

THE BUFFALO POLISH COMMUNITY — A PRELIMINARY PROFILE

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INTRODUCTION

The Polish Community in Buffalo, the largest ethnic group of the city, has so far received very little attention from academic groups. This holds true not only for the Buffalo community, but for the whole of Polonia in the United States. The only book written on the Poles in the United States (Doroszewski 1938) describes the situation from over thirty five years ago and the information it includes is no longer valid for the language spoken by Polonia. Of significance to the linguistic study of Polonia is F. Lyra's Ph. D. dissertation (Lyra 1962) on English borrowings in the speech of the American Poles.

Apart from the above-mentioned works, there are several master's theses on the history of Poles in America and some biographies of Polish immigrants who contributed most to the development of America.

In recent years, there has been observed a rapid process of acculturation among the American Poles and what can be presently grasped of their Polish heritage is only a remnant of their customs, traditions and language brought from the old country. It seems that within a decade or so the only sign of Polishness in the United States will be a Polish last name, distorted in most cases due to the English spelling or pronunciation, because the Polish communities are not reinforced by the new waves of immigration. The number of Poles who came to America recently is too small to play a significant role in the life of the community. Moreover, these recent immigrants tend to form separate informal groups and reject these forms of Polish life which have been so strangely modified on the American ground.

The task of this study is to give an overall present-day picture of the Polish Community in Buffalo. The author is fully aware that a thorough socio-linguistic analysis would require much more time and effort and also a signifi-

cant cooperation from the community itself. I have tried to elicit as much anthropological data as was possible in order to better understand some social processes of the community life that could be a leading path towards its language problems. It is hoped that some social, cultural and linguistic problems dealt with here will be resumed and fully analyzed by the followers.

Let us now look at this interesting ethnic group.

POPULATION

According to the 1960 census, the population of the City of Buffalo was 532,759. Of these there were 47,589 Poles. In this census, Poles, as well as other foreigners, were defined on the basis of having Polish parents or themselves being foreign (Polish) born. Excluded were those not having foreign parents and children under the age of five.

Closer examination of Buffalo's population figures of the state and federal census back until 1850 indicates that Poles have been the greatest ethnic group in the City since the beginning of the century. The 1892 census lists 13,053 Poles and 38,470 Germans, although in reality many Poles were considered "German" because they were born on Polish territories occupied at that time by Germany. The figures indicating the numbers of immigrants from Russia and Austria also require the same interpretive amendment since until the end of World War I, Poland as a state and a country had not existed. One can still, talking to an old Polish immigrant, hear him say: "Sir, they take me here as Austrian, because I come here with Austrian passport. I didn't know no English and couldn't explain I am from Poland". Therefore, the true number of people coming from the Polish territories, speaking Polish and equipped with Polish tradition remains unknown. Also, the criterion accepted for the census would not identify as Polish the representative of the third and fourth generations, who being frequently bilingual, preserved very strongly the Polish culture and now actively work for its revival, calling themselves American-Poles.

The 1970 census shows a considerable decline in overall total population in the city. Now the city has only 462,781 inhabitants. This phenomenon parallels other major U.S. cities in the great influx of people into the suburbs (See Appendix 4). The main areas most favourably occupied by the Poles outside the city limits are Cheektowaga, Sloan, North Tonawanda and parts of West Seneca. Comparing Appendixes I and IV one can easily see a logical progression of inhabitants from the overcrowded city to neighboring suburbs. A great number of Poles have elected to leave the city because of several factors. They are: 1) better housing in the suburbs; 2) relief from overcrowded conditions; 3) better job offerings in some areas, and 4) ethnic bias between the overgrowing black population in the city and the Polish Americans. When Blacks began moving into the previously Polish sections of the city, many Polish-

Americans felt uprooted and threatened by this occurrence. Trying to preserve their cohesiveness and separation from the Blacks, they decided to live in common areas. Cheektowaga and West Seneca are mainly residential areas offering pleasant living conditions for those Poles who achieved a higher social status than the working class city dwellers. Sloan and North Tonawanda are heavily industrialized providing some Polish Americans with easy access to their place of employment.

