

## Polish Refugees in India During and After the Second World War

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The journey through India of Polish victims of Soviet deportations rescued after the German attack on its erstwhile ally the Soviet Union in 1941, is a familiar story to Poles but not to Western readers. Among those who know something about this significant episode of history, the passage to India and ensuing domicile is usually assumed to have taken place under a British-sponsored and British-financed scheme. A study of relevant documents reveals that it was the Indian Princely State (PS) of Nawanagar that offered the first domicile to the Polish children evacuated out of the Soviet Union. The first 500 Polish children were hosted in Balachadi in Nawanagar State and were maintained by charitable funds raised in India, subscribed to by several Indian princes and wealthy individuals. During the 1942–48 period, Indian contributions for the Polish orphans amounted to Rs. 600,000, or 6,765,607 euros in 2008 terms.<sup>1</sup> Even scholarly literature abounds in inaccurate statements, such as “[British] India, which had already agreed to take 1,000 children, increased its offer in December 1942 to accept 11,000 . . . [They] were settled at a camp near Balachadi (Kolhapur),”<sup>2</sup> or “In addition to the East African camps, a camp was established for adult [Polish] refugees near Bombay. The latter camp was primarily funded by a Hindu Maharaja.”<sup>3</sup> In reality, Balachadi and Kolhapur were two different camps and they had different antecedents and funding patterns.

The reception of the Polish civilian war victims in India in 1942 was initiated by the Indian Princely State of Nawanagar when no place for the 500 orphaned children could be found in the whole of British India. The State of Nawanagar took the bold step of adopting the children to prevent their forcible repatriation to Soviet-occupied Poland at the end of the Second World War. This initiative played a critical role in the preservation and formation of the Polish diaspora worldwide.

It should be noted here that the Indian Princely States were a distinct political entity and differed from British India, even though they too were severely subjugated. They ceased to exist after 1947 upon India’s independence from the British, when instruments of accession were signed under varying circumstances and they joined the Union of India. British India covered only half the area and two-thirds of the population of India, the rest being made up by the 600-odd Princely States. In 1945 the Labor Party decided against honoring the treaties made between the States and the British regarding reinstatement of their full powers and territories at the time of the British withdrawal from India. Lord Mountbatten, the last viceroy, told the princes that they must join either India or Pakistan upon the departure of the British from India in 1947. In the states of Kashmir, Bahawalpur, Junagarh, and Hyderabad, the ruler and the people had opposing ideas about which country to join. The history of the post-British period of India does not reflect the existence of the Princely States, which were islands of self-rule in the occupied country of India.

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Nawanagar and Kolhapur were Princely States, and Balachadi (now part of Gujarat) was then part of Nawanagar. The camp at Balachadi for 1,000 Polish children evacuated from the Soviet Gulag was funded through charitable funds raised in India. According to a communication from the External Affairs Department of the British government of India to the secretary of state for India on July 1, 1947, the Indian public had contributed some six lakh rupees for the maintenance of Polish refugees, an amount that otherwise would have been charged to Her Majesty’s Government.<sup>4</sup>

Kolhapur is located southeast of Mumbai in the present state of Maharashtra. At that time, the senior Maharajisaheb served as regent, while in practice two Britishers, Col. Harvey (the political agent) and Mr. E. W. Parry, wielded all the power. Kolhapur was a Princely State only in name, and the British had complete

control over the royal family and the State. The camp at Valivade was set up in 1943 and it housed several thousand displaced Polish refugees. It was administered by the government of India acting as an agent of Her Majesty's Government, that in turn were acting on behalf of the Polish government in exile in London. The camp was financed by funds placed at the disposal of HMG by the Polish government in exile. After HMG withdrew recognition of the exiled Polish government the financial responsibility for the Valivade Camp went to the Interim Treasury Committee (ITC) of the United Nations Refugee Repatriation Agency (UNRRA).

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**The camp at Valivade where Polish refugees lived was administered by the Government of India and it was financed by funds placed at the disposal of HMG by the Polish government-in-exile.**  
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Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji of Nawanagar took over the chancellorship of the Chamber of Princes in 1938. In 1942 when the Polish camp was set up, he was forty-six years old and had been on the throne of Nawanagar for nine years. He was a warm and generous person, had a gift for politics, was energetic and a good public speaker. As Leo Amery, secretary of state for India, put it, he had "practical common sense."<sup>5</sup> Former residents of the Balachadi camp recall periodic visits by the ruler Jamsaheb and his family to the camp, as well as gifts, donations, and even visits to his summer palace. Charitable funds were raised in spite of a famine in some parts of India at that time. Furthermore, Nawanagar citizenship was bestowed on the Polish children to "prevent their forcible removal from the camp and return to communist Poland." The Jamsaheb's welcome statement "You are all now Nawanagaris and I am Bapu, father to all Nawanagaris, including you"<sup>6</sup> had a deep emotive effect amongst the half-starved Polish children. Other such visits, as well as his attendance at camp events and inviting camp residents to the palace only reinforced the warm feelings that the Polish children had developed for the prince. Since the ruler of Kolhapur was a minor child, a Regency Council was operative there under the governor of Bombay, and it

lacked the personal warmth of Balachadi. The Valivade Camp was administered by British authorities. Since more Polish survivors come from that camp, its details are usually remembered while the Nawanagar Camp has nearly been forgotten.

The outbreak of the war also showed the princes' loyalty to the British Crown. At its own expense the PS of Travancore built a patrol boat for the Indian navy; the PS of Bhopal spent its entire stock of U.S. securities on the purchase of American fighter planes; the PS of Jodhpur contributed money for a Halifax bomber; the PS of Kashmir donated eighteen field ambulances; the PS of Hyderabad paid for three squadrons of war planes. Altogether, the cost of war materials provided by the Princely States up to 1945 exceeded 5 million pounds.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the States made numerous direct grants of cash and gave generously of their land, buildings, and workforces for war purposes. Rs. 180 million was contributed by the people from the Princely States in subscription to government war bonds, securities, and donations to the viceroy's War Purposes Fund—again, a display of extraordinary generosity in comparison to British India.<sup>8</sup>

In the meantime, in addition to the Polish Christian victims of the Soviet regime that survived deportations and the Gulag, India also became a transit point for Jews escaping Nazi persecution in Germany, German-occupied Poland, and other German-occupied parts of Europe who arrived with little or no money. The Polish Consulate in Bombay, functional since 1933, became a Polish Relief Committee (PRC) that extended relief to Jewish refugees in association with the Jewish Relief Association, to "prevent them from starving."<sup>9</sup> Several Indian industrialists and charitable institutions, including the Tatas, contributed generously to the fund supporting the Jewish refugees.<sup>10</sup> The refugees arrived with little or no money.<sup>11</sup> The British Government of India was inconvenienced by their presence and communicated this to the Polish Consulate and the Polish Ambassador in London.<sup>12</sup> While some refugees took whatever employment was available, others became the responsibility of the Polish Consulate for relief. The Bombay government kept a strict vigil on the state of

finances of the Jewish refugees from Poland coming into India. They wanted the cost of their maintenance to be borne by the central government who could recover it from the British government and in turn bill it to the Polish government-in-exile in England.<sup>13</sup> The matter was taken up by the British Foreign Office when the Polish Relief Committee ran short of funds.<sup>14</sup> The presence of Jews in Bombay who were escaping the conditions in German-occupied Europe has been extensively dealt with by Dr. Anil Bhatti in *Jewish Exiles in India*.<sup>15</sup>

