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## The Weekly *Polska Walcząca* (1939–1949): A Review

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### ABSTRACT

The paper concerns the history of the sociopolitical weekly *Polska Walcząca* (Eng. *Fighting Poland*), the first Polish Armed Forces newspaper in the West during World War II. **Scientific objective:** To present the contributors and circumstances of the establishment of the newspaper, and its functions, including the discussion on journalism genres. **Research methods:** The method of analyzing the content of the 1939-1949 press was used, i.e. the entire period of publishing the newspaper. **Results and conclusions:** The weekly fulfilled informational and educational tasks first as a military newspaper, and then as a veterans' weekly, accompanying Polish emigration in Great Britain. **Cognitive value:** The paper complements the literature on *Polska Walcząca* because it contains a possibly full overview of the aspects of functioning of this newspaper.

### KEYWORDS

emigration, press functions, journalism genres, Polska Walcząca, Fighting Poland, military press



The purpose of the paper is to describe the conditions of issuing *Polska Walcząca* (Eng. *Fighting Poland*), as well as the origins and history of it. The weekly included issues related to organizational problems accompanying the establishment of the military weekly, its editorial staff and associates. References were also made to the forms of expression used in the weekly, using the content analysis method. The weekly reflected the attitude of the Polish emigration from 1939 to 1949, and the collective fate and ethos of military emigration. Tasks and functions of the weekly, which were presented in this review, validate the thesis that it fulfilled an informative, educational, and auxiliary role in the organization of everyday life in exile, constituting a forum for exchanging ideas and shaping attitudes.

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*Polska Walcząca* was a military sociopolitical weekly newspaper and the first central organ of the Polish Armed Forces in the West during World War II; it was published from November 1939 until August 1949. One day earlier, the daily *Głos Polski* appeared in Paris (Czachowska, 1995). During the whole period of the war, the weekly, *Polska Walcząca*, was a representative of the independence program and armed struggles. General Marian Kukiel (1965) characterized *Polska Walcząca* as an ideological newspaper, exerting educational influence through reporting, historical and literary content, informing reliably about the war and current international situation.

The editor-in-chief of the newspaper was Tymon Terlecki, who held this function until 1948—i.e. almost the whole time of the newspaper’s existence. In a letter from 1944 to Józef Wittlin (Terlecki & Wittlin, 2016), Terlecki wrote about his work:

“I have been in London since July 1940 and I have been doing what I started in Coëtquidan: I am editing *Polska Walcząca*. You probably do not see this newspaper anywhere, but [it] is a senior press of the political and military emigration of this war. And I am in on it almost 5 years. The work is hard, but it is a kind of work in which life and soul grow” (p. 21).

### The Origin and History of *Polska Walcząca*

The project of publishing a military weekly appeared in October 1939 in a training camp for officer cadets in Coëtquidan in Brittany, where a group of volunteers from Poland and the Polish diaspora in France gathered. As Terlecki recalled (Taylor, 1997), there were many writers, journalists, reporters, artists, and employees of Polish diplomatic missions among them. The newspaper was supposed to get to this type of readers. According to Witold Leitgeber (1972), the weekly assumed its own character as a result of many councils and conversations. The initiator of the establishment of the newspaper was the commander of the Coëtquidan camp, Colonel January Grzędziński, whom Terlecki described as follows: “a leftist legionnaire, a peculiar type of military and politician, officer and journalist in one person” (Taylor, 2001a, p. 110). Before the war, Grzędziński was the founder, publisher, and editor-in-chief of different pre-war sociopolitical weekly—*Czarno na Białem*. The commander of the camp ordered Lieutenant Terlecki to become the organizer of the newspaper, and Terlecki reached the training camp very quickly on September 23, overtaking the earliest volunteer transports (Taylor, 2001a). The editor of *Polska Walcząca* was an essayist and theater critic, professor at the State Institute of Theater Art, and an editor of *Scena Polska* and *Teatr*. Apart from substantive standards, he had to ensure compliance of printed materials with the requirements of preventive censorship. Initially, the weekly was subject to French supervision in this matter, insensitive to complex Polish-Soviet relations.