As illustrated on Appendix 1, there are two major centers around which the majority of Polish-Americans reside. One section is the East Side of the City of Buffalo, the other is commonly called the Black Rock area, which is in the northern part of the city. The East Side center developed after the first Polish church in Buffalo (St. Stanislaus) was established. As more and more immigrants were flowing to Buffalo, they settled around this parish because they could find their compatriots speaking the same language and received considerable assistance from the pastors. Not being able to communicate in English, the immigrants also had difficulty finding employment in other sections of the city. The Poles established their own small businesses and the area grew to the proportion it is today.

The Poles who were unskilled and could not manage small businesses sought employment and dwellings in the heavily industrialized Black Rock area of the city. Churches were then established to accommodate the large numbers of Poles.

It might be interesting to make a detailed sociological and sociolinguistic analysis of the two groups, i.e., the East Side and Black Rock groups because it is the Black Rock group population who preserved their first learned language and have not mastered English in its standardized form. Their Polish is affected by the language of their environment and here we can find a good example of language interference, which is the so-called "half-na-pol" speech, meaning a blend of English and Polish.

In the last decade the Polish population declined to 31,699. A major, but not the only, factor in this decline has been the absence of substantial migration from Poland.

An interesting attempt was made in 1973 by the Makowski Citizens Committee aiming at establishing the real number of Poles living in Buffalo. The task of the Committee was to guarantee a turnout of Poles in the 1973 primary elections. The census data, as previously mentioned, was not adequate, so an alternative source had to be found. The Committee started with the computed list of 19,000 Polish Democrats in Buffalo whose names ended in *-ski*, *-cy*, *-ik*, *-cki*, *-iki*, *-ula*, *-wak*, *-chy*, *-ny*, *-zak*, *-zek*, *-wa*, and *-tek*, or included a typically Polish consonant cluster, internally or finally: *-cs*, *-cz*, *-lc*, *-sz*, *-lak*, and *-dz*. The letter *v* is non-existing in the Polish alphabet and was the excluding factor in deciding about the affiliation to the Polish community.

Once again, we face the example of practical impossibility to determine the most appropriate external criteria for ascertaining the ethnic identity. The names criterion does not account for numerous examples of names distorted by the non-Polish pronunciation or completely changed by Poles themselves for various reasons, nor does it account for maiden names of women married to non-Poles.

Ultimately, the Committee conducted its investigation and its findings revealed that there were 37,000 Polish American Democrats in the city or, stating it another way, 27% of registered Democrats in the city were of Polish-American origin. This figure led the Committee to estimate the total number of Poles in Buffalo as 125,000, which seems somewhat exaggerated.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

In the political life of the city, members of the Polish Community do not play a leading role, although recently some sort of awakening has been observed, especially during Mayor Makowski's re-election campaign. Most of the politically active Poles belong to the Democratic Party (27%, as was mentioned previously) holding political offices on the lower levels of Party administration. Among many Polish-American Democrats there exists a feeling of being politically dominated by other ethnic groups, which they say is unjust, considering the number and contribution of Poles into the Party. This political domination, whether real or fictitious, is the source of complaints about not being recognized, politically and otherwise, and neglected in the public life of the city. Figures presented in the "Am-Pol Eagle" Polonia Report show some disproportion between the number in the Polish Community and the number of political office holders. The general feeling is that the community is under-represented in the public life of the city. Also, Poles are only somewhat represented in the banking and administrative posts in the city.

PATRONAGE REPORT
(Sep. and Dec. '73)

	Irish	Italian	German	Black	Polish
Dist. Attorney	223	16	13	NR	9
Memorial Aud.	10	21	NR	15	5
Bff. Sewer	88	129	21	NR	65
Library Bd.	2	2	0	NR	0
Sheriff	14	4	NR	NR	5
Bd. Elections-1	77	39	NR	NR	27
Bd. Elections-2	27	34	NR	5	13

Bd. Elections 1 — special payroll, 2 — regular payroll, NR — No Report.

To change this undesirable situation, the Professional Businessmen's Association of Western New York promotes the advancement of Poles in Buffalo. Professional men (physicians, lawyers, dentists) and businessmen work to establish Polish Americans in the Polish community and obtain recognition of its members outside the community.