Under existing rules the Polish Red Cross was raising relief material to be transported to Polish citizens in the USSR. Kira Banasińska, the wife of the Polish consul general to India Eugeniusz Banasiński, became a delegate of the Polish Red Cross. Together with Wanda Dynowska, a Gandhian who was already in India, they lectured on Poland at several locations in India in an attempt to raise awareness about the Polish situation of double occupation. Contributions and relief material poured in. A flurry of telegrams from the Polish Consul at Bombay and Polish government-in-exile in London were exchanged discussing various routes to supply medicines and other necessities to the Polish civilian population newly released from the Gulag in the USSR. Routes via Afghanistan and China required diplomatic arrangements between Poland and those countries, yet Poland was then under double occupation and the Polish government-in-exile in London was obviously unable to negotiate such routes. Finally, the Ashkhabad-Meshed-Quetta route was accepted as the most feasible for carrying supplies for the Polish population. The consulate supplied six of their own lorries in order to help. It was proposed that a Polish delegation be set up in China since some deported Poles had escaped into China from Soviet-controlled Mongolia.

In his telegram of September 1941, A. W. G. Randall of the British Foreign Office, seeking approval for the "Tashkent Scheme" from Sir Stafford Cripps, mentions that the Polish government asked for moral support from His Majesty's Government for the Polish consul general in Bombay to go to Tashkent via Afghanistan and organize a relief center for Poles in Kazakhstan "said to number many

thousands and to be in deplorable condition."<sup>16</sup> On 12 September 1941 the Polish government had informed the British government that Ambassador Stanisław Kot had reported that there were a million and a half Poles released from slave labor by the Soviet government, spread throughout the Soviet Union, and in desperate need of medicine, clothing, and other supplies.<sup>17</sup> The British Red Cross organized a plan for relief for Polish and Czech soldiers, primarily those capable of joining the Polish Army, and their families (the Soviets deported entire families from Poland, husbands separately from the remainder of the family). However, the extent of the problems for civilians was so vast that they felt relief efforts would have to be carried out on an international scale, with American and Indian participation.<sup>18</sup>

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**In 1943 the British government unilaterally withdrew recognition of the Polish government-in-exile in London, and the financial responsibility for the Valivade Camp was assumed by the United Nations Refugee Repatriation Agency (UNRRA).**  
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The first file on the subject, housed in the India Office Library, London, begins with a letter from Barbara Vera Hodges of the Women's Voluntary Auxiliary services and wife of an I.M.S.<sup>19</sup> officer, addressed to "K." It states that "Lord Tweedale had a reply from the Polish Ambassador in which he said he was definitely interested in the scheme, and was putting it in the hands of people competent to deal with it."<sup>20</sup> In her communication dated 1 November 1941,<sup>21</sup> she outlines a detailed plan to evacuate the Polish refugees and house them in India. The Interdepartmental Conference on Polish Relief held at the Foreign Office on 29 October 1941 refers to Major Victor Cazalet of the British Army, posted at Moscow, who put forward a scheme suggested by Vera Hodges for the evacuation of Polish children from the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union to India, but it is not known whether any further progress was made in the matter.<sup>22</sup> In fact, study of subsequent documents, including Capt. A. W. T. Webb's exhaustive reports, shows that Vera Hodges' suggestions formed the backbone of the methods and administration of the evacuation and camp

facilities for the Poles. Hodges mentions that Sir Alan Parsons was about to start working with the Red Cross in the section that was sending supplies to Russia; if the evacuation plan was possible he might be able to help the first group of 272 children and adults. In later communications this was known as the "Tashkent Scheme." Also, the Polish consul general at Bombay had organized, with the knowledge of British authorities in India, an expedition of six motor lorries to take medical supplies to the Poles in the Tashkent region by October 1941. However, permission for this expedition to enter the Soviet Union had not yet been granted.<sup>23</sup>

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**The Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland were likewise maintained by the Polish consulate and ultimately by the Polish government-in-exile in London.**

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Discussions with the Government of India (GOI) regarding bringing in the children had been underway since 10 December 1941. It was proposed that the untried semi-built road route to the USSR be used to reach relief material and bring out the children on the return route.<sup>24</sup> Major Cazalet was pushing for the acceptance of 500 Polish children in India, though the difficulties of transport were formidable.<sup>25</sup> In his memo dated 9 October 1941, A. W. G. Randall wrote to Mr. Clauson of the India Office that Vera Hodges' plan, sent by the India Office, had also been received directly by the Foreign Office.<sup>26</sup> The Foreign Office had consulted the Poles,<sup>27</sup> and they stated that they were prepared to back it officially. "This means that they would be grateful for an approach to the Government of India for permission to transfer to India, a group of 500, mainly Polish children; if the Government of India agreed the Polish Government would be responsible for organizing, paying for the transport and securing exit permits from the Soviet authorities," wrote Randall to Clauson.<sup>28</sup>

A British Minute Sheet entry dated 22 September<sup>29</sup> states that the Polish government expected that the general release of Polish political prisoners from Russian camps might result in their migrating to countries bordering the USSR, such as China or Afghanistan. A

report was received that some of these victims of the Soviet regime had already arrived in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Persia, and were interned there.<sup>30</sup> The Minute Sheet goes on to say that the Government of India became nervous about an influx of Poles from the USSR through Afghanistan, and began making inquiries about the numbers involved and their ultimate destination.<sup>31</sup> The same document notes that there was a proposal on hand for a relief expedition organized by the Polish Consul General in Bombay and his wife to take emergency relief supplies to Kazakhstan and institute a special base in Afghanistan. The Poles were making varied and complicated arrangements to send supplies to the Polish refugees by the northern route,<sup>32</sup> Persia, and the Caucasus. In his handwritten entry Millard, an official whose designation cannot be established, notes that the Polish Embassy is ready to send one hundred tons of supplies to Russia, including food, for which they require transport. A consignment consisting of every conceivable kind of supplies, including food, had left a fortnight earlier, all purchased by the Treasury Department and out of Polish credit<sup>33</sup> with HMG. The British Minutes stated that it would be impossible to evacuate a population of 1.5 million people and find accommodation for them in other countries; the Poles thus have to confine themselves to bringing out nationals who were likely to be really useful from the point of view of the war effort. The Minutes suggested that the Government of India would look very unfavorably on any scheme for large-scale evacuation of Poles to India.