There have been technical problems since the publishing the newspaper; the lack of Polish fonts in Rennes, where the printing house was located, as well as the lack of the typesetters who would be able to submit Polish letters. The printing house did not have a linotype, the composition

was manual, the fonts were not enough to submit the whole issue, so after making up the text and printing four pages the composition was scattered to make the next four (Tyśmienicki [właśc. Rubel], 1942). There were also problems with obtaining paper and transport.

Despite the difficulties, the work of the editorial team and the commander's favor led to the implementation of the project. The first issue with the volume of 8 pages, in the format 38 x 27 cm, was published on the eve of the November Uprising, on November 29, 1939 (it was not an accidental date) in a circulation of about 1000 copies. The subtitle "Tygodnik Gromady Żołnierskiej" (Eng. "The Weekly for the Polish Forces") was suggested by Grzędziński (Leitgeber, 1972), referring to the organization of the Polish People, founded in Great Britain after the November Uprising. As Agnieszka J. Cieślakowa writes in the biography of Grzędziński (2009): "At the beginning he probably imagined that the French troops forming in France, like the Legions, will be a 'romantic militant brotherhood,' a group united by faith in the struggle for independent Poland, with ideals of social equality" (p. 254).

In February 1940, Terlecki was delegated to the Department of Propaganda and Education of the Ministry of Military Affairs in Paris. The editorial office of the newspaper was also moved there and since then it was located in the Regina Hotel, in the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief (Czachowska, 1995). From the issue 6/7 (1940), the weekly became the official organ of the Armed Forces outside the country. The printing depot was moved to the printing house of the Polish national daily *Narodowiec* in Lens in the Nord Department, where many Poles lived, mainly miners. At that time, a close cooperation between the editorial office and the Polish community began. By the decision of the command *Polska Walcząca* was combined with the biweekly, which was established by the older emigrants, *Żołnierz Polski we Francji*—the organ of the Polish Central Citizens' Committee, and *Polska Walcząca* with the changed subtitle "Żołnierz Polski na Obczyźnie" (Eng. "Polish Soldier in Exile") was created. The union of two titles has increased the circulation to 20,000 copies (Lewandowska, 1993), as well as changing the format and volume to 12 pages.

In June 1940, after the defeat of France, Terlecki was evacuated to Great Britain and, on orders from the Commander-in-Chief, he began the reorganization of *Polska Walcząca*. It was a difficult task due to the loss of the archive and modest housing conditions. The next and the last stage of the newspaper's existence began with the publication of the issue 19 (July 21, 1940). The publisher of the weekly with the new supplement was the Department of Propaganda and Education of the Ministry of Military Affairs (from 1942, the Ministry of National Defense). The new headquarters of the editorial office was located in the St. Clement's Press (Terlecki, 1960), at Portugal Street (WC2A, London). In the same building there was also the headquarters of *Dziennik Polski*—the official body of the Polish government in London.

A separate chapter in the history of *Polska Walcząca* is content control, which the editor struggled with from the beginning of the newspaper's existence. It was a preventive censorship. Terlecki had to adhere to the recommendations of the British censors, also subject to civil war censors at the Ministry of Military Affairs. English censorship influenced the Polish press through the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of National Defense, and the command of the Polish Armed Forces. In the case of *Polska Walcząca*, the traces of content control in the form of unprinted columns are visible only once, with the annotation: "Letters from German captivity—crossed out by censorship" (1939). Probably the reason for the confiscation was the need to protect sources of information and personal safety of informants. From Terlecki's memoirs (Taylor, 2001b) one can conclude that censorship was one of the most severe difficulties in his work. He wrote about it:

“They all wanted to censor, every military officer of a slightly higher level had to add his two penn’orth.[...] I reminded them that *Polska Walcząca* was not and is not *Dziennik Rozkazów* or *Monitor Polski*. [...] when in Paris the censorship was carried out by the embassy, they did it in a very discreet manner [...], then the British introduced the Central Office of Military Censorship. Stanisław Kot [...], who was violently anti-sanctioning, able to defend himself against political suggestions, at least democratically and leftistically, imposed himself as the minister of information. Attempts were made to restrain Kota’s censorship, which, having similar ideological tendencies as me, wanted to inspire everything and control everything. Stroński also enjoyed this censorship, he even corrected the commas” (pp. 215-216).

