

## **OUTLINE OF OSKAR HALECKI'S ACTIVITIES IN EXILE 1940-1973**

### **A SWORDSMAN OF POLAND'S FREEDOM**

Alexander Maciej Jabłoński, Ph.D., P.Eng.

The Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada



Professor Oskar Halecki vel Chalecki, Jr., Ph.D., D.Sc. (1891 – 1973)

(Photo N.N., Visuotinė Lietuvių Enciklopedija, after WWII  
from the Latvian Encyclopedia on the Internet)

### **Introduction**

Oskar Halecki belongs to an exclusive group of famous Polish historians from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He experienced the most difficult times of the modern history of Poland which included WWI, the regaining of the independence of Poland in 1918 after 123 years of occupation, the Polish-Bolshevik war, the difficult times of rebuilding of the Second Polish Republic and her dramatic end in 1939, the German occupation as well as the longer one by Soviets which was characterized not only by the physical but also psychological destruction of the Polish nation and inability to pursue scientific studies and research in freedom. From 1939 Halecki was in exile, and starting from 1940 until his death in 1973, he worked in the United States of America. It was the most

prolific time in his scientific career. His impact on scientific field of history and also historiosophy was tremendous. One might assume that there is not a single historian in the West, who during his studies did not come across his works.

Oskar Halecki vel Chalecki, of the coat-of-arms Chalecki (a variant of the Polish coat-of-arms Abdank) was born on May 26, 1891 in Vienna, in the capital of the liberal and multinational Austro-Hungarian monarchy of the Habsburg dynasty. He was the only son of Oskar Aloysius Halecki vel Chalecki Ritter von Nodenhorst (1838-1903), the feldmarshall of infantry, and Leopoldine Delimanić (1856-1943), from the Croatian aristocratic family. Ancestors of young Oskar had been for a long time a part of the Austrian military elite, but his father remembered about his Polish roots, and he employed a private teacher to teach Polish his young son. He also made a note in his last will to oblige his son Oskar to continue his own genealogical studies of the Halecki vel Chalecki clan. That was what happened, and the young Halecki completed his historical studies at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, after the death of his father. The young Halecki spent the period of WWI, the rebirth of Poland and the subsequent period between the wars in Poland. During his studies, he met Helena Szarłowska (1891-1964), a friend in his class, and the daughter of Aloysius Szarłowski (1845-1911), a historian, a freedom fighter during the January Uprising of 1863 in Polish Lithuania, and later editor of the popular daily, “Time” („Czas”) in Cracow. Oskar and Helena got married on July 15, 1913 at Saint Barbara Church in Cracow. They spent a half century together. They seldom separated from each other in their daily life. Helena accompanied Oskar to many conferences and on scientific trips. They did not have children<sup>1,2</sup>. In a very young age, when he was twenty-two years old, Oskar defended his doctorate in Polish history and in 1915, and was awarded a degree of Doctor of Science at the Jagiellonian University. Until 1918 he taught there as the private “docent”. He became a Pole by his own choice. In 1919 Oskar became a member and a secretary of the Polish delegation, under leadership of Roman Dmowski and Ignacy Jan Paderewski, at the Versailles Peace Conference, which was

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<sup>1</sup> Aleksander Maciej Jabłoński – *Oskar Halecki Halecki vel Chalecki, historyk zapomniany, Na Poważnie*, grudzień – styczeń 2013, nr 7/8, s. 58-61.

<sup>2</sup> Andrzej Maciej Brzeziński – *Oskar Halecki a Liga Narodów – Poglądy i działalność*, Wydawnictw Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2016, s. 9-10.

establishing a new order in Europe (and in the world) after WWI. This conference also founded the League of Nations with headquarters in Geneva. That same year he started working as a professor at the University of Warsaw, where he was appointed Chair of the Department of History of Eastern Central Europe. From 1929 he also lectured at the School of Political Sciences at the same University of Warsaw<sup>3</sup>. From this moment one might find two parallel activities of his interests: scientific work, and other as a keen observer of the international affairs. Without any doubt, all of that got started with his participation in the Polish delegation headed by Roman Dmowski, at the Peace Conference in Versailles and his work and activities at the League of Nations.