Worth mentioning are the veterans of World War II organizations, such as the Polish Army Veterans and Polish Cadets, which ceased dreaming about influencing the political life in Poland and are now only social and civic of indefinite profile, attracting its members by having the Credit Union and organizing weekend social affairs. Many Polish-Americans also belong to the VFW — Veterans of Foreign Wars.

EDUCATION

Courses in the Polish language are offered both on the high school level and college level in addition to the elementary level of two parochial Saturday schools doing considerable language instruction. The schools offering courses of Polish language instruction. The schools offering courses of Polish are: State University of New York at Buffalo, State University College at Buffalo, Erie Community College, Villa Maria College and High School, Kensington High School, and Msgr. Adamski's Saturday School located at St. Stanislaus Church.

Most of the grammar schools, high schools and colleges in the Buffalo area were surveyed and visited to determine the extent to which Polish was being taught and how it is taught.

The State University of New York at Buffalo offers one Polish course on a small level. It is combined with the Department of German and Slavic. It is possible to take an independent study course in Polish Literature. Last year (1973) the University sponsored a Copernicus Celebration. The school also has an inactive Polish Club on campus.

The State University College at Buffalo offers two courses of Polish and one course in the History of Polish Literature. They do have a Polish Club for students interested in promoting the social and intellectual aspects of Polish culture. The college awards the Monsignor Bogacki Fellowship — a 500 dollars award annually for a student who has "evidenced a sincere and serious interest in Polish culture and history, and who is or will become enrolled as a graduate student in Buffalo State College in a program with emphasis on Polish and East European Studies". This award is offered by application to Dr. Francis T. Siemankowski, who is affiliated with the Science Dept. The College arranges for speakers from Poland and the U. S. to give various lectures on Polish affairs. The program is currently working on the initiation of cultural and academic exchange with Poland. The positive attitude of the college faculty and adminis-

tration towards Polish culture at Buffalo and Poland is going to bring fruitful and constructive results. President Bretwell's planned visit to Poland is aimed at establishing a permanent mutual cooperation with the Polish institutions of higher education in order to stimulate not only scientific development but also to activate academically, culturally and socially the largest ethnic group of Buffalo.

Villa Maria Colloge is the leading area college for Polish cultural affairs. Once a year they present a weekend of Polish music, history, food, crafts, art and displays. The affair is well attended. The college itself does not offer an in-depth course of study in Polish. As of now, only Polish 101—102 (grammar and conversation) is offered. The college is a two year Catholic school run by the Felician nuns.

Villa Maria High School is on the same grounds as the Colloge. The high school is also run by the Felician nuns. They, too, do not offer many courses in Polish. Polish I on the Freshman level is offered presently with Polish II for Sophomores being planned for next year.

The area high schools, Kensington, East and South Park, offer Polish 101—102. Polish is not taught at most of the city grammar schools. At one time (in the 1950's) a small attempt was made to teach it. It is said that there is not much of a demand for it now. In the Polish-American grammar schools, Felician nuns were the prime instructors in the language. Now, up to 50% of the teachers in these grammar schools are lay teachers who cannot speak Polish.

Two Polish high schools, Bishop Colton and Bishop Rayn, have closed down because of lack of funds.

Msgr. Adamski's Polish Saturday School is a private independent school. It was established by Msgr. Adamski, who is the Pastor of St. Stanislaus Parish where the classes meet. Classes in Polish are held every Saturday morning from 10:00 to 12:00 for children between the ages of 6—16. They are not only taught Polish but are also given classes in Polish history, music, dance and art. The teachers are mainly Polish immigrants. They obtain funds to operate the school by donations, benefit drives and charging a small tuition. The parents sending their children to this school feel very strongly that their children learn the language and their ethnic heritage. We tried twice to arrange a visit to the Polish Saturday School but were refused. They gave us general information about the school, but did not want visitors.

One might think in a community of this size there should be a permanently big enrollment for Polish courses in every school. This, however, is not the case. Only seven students are studying Polish at the State University of New York at Buffalo, seventeen at State Univ. Colloge, and eleven at Erie Community Colloge. This situation is only slightly better in the high schools. Villa Maria high school has 80 students, Kensington 15, South Park 51, and East High School 15. This gives us the total number of 151 high school students and 35 college

students taking Polish. What is the reason for such a disproportion between the number of people in the community and the number of students learning the language to preserve the remnants of Polish culture and continue its rich tradition? One of the reasons is definitely the lack of textbooks appropriate for students' needs. The textbooks being used are either outdated in terms of language usage (Tesler) or overloaded with grammar suitable only for grammar translation method of teaching à la Szenker.

