; Malczewski 2012: 97–106), Włodzimierz Helman (Helman 1975), and Mirosław Olszycki (Olszycki 2019: 213–226) also discussed the matter. Moreover, Magdalena Michalik-Sztumska (Michalik-Sztumska 2010: 323–330) and Jan Brzozowski have presented the state of research on Polish emigration to Brazil in their articles (Brzozowski 2008: 101–117).



It is worth adding that the issues of the Polish presence in Brazil in the described historical period were also undertaken by Brazilian researchers. Among such authors are Rhuan T. Zaleski Trindade (2016: 126–142, 2020: 45–195), Márcio de Oliveira (2009: 189–304, 2010: 83–99), Rafaela Mascarenhas Rocha (Oliveira, Rocha 2019: 152–175), Neda Mohtadi Doustdar (1990), Sandra Paschoal Leite de Camargo Guedes and Gina Esther Issberner (2017: 427–455), as well as Regina Weber and Thaís J. Wenczenovicz (2012: 159–170). The main areas of interest of the abovementioned Brazilian researchers dealing with Polish diaspora issues are the origin and history of migration processes to the state of Parana, social organizations of Polish emigrants in Curitiba, as well as the analysis of prejudices and conflicts between the local population and immigrants. Another important issue is the cultural and, to a lesser extent, political activity of the Polish minority.

The outline of Polish-Brazilian relations after World War I. Organisational structures of Polish diplomatic representations in Brazil.

The Polish state's recognition on the international arena by Brazil took place officially on April 15, 1919 (Majzner 2015: 216). Brazil was the first country in the region of South and Latin America to diplomatically recognise the Polish state's independence after World War I. It is assessed that it symbolised the Polish state's independence. It had a symbolic meaning and indicated the potential direction of diplomatic cooperation of reborn Poland in that region of the world (*Brazylia*, https://www.gov.pl/ web/brazylia/relacje-dwustronne). On May 27, 1920, there was the ceremonial presentation of credentials to the Brazilian Head of State, E. da Silva Pessoa, by Ksawery Orłowski (Olszycki 2019: 213–226), MP representing the Second Republic of Poland. On June 3, 1921, the Head of State, Józef Piłsudski, received letters of credence from the Minister representing Brazil, R. de Lima e Silva (Mazurek 2019: 179).

The inter-war period also saw the establishment of numerous high-level bilateral contacts between Poland and Brazil. Mutual cultural initiatives (primarily the foundation of the Brazilian-Polish Cultural and Economic Society under the Brazilian Head of State's patronage in Rio de Janeiro in 1929) and economic cooperation (especially after adopting the Polish-Brazilian tariff agreement of August 22, 1929) were promoted (Lapaj 2017: 54). At the same time, the Rui Barbosa Polish-Brazilian Society, headed by Professor Julian Szymański, was founded in Warsaw. The organisation's activities contributed to the promotion of Polish-Brazilian friendship and the strengthening of good relations in the cultural and scientific fields (Stawicki 2019: 11). A common Chamber of Commerce was established while deciding to strengthen mutual economic relations. The above determinants pointed to Brazil's growing importance in Polish foreign policy, which translated into an increase in Poland's diplomatic involvement in the South American and Caribbean region (Ostrowska 1996: 47–54).