The outbreak of WWII in 1939 found Oskar and his wife in Fribourg, Switzerland. They left it quickly and arrived in Paris. Professor Halecki immediately started to help in the organizational efforts to establish the Polish University Abroad (known as PUNO – *Polski Uniwersytet na Obczyźnie*). This university continues to exist to this day in Great Britain. Escaping from the German occupation of France in 1940, they left for Spain and later went to Portugal. From Portugal they travelled by boat to the United States. They arrived in New York on August 10, 1940, on the deck of the Greek ship “Nea Hellas”. Their arrival in North America marked a new and final stage of their challenging lives<sup>4</sup>.

### **The beginning of academic activities in America**

Most immigrants to New World will acknowledge that destiny is not a question of coincidence but depends on someone who would offer support in the professional and also in a pure humanitarian sense. In this regard, Halecki’s received a significant amount of help from Dr. Stephan Paul Mizwa (in Polish Stefan Mierzwa), who was the founder and the President of the Kościuszko Foundation. They knew each other since 1938, when Dr. Mizwa organized and invited Professor Halecki for a lecture tour of American universities and colleges.

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<sup>3</sup> Małgorzata Dąbrowska, *Oskara Haleckiego droga do Bizancjum i na Bronx*, [w:] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy*, pod red. M. Dąbrowskiej, t. I, Warszawa-Łódź 2012, s. 113.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, s. 117.

Stephan Mizwa was a Polish immigrant, who arrived to America via the famous Ellis Island in New York where thousand of new immigrants came to seek a new life for their families. He was a Harvard graduate and he started his academic career as a professor of economics at Drake University. In 1923 Professor Mizwa founded the Polish American Scholarship Committee. It was the first exchange programme for students from Poland with American universities in the field of business and economics. In 1925 with the financial support of Samuel M. Vauclain, a director of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, he established the Kościuszko Foundation. The Foundation's history has involved evolved through various phases. At one point it was completely independent, then partially supported by the Polish Government in Exile, and subsequently it was also penetrated by special communist forces and became partially dependent on the Communist Government in Warsaw. However, during WWII the foundation was free from any foreign influence.

Professor Halecki with his wife, landed first in New York. He was known as a very good university teacher and he had useful command of many languages – he was fluent both orally and in writing in German, French, Italian, English, and of course Polish. He also knew Latin very well.



Dr Henry Noble MacCracken (1880-1970), the Rector of the Vassar College,  
Poughkeepsie, NY (1915-1946) (Photo N.N., Library of Congress ca. 1915)

With the help of Dr. Stephan Paul Mizwa and Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken, who was at the that time, the President of the Kościuszko Foundation, Oskar Halecki started lecturing at the famous Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken was the Rector of the Vassar College at that time. The privately-owned Vassar College was founded in 1861 and is still one of the best rated liberal arts colleges in the US, preparing students for graduate studies. It has the highest rate of the graduates who later successfully pursued their studies at the Ph.D. level. For over 100 years this was a college for young females and remained so during the tenure of Professor Oskar Halecki. The college belongs to the exclusive group of seven female colleges, called *Seven Sisters*, and it maintains its historical ties with Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. Professor Oskar Halecki lectured on this picturesque campus of Vassar College, located in the full of historic sights, Hudson Valley, during WWII. He was able to speak in an extremely convincing manner and at the same time captivate the audience with his extraordinary erudition and knowledge of many topics, even outside of the field of history. Halecki was aware of the importance of his role as a person working among the circles of influence at that time. There were networks of university intellectuals in America. He decided with great determination to conduct his intellectual campaign for the sake of brutally occupied Poland. Halecki did not treat Vassar College as a permanent academic place for his future career, but he was highly appreciated.

Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken wrote to him in a letter dated June 9, 1942:

*It is almost impossible to contain on this scrap of paper the enormity of the contribution that you have made to Vassar over the past two years [...] From all corners I hear the warmest praise and recommendations about what you have done here. Introductory level courses, as well as reflections on the principles of a historic vocation, as well as the remaining, difficult to name contribution to the life of our university are of the highest value<sup>5</sup>.*

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<sup>5</sup> PIN, kolekcja 50 (Oskar Haleckiego), t 1 [w: Janusz Cisek – *Oskar Halecki – Historyk – Szermierz wolności*, IPN, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warszawa 2009] [Translated from Polish by AMJ].

At the beginning of 1944 the Dean of the Liberal Arts of the known, private and Jesuit Fordham University, NY, Rev. Professor Gustave Dumas, on behalf of the Rector, Rev. Professor Robert I. Gannon, invited Professor Oskar Halecki to be a Chair of the Department of Historical Studies.



The Vassar College (zał. 1861 r.), Poughkeepsie, NY.  
The work place of Professor Oskar Halecki in 1940-1942 (Photo – Wikipedia)

Professor Halecki had accepted this offer and Fordham became his place of research until his death. This famous Jesuit and Catholic University was a bastion of modern knowledge and research. Fordham University was founded in 1841 by the Dioceses of New York as the private institution, initially with the name of St. John's College. Later this university was taken over by Jesuits. Then, Fordham University had become one of the leading educational institutions in league among the oldest American universities.



Keating Hall, Fordham University, NY

The work place of Professor Oskar Halecki in 1944 – 1970 (Photo – Wikipedia)

### **Three trends of Oskar Halecki's activities (1940 – 1973)**

In Oskar Halecki's activities, one might highlight three powerful trends, which intertwine with each other in many instances. These three trends (or directions) are: the trend of the scientific research and work, the journalistic trend and finally the socio-political trend. The comprehensive assessment of his legacy should be done in a future monography, which will cover all three trends of his activities, including all their aspects. The wealth of his interests is represented not only in

the recently published and monumental bibliography of his works, but also very impressive bibliography of publications about them, in both cases skilfully prepared by Michał Kozłowski<sup>6,7</sup>.

### ***Trend of Scientific Research and Work***

The most important books published by Oskar Halecki during his life in exile, in one sense, were a continuation of his studies during WWI and also in the interwar period in Poland. Based on the opinion of Professor Piotr Wandycz from Yale University, the wartime experience during WWII prompted Professor Oskar Halecki to consider the new world situation and to search for new solutions for his own country, Poland, as well as for the whole region of the Central-Eastern Europe<sup>8</sup>. During his scientific studies in Poland, he had discovered and learned the modern methodology of research work and handling of complicated sources from archives. His interests at that time, focused on issues associated with the Jagiellonian dynasty period, and specifically on the history of the Polish-Lithuanian union.

At the beginning of his research path he published three monumental historical monographies in Polish: *Ostatnie lata Świdrygiełły i sprawa wołyńska za Kazimierza Jagiellończyka*, Kraków 1915, s. 315 (*The Last Years of Świdrygiełło and Volhynian Case during the Reign of King Kazimir Jagiellonian*, Cracow 1915, 315 pages), *Przyłączenie Podlasia, Wołynia i Kijowszczyzny do Korony w roku 1569*, Kraków 1915, s. 245 (*Annexion of Podlasie, Volhyn and Kiev Regions to the Polish Crown in 1569*, Cracow, 245 pages), and finally *Zgoda Sandomierska 1570 r. Jej geneza i znaczenie w dziejach reformacji polskiej za Zygmunta Augusta*, Warszawa 1915, s. 422. (*Settlement in Sandomierz in 1570, Its Origin in the History of Polish Reformation during the Reign of King Sigismund August*, Warsaw 1915, 422 pages). Then, shortly thereafter he had published a phenomenal work in two volumes in Polish: *Dzieje Unii Jagiellońskiej*, t. 1: *W wiekach*

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<sup>6</sup> Michał Kozłowski - *Bibliografia prac Oskara Haleckiego (1908-2011)* [w:] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy*, red. Małgorzata Dąbrowska, t.2, Warszawa – Łódź, IPN 2014, s.218-269].