By 15 October 1941 Secretary of State Leo Amery approved the plan that Polish children evacuated from the USSR would be received in India and maintained out of charitable funds for the period of war,<sup>34</sup> since the reasons for removing these refugees from Russia outweighed the disadvantages of sending them to India.<sup>35</sup> A Polish Children's Maintenance Fund was set up with an initial contribution of Rs. 50,000 by the Viceroy of India from his War Purposes Fund, and subscribed to by princes and other wealthy individuals. It was described as one more contribution toward the war effort.

The Government of India was reluctant to receive these additional Polish children on several counts:

1. Weather conditions not conducive for European children
2. Increasing liabilities due to threat of war reaching India
3. Potential of espionage agents coming with these children
4. Diversion of scarce resources away from the war effort for civilian consumption
5. Increased governmental expenditure

It also began exploring options for the Polish population in the various States.<sup>36</sup>

The late Jan Siedlecki, president of the Association of Poles in India in 1941–1942, stated in 2005 that the ultimate arrangement was worked out by Kira Banasińska in Bombay, with the support of the Government of India promising to raise charitable funds in India to support 500 Polish children.<sup>37</sup> It should be emphasized, however, that ultimately the welfare of these children was underwritten by the Polish government-in-exile. However, Banasińska could only have worked on this plan awaiting procedural clearance from some location as a destination for the children. That location was the Princely States and not British India.

### ***Royal acceptance***

Comparing them to the people escaping Nazi Germany, Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji, chancellor of the COP and member of the Imperial War Council (IWC), offered Nawanagar as a wartime destination for the hapless Poles caught in Europe's war. The late Jamsaheb Digvijaysinhji's children, Jamsaheb Shatrushalaya Singhji and Princess Hershadi Kumari, believe that it was during one of the IWC meetings that their father met Ignacy Paderewski, the former Polish prime minister, who was attending the meeting as a special invitee. As Paderewski apprised the British government about the condition of the Polish civilian population in the USSR and the urgent need to evacuate them, he was supported by General Władysław Anders, commander of the Polish Army being formed in the USSR, as well as by Professor Stanisław Kot, Polish ambassador to Kuibyshev, USSR, from their

government-in-exile. In typical *darbari* style Digvijaysinghji offered to host them in his state if no other destination could be found. The Nawanagar offer was gratefully accepted by the Polish ambassador to India Eugeniusz Banasiński. He moved quickly to have this plan, codenamed the Tashkent Scheme, approved by the Government of India. This allowed for the securing of transportation via a British convoy bringing military supplies to the USSR, which would then bring the children on its return route.

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**Kira Banasińska and Wanda Dynowska lectured about Poland at several places in India in an attempt to raise awareness about the Polish situation of double occupation.**

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Jamsaheb's exact role can only be surmised from a number of oblique references, since no document establishes it unequivocally. According to the Report of the Delegate of Poland in Bombay dated July 1944, the case of the Polish children being hosted in India started with an official letter of the HMG dated 15 October 1941, to the viceroy of India, that suggested taking 500 Polish children from the USSR and putting them in British and later Indian foster families to avoid financial problems. This suggestion was not accepted by the officials, and HMG was informed accordingly. The officials suggested that 300 children could be placed in Catholic convents and schools in Central India. The remaining children were to go to South India in Ooty in Anandagiri. But this project was not accepted by the Polish side because the children would be separated. Another proposed location was Kalimpong which had several good boarding schools. This idea was supported for a long time until the planned group of 160 children had to be stopped midway due to the advance of Japanese forces and anticipation that the Kalimpong roads would be closed. Finally, the offer of Jamsaheb of Nawanagar to build a campsite in Balachadi was accepted.<sup>38</sup> This information is contained in a report by Captain A. W. T. Webb, Principal Refugee Officer, and the [British] Government of India. Webb wrote that "Government of India had given permission for the entry into India of 500 Polish children from the Soviet territory. . . . Provided the transfer of these children to India

was considered essential, the Government of India were prepared to accept them.”<sup>39</sup> Webb continues “The next step taken was an *attempt* [emphasis added, *A.B.*] to find accommodation for the children in certain convents and schools. Various schemes were examined. Eventually however, since the accommodation was *insufficient* [emphasis added] and no satisfactory solution for the language difficulty could be found, it was decided to erect a camp and place all the children together therein. His Highness the Jam Saheb came forward with an offer to provide a camp site at his private seaside resort, Balachadi in Kathiwar.”<sup>40</sup> In 1942 Balachadi was the summer residence of the royal family of the Princely State of Nawanagar. The Indian Princely States could not deal with foreign countries or their representatives officially,<sup>41</sup> so the matter had to involve the Government of India. The Polish magazine *Polska* carried an interview with Jamsaheb Digvijaysinhji in its 25 November 1942 issue.<sup>42</sup> In his memoirs Count Raczyński mentions that soon after the news appeared in *Polska*, Jamsaheb was invited to a social evening at Madame Popielski’s home at Belgrave Square. He goes on to mention that a little Polish girl greeted him with a few words of “Hindustani” which amused Jamsaheb.<sup>43</sup>

### ***The journey***

The aforementioned Kira Banasińska made sure that the trucks taking relief goods to the USSR would bring the children on the return route. The expedition was to be led by Tadeusz Lisiecki, deputy consul at Bombay; and Dr. Stanislaus Konarski, a physician who was to accompany the mission. A collective visa for the children was issued at Meshed. An experienced Polish driver named Dajek was chosen for this dangerous assignment, assisted by six Sikh drivers.

The children were brought out of the “orphanage” at Ashkhabad [the capital of the Soviet republic of Turkmenistan, *Ed.*] in groups and quarantined at Meshed for a few weeks, as the lorries went back and forth between Meshed and Ashkhabad providing goods for the Soviets and ferrying back children. Finally, in mid-March 173 people started the journey for India. The party consisted of ninety girls, seventy-one boys, eleven adults and one priest,<sup>44</sup> Fr.

Franciszek Pluta, plus the four Polish adults mentioned earlier. The journey was difficult, as described by participant Franek Herzog, later a retired engineer in Connecticut, in *Journey from Russia to India*.<sup>45</sup> They traveled on the Meshed, Birjand, and Zahidan routes being constructed by the Indian Army as one of the Lend-Lease supply routes. On 13 March 1942 the first party of 94 children, four lady guardians, and Father Pluta came Meshed, as reported by Dr. T. Lisiecki. A Polish minister’s wife and daughter were also in this group.<sup>46</sup> The second group of 67 children and seven ladies including the doctor arrived on 20 March 1942.<sup>47</sup> This group included Henryk Hadala of the Polish Education Department.

