



GOOD MIAMI, FLORIDA NEWS

The American Institute of Polish Culture

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Polish Academy of Science in the US

By Szymon Seweryn

Changes that have taken place in Poland during the years following 1989 have been very carefully observed by a Polish diaspora in the United States who hope that perceptions have changed for a previously enslaved country. Interestingly, these changes have been visible not only at the political, system, economic and social levels, but also in regard to science, research, and development. System transformations and the subsequent "openings" that have been taking place these last few decades have created the possibility in scientific environments to initiate cooperation with previously unavailable scientific centers throughout the world. It has opened the door to new sources of knowledge, as well as allowed for the exchange of information and experience; hence, the renovation of the Polish "intellectual capital" within the framework of universities, and scientific and research centers.

Poland's science community has experienced a true renaissance since 2004. The accession to the European Union provided an opportunity to apply for significant funds to be dedicated to the scientific support of the evolving country, thus opening future prospects and contributing to the creation of an updated perception of Poland as a modern country. This is no different than Poland's neighbors in regards to the level of standards applied.

A perfect example of spending the European Union's funds on propagating Poland's science while simultaneously protecting Polish scientific and cultural heritages, and making available all the gathered knowledge to a wide circle of recipients, is constituted by the recently executed project of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS), one of the world's most prominent scientific institutions with long-term traditions. The project is known as Digital Repository of Scientific Institutes (RCIN). The sixteen Scientific Institutes of the PAS have created a consortium in order to establish an interdisciplinary database which provides diverse scientific publications via a digital platform, *dLibra*. The publications have been previously digitalized by scanning and a wide circle of users will have access to them from any-where in the world.

At the end of April 2012, representatives of RCIN from the Institute of Polish Language (IPL) at the PAS in Cracow (one of the associated consortiums of the repository project), undertook a business trip to the United States in order to promote the project. The team's objective was to exchange previous experiences in the field of protection and preservation of the national heritage with American entities also active in this field. This was an important task

Institute of The Polish Language (IPL)

As part of The Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS), IPL was established in 1973 to carry out research related to issues regarding Polish dialectology (the study of regional dialects), onomastics (the history of names), the history of language, the descriptive grammar of Poland, new vocabulary, and phenomena connected to development of modern Polish.

Digital Repository of Scientific Institutes (RCIN)

RCIN is a project being managed by PAS with the aim to speed up and simplify the exchange of information, i.e., publications, intelligence, and educational materials, in world-wide scientific environments and communities.

www.rcin.ijp-pan.krakow.pl



entrusted to the representatives of the Institute -- to foster cooperation with American scientific and research centers as well as Polish diaspora's institutions who promote Polish culture and science within the U.S.

The delegation of IPL consisted of RCIN project manager, Szymon Seweryn; librarian Oriana Reizes – Dzeduszycka; IT specialist Damian Węglarz; and Michał Bereziński and Krzysztof Korpak, specialists in the field of digitalization of materials made available through *dLIBRA*. They visited several U.S. organizations and institutes, including *The Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America (PIASA)*, headquartered in New York. That meeting resulted in a mutual cooperation between both entities at the scientific and research levels, as well as within the library field.

A very significant event and certainly an extraordinary experience for all of RCIN's digital team was the visit to the most spectacular library center in the world – the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The team toured the Library, learned about its history and collections, and participated in a series of specialist meetings devoted to digital projects executed by the Library of Congress in order to protect American and world cultural heritages. We were particularly interested in the Library's digital studies and the possibilities offered by equipment available within the center, and comparison of previous practices applied in the Institute's study to American experiences within this field. The day presented numerous future opportunities

for a collaboration between IPL at PAS and the Library of Congress at the highest library levels, as well as within scientific and re-search fields.

Another meaningful meeting was at The American Institute of Polish Culture (AIPC) in Miami with Executive Director and Honorary Consul of Poland, Beata Paszyc. During the visit Ms. Paszyc presented AIPC's history, as well as community and national efforts which have promoted Poland's and Polish-American's contributions to America for several years. She spoke about educational and cultural events organized by AIPC, which attract prominent guests every year and integrate Polish diaspora into the American mainstream. She noted that 2012 is the 40th Anniversary of AIPC, and at the yearly International Polonaise Ball during which AIPC awards gold medals to distinguished Polish-Americans and Poles, medals were accepted by Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz and Dr. Maria Siemionow.

The IPL delegation outlined RCIN's immediate goals and future projections, and spoke about the progress of works within the field. The meeting concluded with an agreement between both Institutes to continue ongoing dialogues between the IPL at the PAS in Poland and AIPC in America. Such a collaboration will also help propagate the RCIN project among those who want access to sources of Polish researchers located abroad; for them the RCIN database may become an amazing source of scientific materials.



Krzysztof Korpak, Oriana Reizes-Dzeduszycka, Szymon Seweryn, Beata Paszyc, Michał Bereziński, Damian Węglarz

Did you know...

Visual Arts in Poland (Washington, Library of Congress, 1993, stock #030-001-00141-5)

The Library of Congress published *Visual Arts in Poland: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Holdings in the Library of Congress* to catalogue their vast and varied Polish collections. This long awaited labor of love was compiled by the distinguished Polish area specialist in the Library's European Division, Dr. Janina Hoskins. Over 800 major works of architecture, sculpture, painting, prints, decorative arts, folk art and photography are included in the 220 pages of this beautifully illustrated, concisely annotated and handsomely bound book, which is Dr. Hoskin's ode to her beloved Poland's history and culture.