<sup>7</sup> Michał Kozłowski - *Bibliografia prac dotyczących Oskara Haleckiego* [w:] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy*, red. Małgorzata Dąbrowska, t. 1, Warszawa – Łódź, IPN, 2012, s.245-248].

<sup>8</sup> Janusz Cisek – *Oskar Halecki – Historyk – Szermierz wolności*, IPN, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warszawa 2009, s.39.

*średnich*, Kraków 1919, s. 482; t.2: *W XVI wieku*, Kraków, 1920, s. 385. (History of Jagiellonian Union, Vol. 1: In Middle Ages, Cracow 1919, 482 pages; Vol. 2: In the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, Cracow 1920, 385 pages), without aid of computer, without Internet and without any online library<sup>9</sup>.

During his research work in America, the time had arrived for the creation of his ground-breaking works on the whole region of Central-Eastern Europe. However, before this happened, Halecki published his famous book titled *History of Poland*<sup>10</sup>. The author of this essay has in his library, the 20<sup>th</sup> edition (!) of this book, with added new chapters until the fall of communist system in Poland, by Professor Anthony Polonsky and Professor Thaddeus V. Gromada<sup>11</sup>. This version had several English, French, Italian and Spanish editions. Another very important book was also written together with other Western historians and published in 1941 by Cambridge University Press, *The Cambridge History of Poland, Vol. 2: From Augustus II to Pilsudski (1697 – 1935)*<sup>12</sup>. Its first volume was published in 1950 under the title: *The Cambridge History of Poland, Vol. 1: From Origins to Sobieski*<sup>13</sup>. Both volumes had many positive reviews. The author of this essay read Vol. 2 at the Finnish National Library in 1969. Books written by Oskar Halecki were not available at the libraries in the Polish People's Republic (especially to the students outside of Department of History).

In May 1942 together with five other prominent Polish intellectuals, Halecki founded the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, which was supposed to be a continuation of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (founded in Cracow in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century). The Academy was

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<sup>9</sup> Aleksander Maciej Jabłoński – *Oskar Halecki Halecki vel Chalecki, historyk zapomniany*, „*Na Poważnie*”, grudzień – styczeń 2013, nr 7/8, s. 58-61.

<sup>10</sup> Oskar Halecki – *The History of Poland: An Essay in Historical Synthesis*, tłum. z jęz. polskiego M.M. Gardner i M. Corbridge-Patkaniowska [poprawione i rozszerzone wyd. *La Pologne de 963 á 1914*, Paris 1933], London 1942, s.272.

<sup>11</sup> Oskar Halecki – *A History of Poland*, New York 1992, s.472.

<sup>12</sup> [Redakcja] *The Cambridge History of Poland, t. 2: From Augustus II to Pilsudski (1697 – 1935)*, red. W.F. Reddaway, J.H. Penson, O. Halecki, R. Dyboski, Cambridge 1941, XVI + 630 s. + mapa (wyd. 2 w 1951).