The instructors of Polish claim that this language must be approached as a "local language" and not a "foreign one". There can be no greater misunderstanding than this one. Local "half-na-pol" is rejected by the generation of students as low-prestige dialect of old aged Broadway Market buyers, uneducated and unskilled to play any role in the community. Such an attitude towards teaching Polish makes the whole undertaking deprived of genuine culture and divorced from the geographical location of the country of its origin. The above is a typical example of teaching a language in a sterile vacuum without its cultural background and in the longer run is doomed.

The instructors also realize that Polish literature and culture courses have broader appeal and yet insist on treating the language as a "local one". They assume the motivation of "grandparents, travel, boyfriend/girlfriend, husband/wife, or because it is exotic" to be of inferior quality and insufficient to learn the language well. Such an attitude explains why the enrollment is so low, showing the tendency to decrease.

Many high school and college students I talked to expressed their strong willingness to learn Polish, to read Polish literature and they frequently spoke about plans to take a trip to the country of their ancestors. These young Americans, born, brought up and educated in the U. S. in Polish families without pride and prejudice characteristic of their forefathers, and without identity complexes, want to learn Polish as a foreign language or study in Poland to trace back the histories of their families and see the old country. They are very keen on understanding all the problems of American society through the history of nations which founded their country.

For the sake of maintaining the culturally pluralistic American society, more attention should be paid to providing the young Americans of Polish origin with the real values of Polish culture in the form of serious college courses or the like and not subject them to preserve the rejected values relevant to their ancestors.

CULTURE

On the cultural horizons of the community's life one can only see some Poles standing at a considerable distance from one another. None of the existing organizations work according to a systematic program, limiting themselves

to some sporadic actions or some big occasions. Such an occasion was the celebration of the 500th anniversary of N. Copernicus' birthday which activated all the organizations to make their own contributions to the event.

Probably the two best and most active organizations are the Polish Arts Club and the F. Chopin Singing Society. The F. Chopin Singing Society is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. The Clubs organize various exhibits of Polish artists and meeting aiming at the preservation of Polish customs, language and stimulating the cultural life of the community. The Chopin Singing Society of about 500 members not only preserves the genuine heritage of Polish music, but makes it known throughout the American nation.

The cultural organizations willingly promote and sponsor the cultural exchange with Poland. Any concert by a Polish group, a movie, or a theatre performance are well publicized and attended by the community members.

The A. Mickiewicz Dramatic Circle opens the door of its club for Polish scouts, who find here a favourable atmosphere mainly for learning about Polish culture.

The peculiar "label" of "Polka culture" associated with the American Poles seems to be a unique phenomenon in the realm of ethnic cultures in the U.S. The style of dancing, music and lyrics of the polka were brought by the peasants from the rural parts of Poland. Here in the U.S. it was confronted with the country and western music and as a result it emerged in its contemporary form with the dancing style and music themes influenced by country and western music and its lyrical contents glorifying the merry and peaceful life of Polish villages. It is not surprising that the words of most American polkas express some kind of longing for the happy rural life, for they signify the identity complex of these country people in the big industrialized cities of the US.

Polka parties are attended by the older generation of American Poles from the ages of 40—65. These are the people who have never mastered English to be able to fluently communicate in it, feeling at ease among their compatriots. Here they exhibit the same behavioral patterns, sing the same old "nice" polkas and talk about their childhood and adolescence in Poland. They preserved in their minds the image of rural Poland from the twenties which for them means their "homeland". All the post World War II changes in Poland with its industrialization are alien to them. One of the symptoms of change in post-war Poland is the rapid standardization of the language, being another cause of inferior feelings among this generation of American Poles in contact with people from the "old country". Many of this age group maintained their dialects of Polish which are dying out in Poland now.

Another significant group attending these polka parties are people of approximately 35—60 years of age who were born in the U.S. and exposed in their childhood to the Polish language. Their English might be described as "working class" and their command of Polish is minimal and in some cases non-existent.