Giving a prominent role to Polish-Brazilian relations in Poland's diplomatic engagement on the South American continent was possible by establishing the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. The post mentioned above was formally subordinate to the Polish Consulate General in Curitiba, which had been in operation since January 1, 1920. The Polish Consulate in Curitiba played a leading role in the process of uniting the Polish community in Brazil, attempting to reach out to the Polish community across the emerging divides, mainly due to the development of Polish life around left-wing circles on the one hand, and those connected to the Catholic Church on the other. The efforts of the General Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Curitiba to integrate and consolidate various forms of Polish diaspora life can be seen in the creation of the organisation called the Polish Union under its auspices in 1930. The organisation was to unite Polish community groups manifesting various interests (Łapaj-Kucharska 2013: 16). In a document submitted in September 1933 by the Director of the Consular Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Curitiba, the guidelines for the functioning of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Curitiba were concretised. It was pointed out that a coordinated campaign to consolidate the Brazilian Polonia activities had to be continued. At the same time, the emphasis was placed on the importance of action for the economic valorisation of Polish emigration, with the creation of "a centre for a planned and mass emigration movement" in the state of Paraná (Guidelines for economic and settlement action in Parana, September 22, 1933, AAN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ref. no. 9802, and Dolinski, Szmytkowska 2019: 81–83). Besides, vice-consulates operating in the large Brazilian cities of Sao Paulo and Porto Alegre maintained the organizational subordination to the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro (Mazurek 2019: 178–179).

The Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro was headed by Ksawery Orłowski, an MP, when diplomatic relations between the Second Republic of Poland and Brazil were initiated. He held the post from June 1920 to September 1921. In subsequent years, the head of the post changed several times. In the years 1922–1924, Czesław Pruszyński took it over, and in 1924, Jerzy Warchałowski was appointed as the *chargé d'affaires*. From August 1924 to February 1927, the post in Rio de Janeiro was headed by Mikołaj Jurystowski. The years 1927–1938 were characterised by the most outstanding stability in maintaining the Rio de Janeiro post's leadership exercised by Tadeusz Stanisław Grabowski. The diplomat became Minister Plenipotentiary of the Polish Government, and an Extraordinary Member of Parliament acting in his capacity as Head of the Polish Embassy in Brazil. He remained one of the most active diplomats abroad during the development of the Second Republic's diplomatic relations in the inter-war period. It was only a conflict with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Józef Beck, that led to his dismissal and handing over the function to Tadeusz Skowroński.



Tadeusz Skowroński held his post from March 1, 1938 (*Rocznik Służby Zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej według stanu na 1 czerwca 1939*, 2009: 237), until 1945, when the Brazilian authorities formally withdrew their recognition of the legality of the Polish Government in exile, which finally happened on September 12, 1945 (Tarka 2003: 28–29). The operation of the Polish post in Rio de Janeiro was reactivated in the summer of 1946 in connection with organising the structure of diplomatic activities within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Poland (Janicka, Herman-Łukasik, Szczepanik 2007: 28).

On September 4, 1939, Brazil formally declared its neutrality on the war, which delayed the possibility of sending a Polish Army representative to the Polish Embassy post in Rio de Janeiro. The Polish military attaché in Brazil was not contracted until January 1942. Colonel Franciszek Arciszewski held the post. The only change took place in January 1944 when Lt. Col Stanisław Kara was appointed to the post. The military diplomat's activities included involvement in the mobilisation of volunteers ready to join the Polish Army fighting against the Germans in the West. The new military attaché took up his post only in April 1944. He had experience both in the Polish Army and in the consular service of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1918–1939. He was known for his extraordinary activity concerning recruitment and his excellent recognition of the Polish community in Brazil. He was active in consolidating the Polish community in Brazil, while also organising political activities to oppose the representatives of the communist regime in the People's Republic of Poland (Ambrochowicz-Gajownik, Gajownik 2018: 161–172). The events of the Second World War led Polish diplomatic activity in Brazil to focus on helping Polish refugees, propaganda for the Polish cause, and information action to maintain contact with the Brazilian government (Hinz 2018: 15).