Censorship was changing depending on the current political situation. The British government applied a conciliatory policy towards the Soviet Union, which was not appreciated by the Polish side. Therefore, measures have been taken to prevent conflicts with hosts. In the letter of the Ministry of National Defense from 1943, signed by General Kukiel, the following guidelines concerning the military press appeared, which, according to the Ministry, were to fulfill certain functions:

“The military press cannot engage state policy with any of its enunciations. The military press must constantly remember that in the opinion of our hosts, as well as other allied, neutral and hostile states, for each word printed in it, the Minister of National Defense or the Government of the Republic of Poland is responsible. One should therefore beware of the illusions that the statements of the military press could be treated as private voices of the editors of a given newspaper” (IPMS).

The final stage of the newspaper’s existence was in July 1945, when the British government withdrew recognition of the government of Tomasz Arciszewski, following which the financing of Polish state, educational and welfare institutions went down (Habielski, 1999). Various forms of harassment were applied towards the editorial office, for example, difficulties in obtaining paper, and it became more and more difficult to obtain funds for current activity.

After the end of the war, *Polska Walcząca* became a newspaper for demobilized soldiers who did not want to return to the country ruled by the communists. From July 1945, the weekly struggling with increasingly serious financial difficulties was issued by the Service of Caring for Soldiers, and then by the Team of People of Good Will, based on the Fighting Poland Trust (Kowalik, 1965). The printing of the weekly was moved from London to Slough. In the final period, which dates back to November 1946, *Polska Walcząca* gained a new subtitle: “Kombatant Polski na Obczyźnie” (Eng. „Polish Combatant in Exile”), and the issue of the newspaper was taken over by the Association of Polish Veterans. In 1948, Eugeniusz Romiszewski became an editor-in-chief. The last issue 32/33 was released on August 13-20, 1949. Then, in the same month, *Polska Walcząca* became a veterans’ supplement to *Dziennik Polski* (Eng. *The Polish Journal*) and *Dziennik Żołnierza* (Eng. *The Soldier’s Journal*), and from 1950 the weekly *Gazeta Niedzielną* (Eng. *The Sunday Newspaper*). In July 1954, it was resumed in the form of a column in *Dziennik Polski* and *Dziennik Żołnierza*, which appeared until October 1955.

### Contributors and Journalism Genres

The first issue of the newspaper was a preview of the substantive profile and functions of the weekly. It contained messages calling for a fight, addressed to the soldiers of the Supreme Commander, General Władysław Sikorski, and General Stanisław Maczek. The introductory article with the message supporting faith in the victory was written by Colonel Grzędziński, and the occasional text entitled “The Night of Officer Cadets” was written by Terlecki. The nature of the newspaper was also determined by other articles: “Memories of an Airman from the Defense

of Warsaw,” “War Chronicle,” “Camp Chronicle,” various materials about the daily life of the camp, and humorous texts. The adornment of the texts were photographs (though sometimes not of the best quality), graphics, and above all, original drawings made, among others, by Marian Walentynowicz.

In the next stage of publishing the weekly, since the merger with *Żołnierz Polski we Francji*, the formula has been changed: the journalistic and informational part has been expanded, and more literary texts have been published. Terlecki published editorial articles of program character, usually in the essay convention, referring to Polish national traditions. His texts were often anonymous, sometimes he signed himself with the pseudonym “Aleksander Janowski.”