Attending these polka parties means a change of participating in the social events of the community and brings them closer to the ethnic tradition in the Polish American lifestyle they are familiar with. Therefore, their main allegiance is to their particular Polish community connection and they feel little if any ties with the "old country".

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY LIFE

The Roman Catholic Church has played a dominating role in the history of Polish Americans in language maintenance and keeping alive the social unity of the community.

CITY OF BUFFALO PARISHES

	No. of Families	No. of Pupils
St. Adalbert's Basilica	940	253
Assumption	1100	242
St. Casimer's	1400	390
Corpus Christi	1050	294
St. Florian's	700	188
Holy Apostles Peter and Paul	482	115
St. Joachim's	1000	200
St. John Kanty	1800	358
St. Luke	1400	390
Precious Blood	460	212
Queen of the Most Holy Rosary	640	212
Queen of Peace	875	250
St. Stanislaus	800	372
St. Valentine	350	191
Transfiguration	800	251

Being a member of the Catholic Church means being a member of the Polish Community. It is within the Church structure that the people in the community function actively. It is here, through Bingo games, church dances, bazaars and organizations such as the Holy Name Society (men) and the Mother's Club of the parishes that the members of the community are brought together. The church is the social and religious center for members of the community.

While it is true that many Polish-Americans have moved to the suburbs (see Appendix 4), all the parishes within the city (with the exception of St. Valentine's) are the centers for community life. In many cases, after they have moved out of the city, parishioners continue their membership in the city church.

As was mentioned previously, the Bingo games, dances and clubs attract parishioners to the church, but another significant phenomenon accounting for the closely knit structure of the community is that most Polish-Americans send their children to church-related schools. The schools are on the same grounds as the local church and most schoolchurch functions are intertwined, i.e., parents of children attending these schools take an active interest in the schools and the church. In many cases, even after the children are no longer attending the local school, the parents continue to serve on committees to benefit the school and arrange fund-raising and social affairs.

At one time, most of the Polish-American churches offered many, if not all, Masses in the Polish language. This occurrence has been dying. For many reasons, the demand to have Masses said in Polish is not needed. Many of the Poles knowing the language are older or have since died. There has not been a substantial migration of Poles into the community since the turn of the century, and as was stated before, Polish language instruction has not flourished. It was observed that at Queen of Peace Parish, only 10 years ago all masses but one were in the Polish language. Today, all Masses but one are in English. This also holds true for many other parishes. The parish brings in a priest from another church who is fluent in Polish to give this mass and deliver the sermon, since it seems the priests in residence are not able to speak fluent Polish. This one mass offered in Polish is attended mainly by older (65 and over) Polish-Americans.

There most definitely seems to exist a hierarchical system operating with the church's social structure. Influential people within the church are mainly those who own small businesses within the community. These small businessmen are extremely active in church affairs and sponsor many of the functions of the church by donations. For instance, it was found that in most parishes the local undertaker played an important part in the church's social system. The undertaker usually sponsored the church bulletin and donated money and other services to the church. The suburban churches follow a somewhat similar hierarchical pattern as was observed in the city parishes.

In terms of the church value system, it is the family income of parishioners that classifies them as better devotees. On the church hierarchy it is money that is preferred over education, e.g., on the church Board of Directors as a rule, a richer parishioner dominated over a better educated one. When a parishioner was wealthy and educated, e.g. physician, he yielded the most power and respect, but the wealthy people without considerable education were more willingly selected than someone with an education but not having a high income.

The following system seems to be operating:

1. Money and Education
2. Money
3. Education

Being Polish has always meant being of the Catholic faith. The motto "Every Pole is a Catholic" spread out by the clergy did not encourage contacts with the representatives of other religions. In the longer run, Poles felt isolated from the whole world, closed into their ghettos around the Polish Catholic parishes (See Appendix 3).

MEDIA

Below is a list of local Polonia publications and radio programs.