The role of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro in advancing the interests of the Second Polish Republic in Brazil. Monitoring the situation of Brazilian Polonia

In the years under review, the activities undertaken by the Polish Embassy members in Rio de Janeiro addressed the need to investigate the issue of Poland's ability to obtain loans from Brazil. Ksawery Orłowski, Head of the Post, had two official talks with the Undersecretary of State in the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, R. Octavio. During the first conversation, the Polish diplomat suggested that the Brazilian President might come forward with an initiative to provide financial aid to Poland concerning the support for the Polish cause shown by the other South American republics. He reinforced his position by referring to the fact that Brazil had granted similar loans to Italy. The financial assistance given to Italy was strictly confidential and included the granting of 500 million Italian lire in connection with adopting a joint trade treaty. Greece was to apply for similar financial support from Brazil. During the conversation, the Polish diplomat noted that the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative did not express an unambiguously negative stance on the proposal of loans for Poland (The report of the Polish Embassy in Brazil dated October 19, 1920).

During the second conversation, K. Orłowski obtained a preliminary memorandum consulted by R. Octavio with the Brazilian President. The document contained a provision stating that loans had to be postponed until a final formula for financial support was worked out in connection with negotiations conducted by Brazil in parallel with the Netherlands. To achieve the goal the Second Republic set, Orłowski was to establish contact with the financial advisor to the Brazilian Head of State, Landsberg (The report of the Polish Embassy in Brazil dated October 19, 1920). The issue of possible loans for Poland was not definitively financed, which may have proved the Second Republic's too weak negotiating position with Brazilian representatives. Moreover, the lack of loans may have to some extent delayed the planned adoption of bilateral agreements on economic cooperation between the two countries.

The surviving archives show that Polish diplomacy was interested in the issue of Brazilian-Argentinian relations. Argentina was the second leading country in the South American region in terms of the potential for developing diplomatic, political, and economic relations with the Second Republic. Monitoring the state of Brazilian-Argentine relations was justified by the need to discern possible differences and contentious issues that could impinge on Poland's relations with each of the two South American states. A confidential document to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs of December 13, 1920, noted Brazil's military preparedness in the event of a conflict with Argentina, citing the contents of reports by Argentine diplomats, namely the military attaché, Col. Juan R. Alvelo, the naval attaché, Capt. H. Esquivel, and the chargés d'affaires in Rio de Janeiro named Acuna. The results of the support from the Brazilian land forces and navy by the French Military Mission, through which Polish interests in the country had been pursued even during WWI, were pointed out. The main objective was to support volunteers' recruitment to the Polish Army in the West in Brazil. The document recognised that Argentina's aggressive policy towards its neighbour, pursued since the turn of 1919 and 1920, was a factor potentially undermining the possibility of developing Polish-Brazilian contacts in the initial period after Poland regained independence. According to the head of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, the events of the last two months of 1920 indicated a departure from the disputes in Brazilian-Argentine relations and a shift towards a political "rapprochement of South American nations" (The report of the Polish Embassy in Brazil of 13 December 1920).

The issues of the French Military Mission in Brazil returned in a document preserved to illustrate the activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. On 11 November 1920, the head of the post forwarded a strictly confidential report to the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which he noted the investigation of the French government's alleged negative assessment of the Second Republic's diplomatic activities



in Brazil. The document contained criticism of French actions concerning the French Military Mission's economic plenipotentiary's failure to support or even discredit the matter of loans from Brazil to the Second Polish Republic. The issue posed a problem for the Polish government, as the French central bank was to *de facto* guarantee loans granted by the Brazilian government or private financial institutions. Any misunderstandings between Poland and France were to weaken the possibility of a rapprochement between the Second Republic and Brazil, in the context of Warsaw's diplomatic efforts to obtain loans from Brazil (The report of the Polish Embassy in Brazil of November 11, 1920). At the same time, it should be noted that France was then the most important partner of the Second Republic (next to Romania) regarding political, military, and economic issues. The potential for Polish-French cooperation may have been undermined by any diplomatic misunderstandings resulting from the presence of diplomats from both countries in Brazil.