<sup>13</sup> [Redakcja] *The Cambridge History of Poland, t. 2: From the Origins to Sobieski to 1696*, red. W.F. Reddaway, J.H. Penson, O. Halecki, R. Dyboski, Cambridge 1950, XIV + 608 s. + mapa.

suspended during Nazi occupation of Poland. The founding members consisted of historians: Professors Halecki and Kucharczyński (the first Polish Prime Minister of the government established under Regency Council in 1917), Professor Bronisław Malinowski (world known anthropologist), a historian of the state and law, Professor Rafał Taubenschlag, a geographer and discoverer, Professor Arctowski and the known Polish poet, Jan Lechoń. The Institute also gathered a large circle of outstanding American scientists, some of them were foreign members of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (before WWII). Among them one might find such personalities like the Polish sociologist Florian Znaniecki from the University of Chicago, Dr. James Conant, President of Harvard University, Professor Robert Kerner from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), Professor Charles Seymour from Yale University, Rev. Professor, Robert I. Gannon, S.J., President of Fordham University, and Dr. Waldo G. Leland, from American Council of Learning Societies. Professor Bronisław Malinowski became the first President of the Institute, and after his death, the presidency was passed to Professor Jan Kucharczyński, known historian and attorney.

Professor Oskar Halecki became the first Executive Director of PIASA. In 1953, after the death of Professor Jan Kucharczyński, he took over a seat of President of PIASA and he maintained it until 1962. From 1964 Oskar Halecki until his death he was the Honorary President of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America. The scientific journal of the Institute, called *The Polish Review*, gave to him and others the opportunity to publish many scientific papers, including those in relation to the situation of the occupied Poland. He also drew attention with all its might on Christian European heritage.

He presented in this book, his Christian interpretation of history contrasting it in a broad sense with the historical materialism<sup>14</sup>. This book waited until the collapse of communism, for the first Polish edition in 1994 (with new editions published in 2000 and 2002, respectively). This book was translated into many foreign languages and was discussed by different groups and bodies. Its

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<sup>14</sup> Ks. Grzegorz Ryś – *Chrześcijaństwo jako klucz interpretacyjny historiozofii Oskara Haleckiego* [w:] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy*, red. Małgorzata Dąbrowska, t. 1, Warszawa – Łódź, IPN, 2012, s.9-15]

fundamental conclusion was his conviction that European civilization can develop outside of Europe and in the Western hemisphere.



Professor Jan Kucharzewski (1876 – 1952), a historian and lawyer,  
President of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (1942 – 1952) (Photo N.N., ca. 1944 - Wikipedia)

One might assume now, that his innovative approach was supported not only by the circles of émigré historians and scientists of Central-Eastern European origin, but also by other researchers or authors from the Atlantic region. Halecki proposed a new division of the chronology of universal history and a new periodization of history: Mitterrandian epoch, European epoch and Atlantic epoch (the current period)<sup>15</sup>. He also introduced the currently used term East Central Europe. For Oskar Halecki, the Eastern frontier of this part of Europe was the Eastern frontier of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Halecki also drew attention to the German-Russian cooperation in the different timeframe of the European history:

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<sup>15</sup> *Oskar Halecki: Historyk – Szermierz Wolności*, wybór i tł. Janusz Cisek, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2009. s. 39. [Translation from Polish by AMJ].

*The main element of their cooperation was encircling and isolation of other nations, and even total elimination of all nations dividing Germany from Russia, nations representing Eastern borderlands of European civilization*<sup>16</sup>.

His next valuable work was published in 1952 as a new book - *The Borderlands of Western Civilization. A History of East Central Europe*<sup>17</sup>. This was the first and unique history of East Central Europe. The Polish translation is still missing to this date, although this book had a German edition in 1980, and two Hungarian editions in 1980 and 1995, and three new English original editions in 2000, 2001 and 2005. This publication sparked a lot of discussion among Polish, German and also American historians and a number of reviews of it were published in authoritative scientific journals on both sides of Atlantic Ocean.