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After medical checks and issuance of a visa, the group made the overland journey from Meshed to Zahidan in Baluchistan via Gunabad, Birjand, and Shusp on an untried road being built by the Indian Army (this road was being built as an alternate route to deliver Lend Lease supplies to the USSR from the Persian Gulf). The children crossed the Indian border at Nokkundi on 9 April 1942. At Quetta they were received by Mrs. Banasińska, Capt. A. W. T. Webb, and members of the staff of Quetta military station, where the children’s rags were replaced with clothing and they were issued a set of personal belongings and bedding, organized and acquired for them by Mrs. Banasińska. Thereafter the group reached New Delhi. As Franek Herzog recalled, they sang the British anthem, but due to their heavy Polish accent it sounded more like “God shave the king.”<sup>48</sup> They then traveled by train to Bombay, where they were housed in a villa rented by the Polish consulate for this purpose. Later, another villa was also rented and the group was divided into boys and girls, with the boys moving to the second accommodation. They stayed here until

16 July 1942, or until the Balachadi Camp was ready to receive them.

In September 1942 another group of 220 Polish children who had survived the Soviet Gulag arrived, and in December 1942, another 250 were received.<sup>49</sup> Princess Hershah Kumari recalls being a part of the royal entourage to welcome the children into Balachadi; she remembers the children as extremely thin. "They looked so miserable, and their clothes hung about their frames. I was eight years old at the time and wondered how anyone could be so thin and miserable looking at the time,"<sup>50</sup> she said, "And this was their state, we were told, after they had been fed and cared for for a few months."

### Financial arrangements

Under considerable duress from His Majesty's Government, Lord Linlithgow, the viceroy of India, replied to Sir Leo Amery, the British foreign minister, from Calcutta on 23 December 1941, stating that the consensus of opinion ruled out private hospitality as a solution to the lodging problem: "We understand from the wife of the Polish Consul General that there are over a million Polish deportees in Russia [deported by the Soviets after the USSR attacked Poland on 17 September 1939, *Ed.*] and that they [come from] comparatively well-to-do middle class families. I feel, therefore, that I must endorse the majority view that if Polish children come to India they must be accommodated in camps, either specially constructed or formed by requisitioning existing buildings, in which schools would be set up. My conclusions are therefore that we could, subject to the disadvantages described above, accept and arrange for the education of 500 Polish children without great difficulty, that it would be preferable to keep them in largish parties in hostels to be specially arranged. . . . Finally, while a special appeal under the auspices of the Polish Relief Fund may be expected to raise sufficient [sums] to meet part of the cost of maintenance, it could not be relied on to cover all expenditure, and I am not aware whether the Polish Government [in-exile] could guarantee to meet any deficiency. My conclusions are of course necessarily formed in ignorance of the conditions of the Polish refugees in Russia and

in the absence of information."<sup>51</sup> In spite of its own miserable financial condition the Polish government-in-exile agreed to be responsible for any difference between expenditure and receipts from charity,<sup>52</sup> paving the way for them to be evacuated to India by February 1942. Evacuation began before the camp in Balachadi was constructed. Linlithgow sent an appeal to the princes for donations for the Polish children.

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**The British took the position that it was impossible to evacuate a population of 1.5 million people, and find accommodation for them in other countries. . . . only those Poles who were likely to be really useful from the point of view of the war effort [should be allowed to be evacuated].**

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The Polish Children's Fund was set up with an initial contribution of Rs. 50,000 from the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund. Since it was to be a charitable fund, a letter of appeal for donations went out.<sup>53</sup> A committee was established to administer the finances of the camp. Home Secretary E. Conran-Smith, invited O.K. Caroe, secretary to External Affairs Department, to serve on the committee, along with the Catholic Archbishop of Delhi, Mother Superior of the Convent of Jesus and Mary, representatives of Political and Finance Departments, the Indian Red Cross, and Mrs. Banasińska as the delegate in India of the Polish Ministry of Social Welfare.<sup>54</sup> Capt. A. W. T. Webb was appointed secretary of this committee and initiated detailed reports on its proceedings. He prepared the budgets, maintained the accounts, and wrote the reports of immense historical value to which this study has frequently referred. Money was advanced to Mrs. Banasińska to make purchases of the various items required in the camps, including personal effects for adults and children alike and communal kit requirements of a large group of people. The Finance Department advanced funds as required, with the understanding that they would later be repaid either from charitable subscriptions received or by debit to the Polish government. It was decided that the main source of money must remain the Government of India, acting as agents for the Polish government. Funds for the Polish Children's Camp were advanced by the

Government of India as for other evacuee camps handed by the Home Department. All estimates for construction or recurring expenditure would require the concurrence of the Finance Department. Donations received from the public at large would be credited to the Polish Children's Fund. The committee would act as an advisory body with special reference to the appropriate use of funds donated by the public. For that purpose, it would meet from time to time, have access to budgets and approve the transfer of sums standing to the credit of the Polish Children's Account to the accountant general, Central Revenues, or other suitable authority toward the redemption of the debit being raised by the Government of India against the Polish Government for the maintenance of Polish children in India.

By 2 November 1942 the Indian Red Cross Society had raised Rs. 8,424. On 15 December 1942 Lord Linlithgow sent out a solicitation letter to several Indian rulers from Baroda, Hyderabad, Patiala, and Mysore. Another appeal went out on 22 December 1942. The memorandum attached to Capt. Webb's report covering the period 21 November 1943 to 11 November 1944,<sup>55</sup> as well as the report itself, state that during the 1943 financial year, Indian donations amounted to Rs. 491,660. Webb states that a shortage of Rs. 25,519 had been incurred for transportation and equipping the children, and that this expense should be billed to the Polish government in London or deducted from collections in India. If the Polish government agreed to a transfer of Rs. 25,000 from their fund account in London, Rs. 25,000 could be carried over as a balance for the year to come.<sup>56</sup> Webb also mentions that in 1944 contributions to the Polish Children's Fund had been less than in the previous year due to the famine in Bengal<sup>57</sup> and some parts of Madras Presidency. He maintained that India had supported 500 Polish children through 1943 and would continue to do so through 1944, but much depended on the economic conditions of the country. In a communication dated 1 July 1947, Webb informed Gilchrist that "some six lakhs rupees had been contributed by the Indian public for the maintenance of [the Polish] orphans."<sup>58</sup> In 1943 Gilchrist informed Sir Welford Selby of the Polish Relief Fund that £29,500 had been

collected in India for the Polish Children's Fund.<sup>59</sup> Thus from 1942 to 1948 Indian contributions totaled approximately £44,250 (£444,241.51 in 2008 terms).<sup>60</sup>

#### **A workable arrangement**

The importance of the Indian offer was not lost on the Poles. On 31 March 1942 Juliusz Maliniak, the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev's delegate to the Nowosybirsk District, wrote the following in his confidential report on 5,000 Polish citizens, 50 percent of whom were children: "It would be most desirable to direct these children to Persia and India, taking advantage of the generosity of the Indian people."<sup>61</sup> This report was forwarded by Ambassador Edward Raczynski to A. W. G. Randall on 6 July 1942.<sup>62</sup>