The above issues were crucial insofar as they could affect the Polish Embassy's subsequent activities in Rio de Janeiro. Similar objects of interest did not appear in the post's activities at the end of the 1920s, which was the result of an end to tensions between Brazil and Argentina, and at the same time a favourable condition for the development of the activities of the Polish foreign post itself. In 1929, there was a turnaround in Polish-Brazilian relations, which affected the work of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. The establishment of the Brazilian-Polish Cultural and Economic Society under the patronage of the Brazilian President, as well as a similar organisation in Warsaw, raised the profile not only of economic but also socio-cultural relations between the two countries, including the conditions of Poles' presence in Brazil. The newly established organisation also established contacts with the oldest Polish community in Brazil, namely the Tadeusz Kościuszko Polish-Brazilian Society, operating in Curitiba since 1890 (Pitoń 1971: 137–141, Paleczny 1992: 66).

On October 27, 1929, in Sao Paulo, the "Polonia" Society was founded to facilitate Polish-Brazilian contacts and foster understanding and cooperation between the two nations. From the time of its creation and the organisation's activities, it can be concluded that it was born against the background of the Brazilian Polish community's growing cultural activity in the late 1920s. In Rio de Janeiro, the Polish Embassy monitored the organisation's activities, submitting an analysis of its statutes to the Warsaw headquarters. As far as the statutes of Polonia are concerned, it was stressed that it worked to promote the right name of Poland in Brazil and of Brazil in Poland, including the organisation of joint initiatives such as festivals, celebrations, conferences, cultural and artistic events, etc. (Article 1). The "Polonia" executive bodies were to be elected for a 2-year term during the Annual General Meeting, by secret ballot and by a 2/3 majority (Article 7) (The Statute of the Polish-Brazilian Society "Polonia" of November 21, 1929).

The Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro also maintained contacts with other Polonia organisations operating in Brazil. Until the creation of the Brazilian-Polish Cultural and Economic Society in 1929, Polish diaspora organisations' activities faced significant

limitations, mainly of a financial nature and related to a lack of consolidation within the Polish diaspora movement. However, the development of the activities of the "Polonia" Society whose members were in constant contact with the Polish Embassy, as evidenced by the correspondence preserved in the archives, is worth mentioning. The "Polonia" Society was founded in Rio de Janeiro with the aim of "gathering the Polish national element and providing its members with moral and material help; it is the only private national and Polish social institution in the city, bringing together the best of the Polish element, and from the very beginning of its founding it has set itself the task of maintaining good relations and close relations with the most eminent members of Brazilian society, institutions, and the local press, thus taking an increasingly prominent position as a Polish institution in the socio-economic area between the two nations" (The complaint of the "Polonia" Society against Kazimierz Reychman, dated December 3, 1921). In April 1922, Władysław Mazurkiewicz, a Polish diplomat working as a legation counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, expressed several criticisms of the functioning of the Polish organisation in Brazil. In a letter sent to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the diplomat pointed out that the "Polonia" Society had 36 members, mainly workers and craftsmen, some of whom were "if not suspicious, then unreliable, and we find such elements even within the executive board" (The letter from Władysław Mazurkiewicz to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated March 14, 1922).

Moreover, Mazurkiewicz mentioned that the influence of the Society in Brazilian governmental circles and in the society of the host country of Polish emigrants was not significant enough, which was supposed to be the reason why the Society had little influence on lobbying for the Polish cause in Brazil. The diplomat drew attention to the need for the Polish state to subsidise the Society's functioning by covering the costs of the annual aid for the Polish school run under the patronage of "Polonia (The letter from Władysław Mazurkiewicz to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated March 14, 1922). It is worth mentioning that the "Polonia" Society functioned also after the Second World War. In 1972, the institution's activities were reorganised and it was transformed into the Polonia Benevolent Society, with the inclusion of the Polish Women's Circle in Brazil (Ciuruś 1977: 159).

The Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro kept up a regular correspondence with the editors of the "Kurier Polski" (under the local name "Correio Polonez") to gain a better insight into the life of the Brazilian Polonia. The weekly remained important for the local Polish community in Sao Paulo. The functioning and role of the weekly has so far been completely ignored in the literature in the context of analysing the foundations of cultural activities of Brazilian Polonia in the interwar period. "Kurier Polski" was established in August 1929. The event coincided with setting up a particularly important organisation for the initiative of bringing Poland and Brazil closer together, namely the Brazilian-Polish Cultural and Economic Society. It was an interesting periodical, insofar as it originated from the initiative of the Polish Olympian and later



organiser of sports life of Brazilian Polonia, Leon Jucewicz. The sportsman in question founded both the Polonia sports club in Sao Paulo and headed the "Kurier Polski" editorial office (Wnyk 2006: 136). The statutory aim of the weekly was to impartially inform the Brazilian Polonia about all manifestations of the Polish activity development in that country (The letter of Tadeusz Stanisław Grabowski, MP, to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of August 24, 1929).

The Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro subscribed "Kurier Polski" to support its publishing activity (The letter from the editor of "Kurier Polski" to the Polish Embassy in Brazil, September 19, 1929). Efforts were also made to obtain a guarantee of publication in the "Kurier Polski" of press advertisements for ship lines licensed in Poland that operated on the Poland-Brazil route. Thereby, efforts were made to counteract the unfavourable situation from the point of view of Polish emigrants who were somehow forced to contact intermediaries to obtain tickets or information on the activities of shipping lines. At the same time, intermediation was carried out at significantly inflated prices for services and, in addition, there were cases of fraud. The Polish Consulate in Sao Paulo asked the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to take stronger action to protect the case, albeit through confidential channels. However, the shipping lines were not interested in purchasing a newspaper advertisement in the "Kurier Polski" in 1929, which made it impossible for the action to succeed (The letter from the Polish Consulate in Sao Paulo to the Polish Embassy in Brazil, September 16, 1929).

The aforementioned document shows an example of a practical problem faced by a part of the Polish community interested in travelling between Brazil and Poland. Fraudulent activities on the part of intermediaries involved in the information distribution and the sale of boarding passes were relatively common, demonstrating the interest in this practice of Polish diplomatic authorities in Brazil. At the time, illegal intermediation in emigration was a characteristic problem for Poles travelling across the Atlantic Ocean, both to South American countries and the United States. Suspicious individuals involved in brokering were not deterred by severe penalties, including imprisonment and high fines (Pauliuczuk 2015: 200).

The efforts of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro did not have the desired effect, which consequently made it difficult to reliably inform the Polish community about the operation of ship lines selling tickets on the Poland-Brazil route. The Polish Embassy provided the editorial staff of "Kurier Polski" with the addresses of Brazilian commercial companies operating in the then capital city, interested in developing brokerage. That was to facilitate the protection of the Polish community's interests, contacting these companies, which could indirectly have a positive impact on the activity and position of the Polish community in Sao Paulo (The letter from Tadeusz Stanisław Grabowski, MP, to the editor of the "Kurier Polski" of August 13, 1929).

Another crucial area of activity of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro was obtaining articles from the Brazilian press, which dealt with Poland and Poles' broader issues and then sharing them in correspondence with the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The resulting correspondence provides valuable material on the Polish community's situation, as well as the attitude of Brazilians towards relations with the Second Polish Republic and Polish emigration in their country. Important issues covered by the Brazilian press included the arrivals of Polish representatives of the scientific and cultural community in Brazil and the opening of new ship lines between Poland and South American countries (mainly Brazil and Argentina). In the first-mentioned area, the Brazilian press of early November 1928 devoted attention to a visit and a scientific conference chaired by Odo Bujwid, a recognised Polish bacteriologist. In turn, in connection with the intensification of travel on the Brazil-Poland route, the press reported on the activities of the newly-established Gdynia shipping line with its flagship passenger ship Światowid in late November/early December 1928 (The letter from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated January 21, 1929). The Polish Embassy inspired the appearance of articles in the Brazilian press about new sea connections between Poland and Brazil, and more broadly with the South American continent, also on the occasion of the regular service of the passenger ship Krakus (The letter from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, February 5, 1929).