The most frequently published authors in *Polska Walcząca* were: Ludwik Tyśmienicki, (Ludwik Rubel), Jan Rembieliński, Marian Kukiel, Jerzy Pomian (Julian Suski Pomian), Aleksander Janta-Połczyński, Michał Prozor (Czesław Poznański), and Tadeusz Kiełpiński. The author’s columns were run by: Jacek Brzezina (Aleksander Grobicki)—columns on the camp life; Aleksander Janta-Połczyński—“Camp Chronicle,” Jerzy Pomian (Julian Suski)—“From Poland,” Mieczysław Lisiewicz—aviation review, Wiktor Budzyński—“Without Blackout,” Kazimierz Łukiański (Bohdan Pawłowicz)—“A Week at Sea,” Zbigniew Grabowski—“A London Speaker Writes...,” Tadeusz Kiełpiński, signed with the initials “tk”—political review. War correspondents: Marian Walentynowicz, Ryszard Kiersnowski, Ksawery Pruszyński, and Ludwik Rubel simultaneously publishing in *Dziennik Polski* and *Dziennik Żołnierza* (Chwastyk-Kowalczyk, 2008). The following painters and graphic artists took part in the creation of the graphic design of *Polska Walcząca*: Józef Natanson, Aleksander Żyw, Marian Walentynowicz, Zygmunt Haupt, Andrzej Rubinrot, and Feliks Topolski. The author of the title vignette was typographer Samuel Tyszkiewicz. Occasionally, Zygmunt Nowakowski, Melchior Wańkowicz, Witold Leitgeber, Maria Kuncewiczowa, Maria Pawlikowska, Jan Nowak (Zdzisław Jeziorański), Jan Karski (Jan Koziulewski) and Antoni Słonimski (publishing under the pseudonym “Nemo”) collaborated with the weekly. The poetry columns were written by: Kazimierz Wierzyński (a friend of the editor-in-chief), Jan Lechoń, Stanisław Baliński, Beata Obertyńska, and Bronisław Przyłuski. Correspondence, and sometimes poems and lyrics, were sent by poets: Wawrzyniec Czereśniewski, Janusz Teodor Dybowski, and Edward Ligocki. The newspaper also published texts by young authors: Józef Radzymiński, Marek Święcicki, Waclaw Iwaniuk, Bogumił Andrzejewski, Bogdan Wroński, and Karol Borchardt (Taylor-Terlecka, 2005).

In *Polska Walcząca*, military commanders and political activists were constantly publishing their texts. Gen. Kukiel was particularly interested in the development of the weekly for soldiers. He was a Deputy Minister of Military Affairs, then the Minister of National Defense, and the Commander of the 1st Corps of the Polish Armed Forces in Scotland. *Polska Walcząca* published the proclamations and orders of the general, regarding Poles from France and Belgium, American Polonia, Auxiliary Women’s Military Service, mourning after General Sikorski’s death in the Polish Armed Forces. The speeches reprinted in the newspaper were usually delivered due to important events, anniversaries of public holidays (e.g. November 11), and religious holidays (Christmas, Easter). Kukiel dealt with the issue of the history of Polish statehood, which is why he recalled in his articles the history of Polish political thought, parliamentary traditions, emphasized the role of culture as a tool for building and maintaining national identity. In the article “Polish Political Past and National Culture” (Kukiel, 1940), he pointed out: “We defend Latin and Christian culture, which is identified with Poland” (p. 1). In his texts, he also referred to the issues of military strategy, an example of which is the Second Anniversary of the September Campaign (Kukiel, 1941). In 1944, a series of columns by Kukiel (signed as “Triarius”) appeared



in *Polska Walcząca*—entitled “Weekly Review” (Triarius, 1944), in which he commented on the most important political events.