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The news about the starvation and inhuman condition that the Polish civilians endured as they were deported by the Russians began to spread and reached London. In a letter dated 6 June 1942, British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden wrote to Leo S. Amery, MP that "the Poles are pressing us hard over their civilians in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics whom they represent as living in harrowing conditions, diseased and threatened with death from starvation. Our own reports on the condition of those Poles who have reached Persia recently confirm much of what the Poles tell us, and the Polish Ambassador in Kuibyshev has begged his Government to appeal to us and the United States to help in removing 50,000 Polish children. . . . The Poles argue that between the German extermination policy and the fate of their people in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the basis of their national life is being destroyed. . . . And for the immediate help, I can think of nowhere to turn but India."<sup>63</sup> [It should be added that at the very same time, thousands



of Polish airmen and soldiers were fighting the Nazis under the British flag on British, Norwegian, and African soil. *Ed.]*

In 1942 the British government made exhaustive efforts to find countries that would accept the refugees. The United States and Canadian governments were approached, as were several South American governments. All were either hostile to the idea or else hedged their offers with such conditions that they proved impracticable.<sup>64</sup> General Władysław Sikorski had appealed to President Roosevelt to accept Polish children, but Roosevelt referred the question to the South African government, promising the financial and material assistance of the American Red Cross.<sup>65</sup> The Americans also suggested South Persia with a promise of American financial and material help, which did not suit the British for military reasons. Randall then understood that while the British could count on the United States for sharing the financial burden, he would have to find British territory for hospitality.<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, he wrote to the India Office, seeking to make the larger Indian Princely States like Hyderabad, Mysore, and Baroda responsible for hospitality toward the Poles.<sup>67</sup> In a cipher telegram dated 25 November 1942, the secretary of state for India wrote the following to viceroy of India:

The War Cabinet for some time has been much exercised over the task of absorbing Polish refugees now in Persia. In spite of a steady flow during recent months, there still remain some 25,000, mostly women and children, who, for military, political and economic reasons must be moved out as early as possible and certainly by the end of March. Arrangements had been made to absorb a large batch in Mexico and the balance in East Africa where room was to be made by the transfer of Italian prisoners to America, but this plan has failed from lack of shipping and military escorts. It is still hoped to transfer several thousand to America on vessels returning via Bombay or Karachi and also East Africa, which has already responded generously, but which will shortly reach saturation point. It will not however be possible to exhaust the number in this manner. I have accordingly been asked to appeal to you to take about 5,000, mostly women and children with some men above military age, till the end of the war. This number is over and above the quota of Polish children you have already agreed to take. . .

. It has been suggested to me that some of the larger states such as Hyderabad and Mysore might agree to come to the rescue as Nawanagar and Patiala have done in the case of children, and if you do not find asylum anywhere in British India perhaps you might care to consider this course. The Russian reaction has surprised me, but I should think that it will still be possible to get the children out. Hence I doubt if it would be wise to assume that accommodation meant for children can now be turned over to the new influx now proposed. New sources would have to be tapped, and loathe as I am to add fresh burdens, I hope that you may find some corners for these unfortunates till the end of their exile.<sup>68</sup>

The Foreign Office at the time viewed India as “the most promising solution. . . either as a destination or a transit territory, or both.”<sup>69</sup> This arrangement also held a political solution for the British authorities. By hosting the Polish civilian population evacuated out of the Soviet Union in territories subservient to the British the Soviets were not embarrassed and the delicate war alliance was saved.

Following the success of Nawanagar, the British Government of India consented to take more Polish refugees, not only children but also women and elderly men. They were to be sponsored financially by the Polish government-in-exile in London. But the number of those accepted was small: the suggestion by the India Office to push open the doors of larger Indian States a little more and include a substantial number of adults<sup>70</sup> was not accepted. As the grim situation of those refused entry became clear to Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji, he spoke earnestly about the need to help these people. Jamsaheb increased his offer to take in 2,000 more Polish children and the PS of Patiala offered to take in 3,000.<sup>71</sup> The PS of Baroda also made an offer, but details are not available. The Soviet government then stopped all further evacuation of Polish children on the grounds of “prestige.”<sup>72</sup>

A proposed campsite at Chela in Nawanagar State, abandoned by the R.A.F, was turned down, as was the offer of Patiala to build a new town for the refugees at Simla hills,<sup>73</sup> ostensibly due to inadequate availability of water.<sup>74</sup> Simla was the summer capital of British India. Sayajirao of Baroda was forced to abdicate,

whereby his offer to house the refugees became null. Records from the Association of Poles in India (API) for 1942–48 show that fifty girls were traveling at his invitation, but little is known about what happened to them. The API has assumed that the group may have been amalgamated with the Balachadi group.<sup>75</sup>

The Polish consul general considered Aundh State as a destination for Polish civilians and for that purpose approached Maurycy Frydman (alias Bharatanandji),<sup>76</sup> a Polish-Lithuanian-Jewish engineer who had come to India before the Second World War in the service of Mysore State. He was drawn into Gandhianism and left the service of Mysore State to join Apa Pant, the ruler of Aundh State, to implement Gandhi's teachings. Since the spirit of Indian nationalism was rather strong within the ruling family of Aundh, the destination did not receive the approval of the British government of India. Finally, the Princely State of Kolhapur was chosen as the destination for the new wave of Polish refugees.

Since moving the Polish civilian population out of Persia was a pressing matter, it was decided that a large number of Polish refugees would be directed to certain camps in British East Africa. The city of Karachi became the nodal point of transport. Ships laden with supplies for the troops, as well as "Aid to Russia" transport left Karachi and returned with troops from Persia for re-equipping and redeployment in the theater against Japan. The Polish civilian population was hastily removed from Teheran to Abadan in South Persia to await shipping to Karachi, from where they awaited ships to go to Uganda, Kenya, or Mexico, or remain in India. Two camps in Karachi, Country Club and Malir, were transit camps for persons going either to East Africa or to Valivade (Kolhapur).

Both the Balachadi and Valivade camps had schooling facilities. For older children schooling was arranged with Catholic institutions in Karachi, Mt. Abu, Mumbai, Panchgani, and elsewhere. At the end of their schooling most boys joined the Polish Armed Forces and were deployed to various parts of the world to fight the Nazis. In 1944 forty boys from Kolhapur and Balachadi camps were granted visas to travel to the United Kingdom for training in the Polish

Marine services and fighting in the British war against the Germans.<sup>77</sup> They included six boys who had attended St. Mary's High School in Mumbai; others had attended St. Mary's High School at Mt. Abu.<sup>78</sup>

#### **Adoption and bidding adieu**

After the British government unilaterally transferred recognition from the Polish government-in-exile in London to the newly formed "Lublin Government" in Soviet-occupied Poland in 1943, there was a flurry of activity including the closure of the Polish Consulate in Mumbai. The Foreign Office advised the India Office to inform the Government of India that the Polish consul general could no longer continue to perform consular functions even if it caused inconveniences for the local Poles.<sup>79</sup> The Polish Children's Fund was also closed. Most of the people in the camp were not willing to be repatriated to postwar Poland, which was occupied by Soviet Russia. "It was a hot potato, nobody wanted to touch it," stated Rev. Z. Peszkowski in 2004.<sup>80</sup>