The issues addressed in the Brazilian press, which were either under close scrutiny or inspired by the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, included the following:

1. German press agitation in Brazil, hostile to Poland (The letter from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, February 5, 1929).

The problem of German propaganda in South America, hostile towards the Second Polish Republic and the Brazilian Polish community, was of interest to the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. The leading propaganda publications were the German "Deutsche Zeitung" and "Deutsche Rio-Zeitung", published in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, respectively. However, anti-Polish articles were also occasionally inspired by the Portuguese-language press, for example in "Correio da Manha", a newspaper issued since 1901 and opposing the incumbent President. The German-inspired press marginalised the significance of the Young Plan of 1929, which relieved Poland of debts inherited from the three partitioners. Moreover, it was pointed out that Poland allegedly violated the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles in terms of protecting the rights of national minorities, and the so-called Danzig Corridor was raised as an axis of the dispute between Poland and Germany. The issue of the Polish-French alliance was also addressed, arguing that it was directed aggressively against Germany. In the opinion of the Secretary of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, Stanisław Głuski:

It is clear from the tone as well as the factual level of these articles that they are materials inspired – if not directly sent – from the Berlin press office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a tendency to discredit and undermine Poland's political prestige" (The letter from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of August 27, 1929).



In "O Jornal", in turn, the Germans raised in propaganda the issue of the Free City of Danzig, Polish claims to dominate the Baltic Sea, the alleged actions of the Second Polish Republic to acquire colonies and the current, in the opinion of the German side, militarism and violation of the rights of national minorities in Poland (The letter from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated June 11, 1929). It is worth mentioning that at that time Manfred Kuder provided an extensive review containing the directions of the German press in Brazil from the described period, including the situation up to the turn of 1936 and 1937 (Kuder 1936/1937: 394–494).

- Promoting the themes of Polish speeches before the League of Nations, with an attempt to identify the attitude of South American states towards this international organisation (The letter from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated February 5, 1929).
- 3. Promoting, through lectures and conferences organised under the auspices of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, the achievements of the General National Exhibition, which took place in Poznań from May to September 1929 and was widely reported in the Brazilian press (The letter from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated June 26, 1929).

The 1929 Universal National Exhibition was aimed to sum up and promote, both at home and abroad, the reborn Polish state's achievements in the first decade following the end of the First World War. The exhibition showcased the country's economic, urban and cultural integration, while also having propaganda overtones (Grzeszczuk-Brendel, Klause, Kodym-Kozaczko, Marciniak, 2009: 5–16).

4. Informing on the activities of the Brazilian-Polish Cultural and Economic Society under the patronage of the President of Brazil (The letter of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of August 14, 1929).

The articles published in the Brazilian press were to present Poland's cultural, scientific, and artistic achievements, opposing possible attempts, made especially by Germany, to discredit Poland's position on the international arena. As for the aims of the Society's activities, for example, promoting intellectual exchange and encouraging the creation and development of trade links between Poland and Brazil were emphasised (An article from the "Revista da Semana" newspaper [1929, no day date]).

5. Preparing various articles and economic materials by the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, with a view to boosting interest in Polish exports to Brazil.

The surviving archives show that the efforts of Polish diplomatic officials in Brazil were aimed at promoting in the local press the possibility of increasing imports of

Polish iron and cement, showing the competitiveness of Polish entrepreneurs' offers (The letter from Michał Świrski to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated March 14, 1929). The Brazilian press was also interested in the development of the Polish oil industry, pointing to the conditions for development, as well as the production capacity of this branch of the economy after 1924 (Letter of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 20 July 1929).