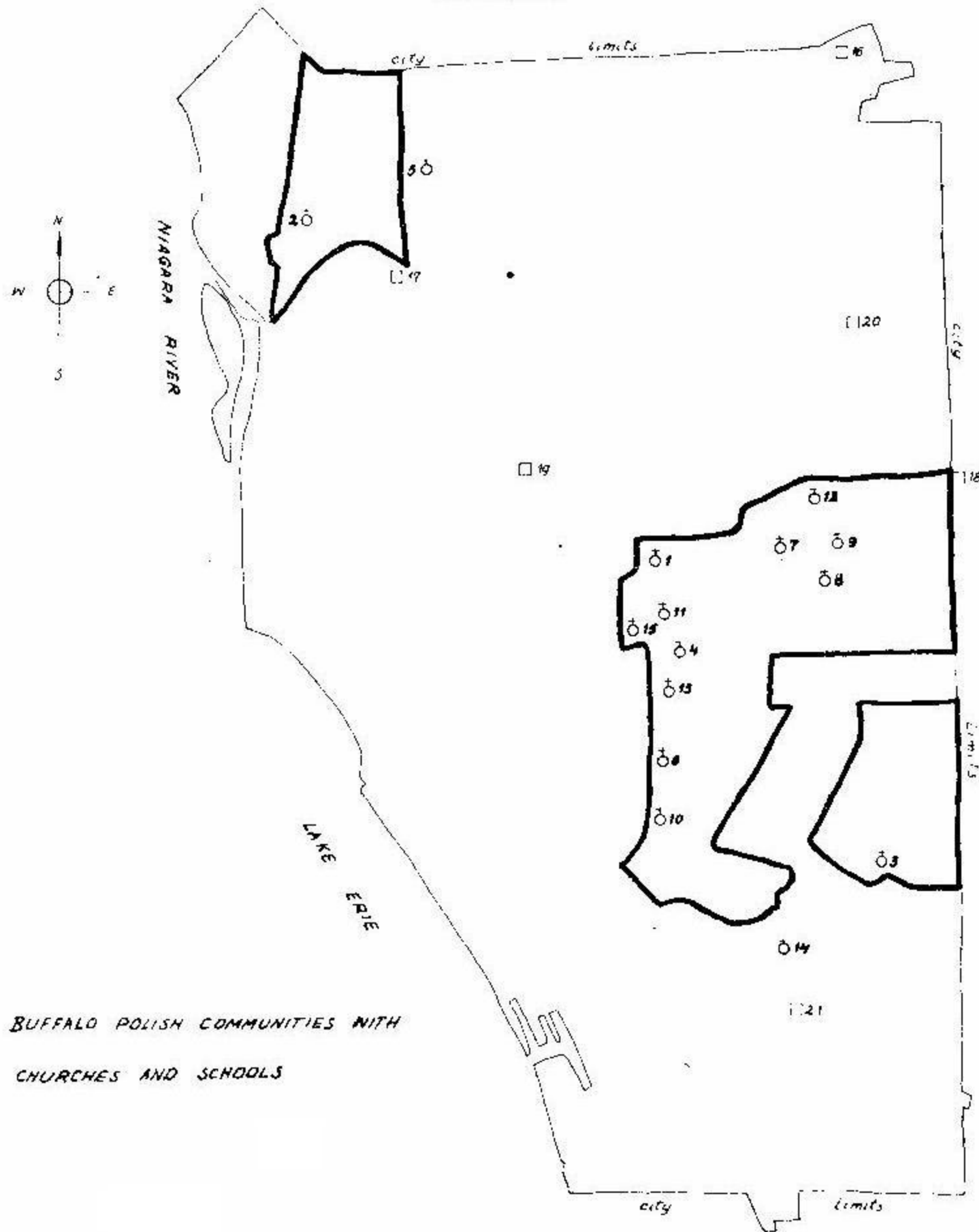
Publications

1. *Am-Pol Eagle*, published weekly (Thurs.), 1335 E. Delawan Ave. Buffalo, N. Y. 896—1344, M. W. Pelczynski, Ed. and Publ.
2. *PUA Parade*, published monthly, 761 Fillmore Ave., Buffalo, New York 14212, 893—1365, J. Sielski, Ed. and Publ. by Polish Union of America.
3. *PBA Bulletin*, published monthly, Box 203, Buffalo, N. Y. 14212, T. Franczyk, ed.; official of Prof. and Businessmen's Assoc.
4. *Ave Maria*, published monthly, 600 Doat St. Buffalo, N. Y. 14211, S. M. Donata, Ed.
5. *Polish Cadets*, published monthly, 927 Grand St. Buffalo, N. Y. 14207, W. Such, Ed.
6. *E. Clinton Shopper*, published monthly, 1972 Clinton St. Buffalo, N. Y. 14206, E. Kurpysz, Ed. Publ.