On 19 July 1943, Edward Raczyński, outgoing ambassador of the Polish government-in-exile in London, wrote this to Anthony Eden: "I have the honor to express on behalf of the Polish Government their sincere and deep-felt thanks for the interest taken in the welfare of Poles evacuated from Russia and particularly for the generosity of the Indian Government, the Indian Princes and Indian organizations in undertaking to maintain large numbers of Polish children for the duration of the war. . . . By their decision to offer shelter on hospitable Indian soil to thousands of Polish children, India has rendered possible their preservation for Poland, where important tasks will await them in the future."<sup>81</sup> Many refugees were deeply apprehensive after having tasted life in the Soviet Union. There was a great ferment in the camps. When representatives of the new "Polish government" visited and informed the former prisoners of the Soviets that, according to international law, all orphans were the charges of the country to which they belonged by birth, there was decisive resistance about repatriation to Poland among the children. One teenage boy threatened to jump out of the ship if he was forcibly returned

to Poland, recalling his mother dying of starvation in the streets of Russia.<sup>82</sup> When shown a letter allegedly from his father asking for his son's return to Poland, another boy wanted to know why his father would send a typewritten letter to a stranger and not a handwritten one to him if he wished to be reunited with his son.<sup>83</sup> The mood of the adult Polish population in Valivade can be surmised from Webb's report of 1 November 1944: "The Poles are convinced that there is a plan afoot to transfer them to the clutches of either the Russian (Soviet) or Lublin Governments."<sup>84</sup> The visit of Special Representative of UNRRA Durrant to the Polish camps caused great unrest and "nearly resulted in a riot".<sup>85</sup> On 17 March 1945 he was "urged to leave camp in his own interest."<sup>86</sup> Those Poles who communicated with their friends or relatives in the camps in East Africa were advised against Durrant and "recommended strong personal action, should he turn up in Kolhapur."<sup>87</sup>

While those over sixteen (the legal adult age at the time) "refused to consider repatriation, guardians were appointed with the consent of Polish Consul General in India just before closing down of the consulate, for those under sixteen years of age."<sup>88</sup> Legal adoption of the orphaned children was worked out in the courts of Nawanagar between Fr. Franciszek Pluta, the commandant of the Polish camp at Balachadi, JamSaheb Digvijaysinhji and Lt. Col. Geoffrey Clark, the British liaison officer. The camp in Balachadi and the rest home in Panchgani were closed down due to austerity measures and amalgamated with the camp at Valivade. The "adopted" children were moved out of the Nawanagar court's jurisdiction, first to Kolhapur and later overseas. The Legislative Department of GOI "considered this transaction valid in law."<sup>89</sup> Fr. Pluta arranged for eighty-one children to be sponsored by two American missionary organizations: fifty girls were sponsored by the Bernardine Sisters of Pennsylvania,<sup>90</sup> and thirty-one boys by Orchard Lake Seminary, Michigan.<sup>91</sup> Only those children who chose to return to Poland voluntarily, did so. Roman Gutowski found his mother, who had returned to Poland from the Soviet Union, as did Leszek Trazalski who found his uncle who had insisted that he return.<sup>92</sup>

His Majesty's Government had no objections to such a move, and R. N. Gilchrist of HMG informed Rhea Radin of UNRRA accordingly. The Government of India acted as an agent of HMG and raised no objections to this plan.<sup>93</sup> UNRRA then demanded to know the legal standing of such an arrangement. Selene Gifford, director of the Displaced Persons Division at UNRRA, and Rhea Radin, Chief Repatriation and Care Division of UNRRA, were informed that "the position of the children under present guardianship [was] absolutely safe and easy to defend."<sup>94</sup> The formal documents of the case were "water-tight from a legal point of view," according to Webb.<sup>95</sup> One Ms. Burakiewicz, a representative of the government of Soviet-occupied Poland, tried to stop the children's departure, but they had already left Valivade camp. Fr. Pluta was later declared an "international kidnapper" by the postwar "Polish" government in Warsaw. He left for the United States and remained there until the end of his life.

Valivade Camp closed in March 1948. Its residents moved to the United Kingdom under the aegis of the Polish Resettlement Scheme (PRC) in India. The last remaining camp residents were moved to Tengeru camp in Africa to await resettlement. Some like Tadeusz Dobrostanski, went to Australia where they were accepted as displaced persons (DP). Some former Balachadi children like Franek Herzog and Stefan Klosowski reached the United States and Canada respectively from the United Kingdom after completing higher education there. Today the children from the former Balachadi Camp in India can be found in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia, contributing to the formation of the Polish diaspora in those countries. In the United States they added to the numbers of those accepted under the category of displaced persons, including the residents of the former Santa Rosa camp in Mexico.

### Conclusions

The 1942 Nawanagar offer to host Polish children is important on two counts. First, it came at a time when no other country in the world was willing to accept Polish refugees. Second, this offer enabled the British to abandon

their erstwhile ally Poland and declare themselves on the side of a newfound ally, the Soviet Union. While the refugees were eventually relocated to destinations in British-controlled parts of the world, they were initially in the territory of the Princely States, saving the British from embarrassment vis-à-vis the USSR.

In spite of being fully aware of the plight of over one million Polish people deported to the GULAG by the Soviets, the British were willing to extend aid to only a few hundred people at a time. The rate of evacuation was set at 160 per diem<sup>96</sup> at a time when thousands needed help. It is interesting to note that the British Government of India, who controlled at least one-third of 4,225,113 square kilometers of area of the present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh combined, could not find a place to accommodate 500 orphaned Polish children in 1942, whereas the tiny Princely State of Nawanagar could quickly organize the space to build a special camp for them.

The initiative of Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji of Nawanagar paved the way for several thousand Polish refugees to be received in various parts of the world. His state was the first to host 500 Polish children. He extended his offer to another 2,000 children, and galvanized the support of Maharaja Yadavindra Singh of Patiala to extend an invitation to 3,000 Polish people. These offers were the bedrock for the formation of the Valivade Camp in the politically pliant PS of Kolhapur. Furthermore, the adoption of Polish children by Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji paved the way for eighty-one children to go to the United States and build a life for themselves there in the free world, after initial assistance from Polish Catholic missionaries.

It is pertinent to note that the Indian people reeling under wartime levies and shortages donated fairly large sums of money for the hapless Polish children to maintain them for several years and continued to do so even during a period of famine in the country. It should also be noted that the Indian Freedom Movement was not xenophobic in nature. There was no antagonism reported from any quarter about the presence of the Polish orphans even during a year of drought and famine. Not only were wealthy people contributing to the Polish Children's Fund, Mahatma Gandhi was

sympathetic to their cause as well. He had a very close association with two Poles: Maurycy Frydman (aka Swami Bharatanandji of Aundh) and Wanda Dynowska (aka Uma Devi) at the time. The Indian connection has played a critical role in the preservation of the Polish Diaspora in the English-speaking countries. Δ

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In 2011, PPP of 1945 £44,250 was £1,562,000.

<sup>2</sup> K. Sword, *Deportation and Exile: Poles in the Soviet Union, 1939–48* (London, 1994), pp. 84, 86.