The objective of strengthening interest in Polish exports to Brazil found yet another expression in the practical activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. When representing the Second Republic of Poland's interests in Brazil, the Post members took an active part in monitoring the implementation of commercial contracts concluded between Poland and Brazil. For example, at the beginning of October 1929, the Polish Telegraphic Agency confirmed that the Brazilians received the second large shipment of Polish coal, comprising nearly 6,500 tonnes delivered to the Brazilian state railways (The telegram from the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the Polish Telegraphic Agency, October 4, 1929). In September, the Brazilian railways collected a much larger order, covering 50,000 tonnes of coal from Poland. The Polish Embassy's report indicates that the first attempts to introduce Polish coal to Brazil date back to early 1928. By the end of November 1929, the total number of shipments from Poland amounted to six deliveries (The report of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro dated November 27, 192). It can be estimated that through overcoming freight difficulties, Polish coal companies enabled the increase in profits and opened new opportunities to enhance the potential of Polish-Brazilian trade. That was vital for Polish economic interests, as in a relatively short period after the effects of the 1929 economic crisis became apparent, Polish coal was gradually displaced from the Scandinavian and Baltic countries (Jezierski, Leszczyńska 2003: 267).

The Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro functioned until the outbreak of World War II. In the decline of the inter-war period, the post's work was characterised by the activity in the field of recognition and attempted to respond to the growing German propaganda in the Brazilian press and government and diplomatic circles. Simultaneously, the material and financial conditions of the work worsened compared to the late 1920s examined in this article. In practice, German propaganda efforts aimed at the diplomatic isolation of the leading Polish diplomatic representation in Brazil, located in Rio de Janeiro. The most extensive account of the working conditions and problems which the analysed post faced on the eve of the outbreak of the Second World War was given in his memoirs by its last head, Tadeusz Skowroński (Skowroński 1980: 55–72). The above listed events coincided with a parallel rise of nationalism in Brazil, which was unfavourable to the Polish community and the Polish cause represented by the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. That was accompanied by censorship of the press, centralisation, and statism of power during the dictatorship formally established in 1937 in the era of Getúlio Vargas' presidency lasting since November 1930 (Kula 1978: 117–118). "Gazeta Polska w Brazylii" ("Polish Newspaper



in Brasil") reported that in Brazil a campaign was launched to prevent and combat political activity among foreigners, which adversely affected the status of Polish diplomatic missions on the eve of the outbreak of World War II (*Polish Newspaper in Brasil* 1939, No. 29: 1).

Conclusions

The arguments contained in this article allow the following conclusions to be drawn:

- 1. The Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro contributed to strengthening the rank of diplomatic relations between Poland and Brazil in the 1920s. The diplomats' activities strengthened the Second Republic of Poland's interests concerning Polish-Brazilian political, economic, and socio-cultural relations.
- 2. The activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro included the preparation of activities for Polish-Brazilian trade rapprochement, press inspiration, monitoring of neighbourly relations in Brazil, and identification of the situation of Brazilian Polonia.
- 3. An essential area of activity for the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro was maintaining contact with Polish organisations in Brazil.
- 4. The activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro faced numerous limitations in the 1920s. Among the setbacks, there were the unrealised Brazilian loans to Poland and the lack of guarantees for publishing press advertisements of ship lines licensed in Poland that operated on the Poland-Brazil route in the "Kurier Polski". Moreover, in the following years, the importance of German propaganda in Brazil, hostile to Poland, also grew.

One may conclude from the presented arguments that the activities of the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro were not only situated in the context of strengthening the foundations of the Second Republic's international and diplomatic security but also concerned cultural security. The presence of a large Polish community in Brazil required active efforts of the diplomats serving in the embassy. Maintaining close contact with Polonia organisations and the press organs of the Brazilian Polish community was a prerequisite for enhancing the Second Republic's cultural security in the 1920s. Polish diplomatic missions in Brazil, headed by the Polish Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, were set up in places with major Brazilian Polonia centres. That coincided with the process of "institutionalisation of organisations and associations acting on behalf of Polish settlers" (Lapaj-Kucharska 2017: 298).

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