All the authors of *Polska Walcząca*, who were, after all, from different political environments, cooperated in writing. According to Ludwik Tyśmienicki [actually Ludwik Rubel] the reason was in the ability to reach an agreement:

“We finally managed to get along with each other: endek with the leftist, people who were standing yesterday on opposite sides of the barricade. What is the secret? I think that above all in the atmosphere of ideology that prevailed there, in the conviction of all present, that whoever found the way to the military camp in Coëtquidan, and now sits with me at one table, may differ in details, but not in matters of principle” (1942, p. 2).

An important achievement of Terlecki was to engage writers, journalists, and artists to collaborate with the newspaper, and to acquire them for the campaign to mobilize soldiers after the defeat. The popularity of the weekly was determined by the diversity of forms and the richness of stylistic statements: reports on the course of action on land, sea, and air; reportages from the front lines; political reviews; program editorial articles; poetry and prose; moral articles as well as humorous stories such as “A Stove and Turnip: The Adventures of Two Volunteers in Koczkodan,” and the “Werinajsek” series. The latter referred to the satirical journal published under the title “Werinajs: A Cheerful Biweekly” edited by Antoni Wasilewski.

An attractive diversion were illustrated special issues devoted to particular types of troops (navy, aviation, armored troops), the Polish military traditions, anniversaries of national holidays (such as the anniversary of the Constitution of May 3), significant figures from the history of Poland (Ignacy Paderewski, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Nicolaus Copernicus), as well as current political events of major importance (visit of Gen. Władysław Sikorski in the United States). There were often supplements showing the involvement of the editorial staff in current affairs: “Companion-in-Arms” devoted to volunteers of the Polish Armed Forces fleeing the German army; “First Line”—about soldiers of the Home Army; “Our Way,” “Our Mark”—the organ of the Polish Combatants’ Association.

The principle of loyalty and journalistic solidarity found expression in making the newspaper available to publishing houses, such as *Lud Polski* (Eng. *The Polish People*) or *Kącik Kombatanta z Francji* (Eng. *The Veterans’ Corner from France*). *Polska Walcząca* reprinted materials published in the military newspaper from the Soviet Union: *Polska Walcząca na Wschodzie* (Eng. *Fighting Poland in the East*); from the Middle East: *Orzeł Biały* (Eng. *The White Eagle*), *Zew* (Eng. *The Call*), *Polak w Iranie* (Eng. *A Pole in Iran*); publications of the Underground Poland, such as: *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Eng. *The Bulletin*), and *Wiadomości Polskie* (Eng. *The Polish News*). The weekly informed about various publishing initiatives—novelty books and military press titles, such as *Prasa żołnierska na froncie włoskim* (Eng. *Soldier’s Press on the Italian Front*) (Bau, 1944). There were also press reviews—except Polish, English, French, and American. An important place in *Polska Walcząca* was dealt with by the Polish Corps of Handling and Distribution. The editorial staff met the expectations of readers in changed social conditions, placing practical information about learning a language, English customs, vocational education, gaining and maintaining a job, legal advice for Polish entrepreneurs. The weekly also touched upon issues related to morality and professional discrimination.

### **Aims and Functions; A Newspaper’s Content**

The task of *Polska Walcząca* was to present the government’s position, to integrate soldiers with different political past and to foster a sense of community in the struggle for independent

Poland. The weekly was subject to the supervision of the Ministry of National Defense, therefore it was often published in it by senior officers (mainly General Kukiel), as well as politicians (e.g. Stanisław Stroński, a minister in Sikorski's government). There were information articles about the command activity, such as reports "With the Supreme Commander—to the East" (Fudakowski, 1944).

The weekly assumed affordability, which was to be an expression of the mood of the camp environment. One of the first authors of the newspaper Karol Zbyszewski (1942) described the nature of this publishing initiative:

"*Polska Walcząca* was from the beginning a sympathetic newspaper. It did not give photographs of the camp commander, official interviews, and pompous appeals. It was a non-invasive newspaper, without pretensions. But at first it had to slowly gain readers" (p. 3).