<sup>3</sup> R. V. Kesting, "American Support of Polish Refugees and Their Santa Rosa Camp," *Polish American Studies*, vol. 48, no. 1 (Spring 1991), 79–90 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20148352> Accessed: 14/12/2009 09:25).

<sup>4</sup> BI I&OC, L/P&J/8/415, cipher telegram for GOI-EAD to S of s, India, dated 1 July 1947. Folio no. 260.

<sup>5</sup> Amery to Linlithgow 13 November 1942, TOP, III 251, cited in I. Copland, *The Princes of India in the Endgame of Empire 1917-47* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 189.

<sup>6</sup> Marian Raba, former resident of Balachadi camp, resident of Leicester, personal interview with author, May 2005.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> NAI, 186/-X/40(Secret), Thomas Cook & Son to Capt. RKM Saker, dated 22 February 1941.

<sup>10</sup> Pune, Tata Central Archives, DTT Collection, Minutes of 65, 67 and 80th Meeting.

<sup>11</sup> NAI, EAD 186/-X/40 (Secret).

<sup>12</sup> Warsaw, Archiwum Akt Nowych (hereinafter AAN), S38–39.

<sup>13</sup> NAI, 186/-X/40(Secret), Folio 29-31, RKM Saker.

<sup>14</sup> AAN, S 38–39.

<sup>15</sup> Bhatti et al., *Jewish Exiles in India*, Manohar, New Delhi (n.a.).

<sup>16</sup> BNA, FO 371.29214, A.W.G. Randall to Sir S. Cripps, September 1941.

<sup>17</sup> BNA, CAB/ 111/310, Aide-memoire, Walker to Gorell Barnes, 24 October 1941.

<sup>18</sup> BNA, CAB/ 111/310, Aide-memoire, Walker to Gorell Barnes, 24 October 1941.

<sup>19</sup> Possibly Indian Military Service.

<sup>20</sup> London, British Library–India and Oriental Collection (hereinafter BL-I&OC), L/P&J/110-N/19-1/412, Folio 298.

<sup>21</sup> London, British Library–India and Oriental Collection, L/P&J/110-N/19-1/412, Folio 298.

<sup>22</sup> BNA, CAB/111/310

<sup>23</sup> BNA, CAB/111/310

<sup>24</sup> London, Polish Institute and General Sikorski Museum (hereinafter PIGSM), Banasiński Collection, KOL 129/2. Also, London, British National Archives (hereinafter BNA), CAB/111/310.

<sup>25</sup> BNA, CAB/ 111/310, Aide-memoire, Walker to Gorell Barnes, 24 October 1941.

<sup>26</sup> BNA, FO 371/29214, A.W.G. Randall to Clauson.

<sup>27</sup> Possibly the Polish ambassador to London Count Edward Raczyński.

<sup>28</sup> BNA, CAB/111/310.

<sup>29</sup> Year assumed to be 1941.

<sup>30</sup> Angora telegram 2192 in C IO275, cited in BNA, FO 371.29214.

<sup>31</sup> BNA, CAB/111/310.

<sup>32</sup> Northern route here could mean the land route from India through erstwhile Northwest Frontier Provinces, now in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

<sup>33</sup> BNA, FO 371.29214.

<sup>34</sup> NAI, EAD - 276(8)-X/42, Capt. A.W. T. Webb's report dated 3 November 1941.

<sup>35</sup> NAI, 186/-X/40 (Secret), telegram dated 7 January 1942 from PSV to Asst Secretary PSVO,

<sup>36</sup> London, Polish Institute and General Sikorski Museum, Banasiński Collection, KOL 129/2. Also, London, British National Archives, CAB/111/310, Letter dated 23 January 1942, Eugeniusz Banasiński to Wanda Dynowska.

<sup>37</sup> Jan Siedlecki, President, API, 1942–48, London, interview with author, London, 16 March 2004.

<sup>38</sup> PIGSM, C811d/, Report of the Delegate of Poland in Bombay, dated July 1944.

<sup>39</sup> NAI, 276(8) – X/ 42. P 8 (2).

<sup>40</sup> NAI, 276(8) – X/ 42. P 8 (2).

<sup>41</sup> BL-I&OC, R2/952/76 C-70/43, Appendix Notes, dated 10 January 1943, indicative communication regarding Kolhapur Durbar (the P.M. mentioned the Polish Consul General as coming here). We must draw attention at once to the rules debarring States

from corresponding directly with foreign countries or inviting foreign consuls to the State without the P.D.'s approval. Sd. J.B.)

<sup>42</sup> Interview in weekly magazine *Polska*, no. 17 (25 November 1942), cited in notes of chapter on Balachadi Camp, *Poles in India 1942–48, In view of Reminiscences and Documents* (also referred to as API Book).

<sup>43</sup> Edward Raczyński, *In Allied London*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1962).

<sup>44</sup> NAI, 276(8)-X/42, Capt. A. W. T. Webb's Reports (herein after WR) dated 3 November, 1942, 9.

<sup>45</sup> F. Herzog, *Journey from Russia to India*, unpublished.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Letter dated 19 March 1942 from Polish Consul to Undersecretary of Government of India.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. Letter dated 28 March 1942.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> A complete list of children who arrived at Balachadi is in the possession of the editors of *Sarmatian Review*; it was included as an appendix to my Master's thesis and my PhD dissertation.

<sup>50</sup> Harshadkumariji, Princess of Nawanagar, interview with author, New Delhi, October 2003.

<sup>51</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/110-N 19-1/412, folio 254, Linlithgow to Amery, dated 23 December 1941.

<sup>52</sup> NAI, 276(8)-X/42, Capt. A. W. T. Webb's Reports, (herein after WR), 9.

<sup>53</sup> NAI, 276-X/42/Secret, Viceroy's Office.

<sup>54</sup> NAI, 276-X/42/Secret, Folio 24 and NAI, 276(8)-X/42, DO 126/142/41-Poll (Evn).

<sup>55</sup> PIGSM, C-811c, Report of the Delegate.

<sup>56</sup> NAI, 276(8)-X/42, Capt. Webb's Report as Appendix 23.

<sup>57</sup> Amartya Sen's experience of the Bengal famine as a child left an indelible mark. He drew from that substantially in the formulation of the 1998 Nobel – Prize-winning theory of distribution in welfare economics.

<sup>58</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/8/415, Folio no. 260. Cypher telegram dated 1 July 1947 from Govt. of India EAD to Sof S India9 Gilchrist from Webb).

<sup>59</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/110-N 19-1/412, Folio No. 40, Gilchrist to Selby, dated 15 July 1943.

<sup>60</sup> A purchasing power calculator says that the the 1945 value of £44,250 amounted to £1,562,000 in 2011. <http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/relativevalue.php>, accessed 10 March 2013.

<sup>61</sup> BNA, FO 371/32630: 5.

<sup>62</sup> BNA, FO 371/32630: 1.

<sup>63</sup> Eden to Amery, BL-I&OC letter file. POL 4258, Letter dated 6 June 1942.