On the important occasion of the Millennium of Christianity in Poland, the special monumental, multi-voluminal work was published, under the title: *Sacrum Poloniae Millennium. Dissertations – Overviews– Historical Documentation*. Oskar Halecki was the author of Vol. 5 titled *From Florence to Brest (1439 – 1596)*, which was published in Rome, in 1958. This volume proved that Halecki did not stop his archival research and studies on the Christian history of the old Poland and its relation to universal history (including the history of Byzantine Empire)<sup>18</sup>. His next valuable contribution was a book titled *The Millennium of Europe*, and was published in 1963<sup>19</sup>. This book was attacked by a Marxist's historian, Professor Konstanty Grzybowski<sup>20</sup>, in the Communist-

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<sup>16</sup> Oskar Halecki – *Historia Europy – jej granice i podziały*, Lublin 2000, s.130-131.

<sup>17</sup> Oskar Halecki – *The Borderlands of Western Civilization. A History of East Central Europe*, New York, 503 s., New York 1952.

<sup>18</sup> Oskar Halecki – *From Florence to Brest (1439 – 1596)*, Roma 1958, 444 s. (*Sacrum Poloniae Millennium. Rozprawy – szkice-materiały historyczne*, t. 5).

<sup>19</sup> Oskar Halecki – *The Millennium of Europe*, wstęp H. Burgmans, Notre Dame (Indiana) 1963, XXVII +441 s.

<sup>20</sup> Konstanty Grzybowski – *Anachroniczna historiozofia profesora Oskara Haleckiego*, „Nowe Drogi” 1964, nr 10, s. 101-107.

occupied Poland, but received a very positive review by Professor Leon Koczy<sup>21</sup>, who was a Polish historian, working in Scotland. A German translation of this book was published in 1966.

From Byzantine history, Oskar Halecki prepared, in the last years of his life, a new and extended edition of his book originally published before WWII in French, and titled *Un Empereur de Byzance á Rome*<sup>22</sup>. This book was awarded with very positive reviews in the world of Byzantine research.

Oskar Halecki for many years, had also studied the Jadwiga Anjou, the Queen of Poland and this research resulted in many scientific articles, but he could not complete his work on this future Polish saint. In 1991 only, his former student, Professor Thaddeus V. Gromada published the last work by Oskar Halecki. This work was titled *Jadwiga of Anjou and Rise of East Central Europe*<sup>23</sup> with an introduction by Professor Gromada.

Separate of all scientific activities, publication of articles, reviews and discussions in scientific journals, was Halecki's participation in conferences and international congresses. The monumental bibliography of Oskar Halecki<sup>24</sup> lists his published works and articles and proves his caliber as a researcher and an author. In her well-done study Professor Maria Zadencka from the University of Stockholm, describes participation of Polish historians, working as emigrants

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<sup>21</sup> Leon Koczy -,Teki Historyczne" 1964/1965. s. 123-129.

<sup>22</sup> Oskar Halecki – *Un Empereur de Byzance á Rome*, wyd. 2 rozszerzone, London 1972, VI\_532 s. (przedruk *Un Empereur de Byzance á z 1930 r. i Rome et Byznace au temps du grand schisme d'Occident 1937 r.*)

<sup>23</sup> Oskar Halecki - *Jadwiga of Anjou and Rise of East Central Europe*<sup>23</sup>, Boulder (Colorado) – Highland Lakes (New Jersey) 1991, XVI + 400 s.

<sup>24</sup> Michał Kozłowski - *Bibliografia prac Oskara Haleckiego (1908-2011)* [w:] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy*, red. Małgorzata Dąbrowska, t.2, Warszawa – Łódź, IPN 2014, s.218-269].

outside of Communist Poland, in the World Historical Congresses<sup>25</sup>. She also cites an original fragment of the Halecki's article, describing a dramatic situation of these outstanding researchers and representatives of a free Polish historiographical thought when they met with Polish historians participating as representatives from Communist-occupied Poland<sup>26</sup>.