Radio Programs

1. WXRL, Stan Jasiński, 5360 William St., Lancaster, N. Y. 14086 NT4—4142. Sat. Noon — 3 p. m., Sun. 12: 30 p. m. to 3 : 30 p. m.
2. WXRL — Fr. Justin Rosary Hour (Fr. Cornelian) Athol Springs, New York 14010. Sun. 3 : 30—4 : 30 p. m.
3. WXRL — Msgr. C. Meloch, St. Stanislaus Church, Buffalo. Sun. Noon — 12 : 30 p. m.
4. WHLD — Matt Kospanty, 761 Fillmore Ave. Buffalo, N. Y. 14212, Mon. thru Sat. 1—2 : 15 p. m.
5. WHLD — Fr. Justin Rosary Hour (Fr. Cornelian) Sun. 1—2 p. m.
6. WADV — Dan Lesniak, Rand Bldg. Buffalo, New York. Sat. 10 a. m. — 1 p. m., Sun. Noon — 4 p. m.
7. WWOL — Bob Mycek, Hotel Lafayette, Buffalo, N. Y. Sun. 3—6 p. m.
8. WHLD, Polish Bible, Sun. 9 : 45—10 : 00 a. m.
9. WHLD, Polish Gospel, Sun. 2—2 : 30 p. m.
10. WJLJ — G. Salczynski, 1224 Main St. Niagara Falls, N. Y. Sun. 9 : 30—10 : 30 a. m.