Already in 1940, the concept of the newspaper evolved towards shaping the attitudes of citizens capable of taking an active part in the life of an independent country in the future. Zbigniew Grabowski, one of the journalists of *Polska Walcząca*, noted (1945) that a Polish soldier should be aware of the importance of thinking, which can be treated as a tool of warfare during the war—so the newspaper had also an educational function. Its implementation was undoubtedly influenced by the literary value, but also by the popularization of the published articles.

Also, sensitivity and respect for the delicate sphere of social relations remained the main feature of *Polska Walcząca*. In an article on the broad social background of the newspaper's recipients, published in *Orzeł Biały*, Terlecki reminded that apart from the intelligentsia in the ranks of volunteers, there were labor emigrants, Polonia workers from France:

"In Coëtquidan there was the first significant social confrontation—Poles from the country and Poles from economic emigration. It must have been a dramatic confrontation. People were facing each other in a different way, better or worse struck by independence and those for whom it did not change anything in the image of the world, who, despite the independence of their country, had to look for work and bread in different countries. The first came, having lost the good they possessed. Others were summoned to the ranks to fight for a good that they were not allowed to possess" (1945, p. 8).

Suggestions to overcome political divisions in the name of *raison d'état* and the involvement of all Polish communities outside the country (especially the intelligentsia) in forming state in exile included by Terlecki in an editorial: "The new newspaper will combine the efforts of soldiers, exiles, writers, and artists who by leaving the country became refugees, they were counted in the soldiers' group by the will to complicity in the collective service" (1940a, p. 1).

From the beginning of the existence of *Polska Walcząca*, a lot of space was devoted to the vision of post-war Europe, its system, and international relations. An important role in the weekly was the idea of federation, the systemic organization of European countries (Popiel, 1941). In the weekly the war was understood as a struggle to save European civilization, democracy and, above all, humanistic values:

"Poland faithfully for centuries and up to the present moment fulfilled its duties of the bulwark not only of Christianity but of European civilization in general in the most difficult geographical point of Europe, faithful to its destiny and needed to fill it further in a better world that is to recover from pain [...] of the present war. [...] We are optimists when it comes to the victory of the Allies, because the one who, apart from material superiority, still has a moral advantage cannot lose. As for Poland, also because maintaining a pillar supporting the common sphere is in the interest of all Europeans" (Janta, 1940, p. 1).

Terlecki devoted much attention to emigration as an ideological concept, he analyzed its philosophical, cultural, social, and historical aspects. He believed that it was a mission, and a Pole in exile must have a sense of “cause.” Also in the case when its ethos, goals, and values seem to be temporarily impossible (Kisiel, 2009).

The newspaper fulfilled an informative function, it had ambitions to cover the entirety of issues concerning Polish environments of the emigrants and the situation in the occupied country. The weekly published reports describing the struggle of the civilian population for survival and the activities of the Underground State. The tragedy of the Warsaw Uprising echoed in *Polska Walcząca*—the editors appealed for help to the fighting city. The publication of such relations was associated with the danger of revealing sources of information, surnames or facts that could have caused the repression of the occupation authorities. In connection with these threats, it was common practice to publish incomplete information about the Polish army in the West.

Another function, favored by Terlecki and military command, was the social function of the weekly. The editors, by providing a newspaper for various propaganda actions, tried to integrate soldiers and stimulate solidarity among them and initiate cooperation. An example of such activity was, for example, obtaining correspondence “caregivers” for soldiers. The newspaper presented a whole panorama of “educational” activities, such as: occasional events—nativity plays, concerts, readings, exhibitions, organization of the issue for field hospitals, for war orphans, and collection of books for soldiers in the East. It is also worth mentioning the important initiative of publishing the names of people found and located in the Soviet Union.

After the evacuation of the weekly to Great Britain, related to the beginning of a new stage of the war, the point of view of the newspaper changed. In the exile communities, despite the defeat of France and the establishment of the Vichy government, a great cultural and civilizational contribution was still noticed (Terlecki, 1940b), nevertheless attempts were made to find a new reality, focus on the British social and political system.