<sup>64</sup> K. Sword. *Deportation and Exile, Poles in the Soviet Union 1939–48*, (London : St. Martin's Press

with School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 1994), 84.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> B.L-I&OC, W 15133/5130/G, dated 17 November 1942, A.W.G. Randall to Gibson.

<sup>68</sup> B.L-I&OC, L/P&J/110-N 19-1/412, Cipher telegram dated 25 November, the Secretary of State for India to Viceroy of India, 114.

<sup>69</sup> B.L-I&OC, A.W.G. Randall, Foreign Office, to J.P. Gibson, India Office, 20 August, 1942 [POL 6251 1942) India Office letter file.

<sup>70</sup> BL-I&OC, W 15133/5130/G, A.W.G. Randall to Gibson dated 17 November 1942.

<sup>71</sup> BL-I&OC, POL 8852, telegram no. 28067, dated 16 October 1942, GOI-Home Department to S of S for India.

<sup>72</sup> NAI, EAD 276-X/42/Secret, Telegram dated 17 November 1942 from Bullard, Teheran to Consul General Meshed, repeated to Government of India.

<sup>73</sup> China, Hardev Singh, former chief secretary of PEPSU state and later Punjab, personal letter to author.

<sup>74</sup> NAI, EAD 276(8)-X/42, AWT Webb's report dated 3 November 1941.

<sup>75</sup> Chapter on Balachadi, *Poles in India, 1942–48. In the light of Documents and Reminiscences* (London, 2007). In Polish with English translation provided by members of *API 1942–48*.

<sup>76</sup> PIGSM, Banasiński Collection, E. Banasiński to Wanda Dynowska.

<sup>77</sup> NAI. 218(72)-G/44, pp. 1–4.

<sup>78</sup> Among the latter was Henryk Baczyk, presently from Perth, Australia, an older brother of Alina Baczyk Haus whose independent testimony is available on the Internet. Tadeusz Herzog, late brother of Franek Herzog of Connecticut, also appears on that list. "Alina's Odyssey," Web Resources, accessed 26 May 2002.

<sup>79</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/8/414(Coll 110 N3), Folio 446, Hancock to Gilchrist, dated 16 October, 1945.

<sup>80</sup> Z. Peszkowski, videotaped interview with author in Warsaw, 2004.

<sup>81</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/110-N 19-1/412, dated 19 July 1943, E. Raczyński to A. Eden.

<sup>82</sup> S. S. Puranik, "Why the Poles do not want to leave India," *The Maratha*, 10 January 1949.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> BNA, FO 371.51153, Capt. A.W.T. Webb's Report.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/8/415, pp. 125–131.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p. 139, A.W.T. Webb to J. H. Thomson, Residency Office, Kolhapur.

<sup>88</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/8/415, p. 341, Telegram dated 2 July 1947, GOI to S of S India.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Among them was Alina Baczyk Haus. "Alina's Odyssey," Web Resources, accessed 26 May 2002.

<sup>91</sup> F. Pluta, *Reunion speech of July 18, 1989*, unpublished, (USA: English transcript courtesy of Franek Herzog). Also mentioned in L. Królikowski, *Stolen Childhood: A Saga of Polish War Children*, Father Justin Rosary Hour, New York, 1983.

<sup>92</sup> Roman Gutowski, resident of Warsaw and Leszek Trazalski, resident of Kraków, former residents of Balachadi, interview with author, March 2004.

<sup>93</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/8/415, Telegram dated 30 January 1947, Capt. A.W.T. Webb to L. Findlay, UNRRA, 410.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, Telegram dated 30 January 1947, CRD to S of S, India, 491.

<sup>95</sup> BL-I&OC, Letter no. POL 8103, Webb quoted in Eggers to Gilchrist, 23 May 1947.

<sup>96</sup> BL-I&OC, L/P&J/8/413, Cypher telegram no. 897, Cairo to Foreign Office, dated 22 June 1942.

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## Literature on Trial

### The Emergence of Critical Discourse in Germany, Poland, and Russia, 1700–1800

By **S. D. Chrostowska**. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2012. 273 pages. Bibliography and Index. ISBN 978-1-4426-4356-7. Hardcover.

#### Matthias Rothe

After reading S. D. Chrostowska's book on the literary criticism as genre, I had to think carefully about writing this review. How to balance out information, description, positive and negative evaluation, and polemic remarks? How to justify my findings? Finally, how will these implicit rules shape what I am going to say? *Literature on Trial: The Emergence of Critical Discourse in Germany, Poland, and Russia* invites all of these questions.

The title of the book is somewhat misleading. S.D. Chrostowska's study inquires into "the genres [my emphasis] of emerging literary-critical discourses" and sketches their "trajectory" (190), which is different from an inquiry into the *emergence* of genres (literally the reverse project). Additionally, there is also no reference to the juridical position of the critic ("literature on trial") evoked by the title. Instead, the author tells the story of the "coming of age" (48) of literary criticism, its path to institutionalization and to relative autonomy. The book begins with a lengthy discussion of the relation among discourse, genre, and history, making a case for the employment of the term "genre." Each of the following three chapters is dedicated to a different state, or rather to a different cultural-linguistic region (the distinction between state and region demands further discussion), and each chapter is structured in a similar way. An account of the eighteenth-century socioeconomic, cultural, and political history of the region/state in question frames a detail-driven analysis of individual examples of literary criticism. These examples in turn are ordered chronologically, and hence lend themselves to be read as supporting the

coming of age narrative. The book conveniently offers an index of names and topics.

Chrostowska's discussion of the relation between genre and discourse in the introductory chapter is very thoughtful and makes a persuasive case for genre as a category that is too easily dismissed. Her understanding of genre in terms of "generic relations" in "continual flux" (16) appears to be applicable to many forms of textual analysis and is apt to provoke further discussion. The concept of a "discursive form" (15) as a mediator between discourse and genre is promising, yet not sufficiently elaborated. It is as if the author does not sufficiently trust her own insights and so does not follow through with them.

In the course of her analyses she understands "genre" less in terms of ever-changing relations, but instead employs it as a ready-made tool, a relatively fixed form. "Genre" becomes "the frame through which to study successive phases in a discourse's history" (15), or "a lens through which to examine discourse" (22); genre is set up to function "as a prism through which to view . . . discursive features" (6). But the lens of genre makes discourse dissolve into a series of discrete texts; each text still fails in its own way to meet the criteria defining the broader genre. What should have become visible as "successive phases of a discourse's history" (15) ends up being a mere collection of texts whose belonging to one and the same discourse remains at the level of assertion. In other words, these individual texts are not able to represent what they are supposed to: a developmental trajectory. Hence the connection between the book's analytical section and its historical section remains weak. Since the author seems to be most interested in the description of the formal qualities of individual texts, she often resorts to traditional narratives in the historical part. She too easily accepts traditional periods such as "Sturm und Drang," "Classicism," and "Romanticism," and simply takes as given what was itself subject to emergence and change. More importantly, she also presupposes what is in its history most intimately connected to the business of criticism, namely literature in the modern sense of the word (although her theory