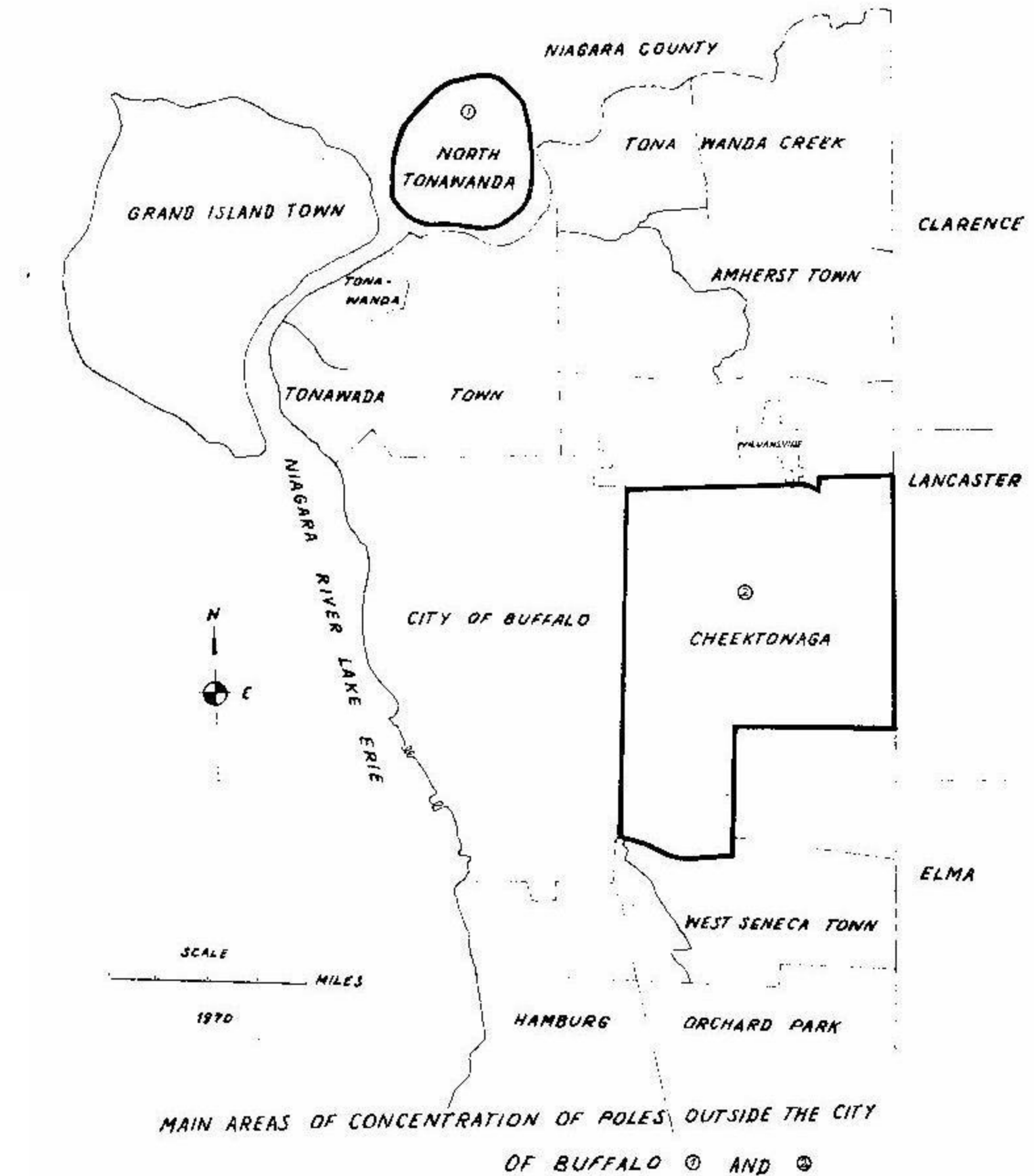
APPENDIX I



BUFFALO POLISH COMMUNITIES WITH CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS

APPENDIX I

Roman Catholic Churches in the Polish Community: 1. St. Adalbert's - 212 Stanislaus St., 2. Assumption - 235 Amherst St., 3. St. Casimir - 160 Cable St., 4. Corpus Christi - 199 Clark St., 5. St. Florian's - 567 Hertel, 6. Sts. Peter and Paul - 795 Chilton, 7. St. Joachim's - 60 Titus, 8. St. John Kanty - 101 Swinburne St., 9. St. Luke's - 1300 Sycamore, 10. Precious Blood - 145 Lewis St., 11. Queen of the Most Holy Rosary - 218 Sobieski St., 12. Queen of Peace - 1955 Genesee St., 13. St. Stanislaus - 123 Townsend St., 14. St. Valentine's - 522 South Park, 15. Transfiguration - 923 Sycamore St. *Schools where Polish is taught:* 16. State University of New York at Buffalo, 17. State University College at Buffalo, 18. Villa Maria High School and College, 19. East High School, 20. Kensington High School, 22. Msgr. Adamski's Polish Saturday School.



MAIN AREAS OF CONCENTRATION OF POLES OUTSIDE THE CITY OF BUFFALO ① AND ②

11. WNIA - Happy Harry Kostrzycki, 2900 Genesee ST. Buffalo, N. Y. Sun. 10 a. m. - Noon.

12. COMAX CABLE TV, Ch. 10 Daniel J. Kij and Diane Ruszczyk, 850 Elk St. Buffalo, New York 14203, Sun. 11-10:45 a. m. Mon.-Sat. 6:45-7 p. m.

If someone tried to foresee the future of Buffalo Polonia predicting the definite end of its ethnicity, he might use presently existing and rapidly decaying media as a source. The Polish radio stations broadcast programs in Polish for about 25

hours a week. The programs are mostly commercial, advertising Polish butchers and bakers between every second polka and informing the listeners about the current events in the American Polonia. Four radio programs broadcast almost polkas entirely. They are WADV, WWOL, WJLJ, and WNIA. There are two radio stations, WXRL and WHLD, which broadcast religious program for 3 hrs. 15 min. per week.

All four papers issued in Buffalo published in English almost entirely with the exception of some short messages in Polish.

As can be seen, the media does not promote in a great degree the development of cultural heritage nor help in maintaining the language.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is hoped that this project will initiate a large and in-depth sociolinguistic study of the largest ethnic group in Buffalo. The analysis of language spoken by its members can bring much insight into the theory of languages in contact. Also, the attitudes toward Polish and Poland are changing from the unfavorable and rejecting to the positive and inquisitive. Both the older, educated people and younger generation want to learn the language of their ancestors and trace back their cultural heritage. These interests and needs, if fulfilled in an appropriate way, can enrich the cultural pluralism in the United States.

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