Initially, *Polska Walcząca* was a camp weekly, with intellectual ambitions, but with considerably limited access to wide reading communities. In July 1940, the situation changed in favor of the title. In Great Britain, not only soldiers could be the readers of the weekly, but they were still the main body of recipients, but also civil environments. Zbigniew Grabowski tried to determine the reasons for the popularity of the newspaper from the perspective of 1945:

“*Polska Walcząca* is not a bit of a military newspaper. [...] This is a newspaper about the soldier’s hardship, without showing off, it is always vividly interested in matters going beyond the war. It is significant that *Polska Walcząca* devotes so much space to ‘civilian’ matters. [...] I know that it is civilian articles that arouse great interest that a soldier discusses these things, discusses them, argues with the authors of these comments” (p. 9).

In the final phase of the war, the bitterness of the emigrants and the pessimistic moods prevailing in the army, connected with the difficult international situation, the policy of the British Government’s concessions to the Soviet Union, were reflected in journalism and letters to the editors of *Polska Walcząca*. The enthusiastic attitude towards Great Britain has also changed.

After 1945, the outgoing press took over the role of a platform for dialogue and exchange of political thought outside the country—from now on, the journalism was to shape the model of thinking and relation to reality. This pattern is sometimes referred to as “steadfastness,” and the main expressive of this line has become, among others, *Wiadomości* (Eng. *The News*) by Mieczysław Grydzewski. Jerzy Giedroyc (1994) characterized British exile as self-sufficient and absorbed only in its own affairs. In *Polska Walcząca* attempts were made to weigh the arguments, avoiding polemics and formulating extreme views. Despite such attempts of openness to the



dissimilarity of views, the newspaper, however, was part of the trend of independence thinking called “implacable.” An example of an express declaration of obligation is the article entitled “Triennium”: “Among unfounded or unimportant disputes, breakups and rifts, the soldier weekly tried to keep this obvious, most obvious truth in mind, that unity is more important than all differences, fighting against the enemy is more important than any other, and the most painful and lacking there is the pain of exile and the lack of own land” (Terlecki, 1942, p. 1).

The subject matter discussed in the newspaper oscillated around three issues: international politics, the situation in Poland, and the role of emigration. Events important for world politics were commented on a regular basis, visions and concepts of the future Europe were invoked, such as the idea of federation, attitudes towards Pan-Slavism, political cooperation with the Czech Republic, Ukraine, and Lithuania, the role of Germany after the end of hostilities, and participation of Poles in the post-war European order. The second area of journalism of *Polska Walcząca* concerned the issue of Polish war and post-war reality. Another field of interest in the newspaper was the issue of emigration, its ethos, social problems, institutions, priorities of activity, postulates—detailed information was provided about the London environment, especially in correspondence with the editorial staff.

We should also mention the most obvious and often overlooked role of the newspaper for the army, that is, a consolatory function, which was supposed to accentuate the awareness of the communality of fate, soothe the longing for loved ones and the country. Rembieliński recalled: “Then, among others, a song was born in Coëtquidan, printed in this newspaper, sung to the note »And if there will be the sun and good weather« only [...] about the rhythm changed, marching: And if fall, winter, spring will pass/ The joyful moment will come: / Our army will enter the Homeland, / Our eyes will see the Polish land” (1942, p. 3). After 1945, the weekly tried to heal nostalgia, turn it into a caustic act of intellectual creation, tried to support, maintain bonds, and help in difficult conditions. During the war it accompanied in the fight, and after its end it was the organizer of everyday life, it supported the process of adapting to life in new world.

## Abbreviations

IPMS—Archive of the Polish Institute and the Museum of General Sikorski

## Archives

IPMS Kukiel, M., Letter of the Minister of National Defense, General Marian Kukiel, Archives of the Polish Institute and Museum of General Sikorski, 16. X.1943. Ref. A XII.3 / 82.

## Press

*Polska Walcząca*, 1939–1949

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