*This striking dualism of the representation of Polish historiography was without precedent. ... The experience proved both painful and instructive. ... In a number of cases former colleagues and even friends who otherwise would have been so happy to see each other again and freely talk after so many years of separation, faced one another in an only too natural embarrassment which on either side of invisible barrier was caused by different considerations. Furthermore, from a national point of view it was more than painful; it was a disgrace that scholar of the same origin found it more difficult to cooperate with one another than with the historians from other lands who witnessed their disagreement, wondering whether it was apparel or real. ... Under such conditions the task of those scholars who represented free Polish historiography abroad was extremely difficult indeed. Without any governmental support, not represented in the International Committee, listed among historians of the countries where they are residing at present, they enjoyed in compensation only one advantage: complete freedom of expression without foreign instruction or control. On many occasions they also had the comfort of feeling the sympathetic understanding of many colleagues from various lands who well remembered their participation, as representatives of independent Poland, in the prewar congresses...*

It is noteworthy to mention that Oskar Halecki, himself, was a principal originator of participation of Polish historians in the World Historical Congresses since his service in the League of Nations. Many Polish historians participated in the subsequent congresses in Brussels in 1923, in Oslo in

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<sup>25</sup> Maria Zadencka – *Polish Exile Historians at the International Historical Congresses*, [w:] *East and Central European History Writing in Exile 1939 -1989*, Edited by Maria Zadencka, Andrejs Plakans and Andreas Lawaty, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2015, s.155-187.

<sup>26</sup> Oskar Halecki – *Poland and the Tenth International Congress of Historical Sciences*, „The Polish Review I, No. 1. Winter 1956, s.5-22 [English translation by A.M. Jabłoński].

1928, and specifically in Warsaw and Cracow in 1933, as well as in Zürich in 1938, This situation dramatically changed after WWII. Halecki participated in the World Congresses, in Paris in 1950, in Rome in 1955 and in Stockholm in 1960. However, the crisis was slowly drawing to the fore and it was associated with a growing number of Soviet scholars who started to participate in official delegations from the Soviet Union. In the galaxy of the Polish historians working outside of Poland, Oskar Halecki had assumed a specific and unique role. Professor Rafał Stobiecki has rightly noticed that this generation was shaped in the tradition of free Second Republic of Poland, after WWI. He lists, in addition to Oskar Halecki, such important Polish historians like Waław Jędrzejewski, Leon Koczy, Jan Kucharzewski, Marian Kukiel, Stanisław Kościółkowski, Karolina Lanckorońska, Otton Laskowski, Rev. Walerian Meysztowicz, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, Tadeusz Sulimirski, Władysław Wielhorski<sup>27</sup>.

### **Journalistic Trend**

A journalistic trend of Oskar Halecki's work, was interwoven with a socio-political trend of his activities. In one sense, it was also an important supplement to his scientific and teaching activities, which was always the most important part of the scientific trend in his professional life.

From the outbreak of WWII, he continued his great work for the cause of his occupied homeland. In 1943, he organized a special conference on the current situation of East Central Europe. Meantime, in Poland and in the war theatre, and in fact, in the whole world, there were changes unfavorable not only for Poland but for the whole region. During partially secret conferences in Teheran and later in Yalta, the new partition of Poland was sealed. The Western Allies declared new zones of influence with their new ally in their fight against Hitler, the Soviet Union, ruled by Joseph Stalin, a communist criminal of historic proportions. Oskar Halecki together with other émigré historians and intellectuals followed these events very closely, and he had foreseen a very

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<sup>27</sup> Rafał Stobiecki – *Oskar Halecki na tle emigracyjnej historiografii polskiej*, [w] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy* pod red. Małgorzaty Dąbrowskiej, t.1, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Warszawa-Łódź 2012, s. 223.

difficult time of new occupation in Poland, passed to hands of Stalin and his local puppets – Polish communists.

As early as 1945, results of this new situation impacted also the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in New York. In January 1945, the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences was reactivated, but was almost immediately subjected to the new communist authorities. Oskar Halecki had decided not to accept their authority and he confirmed the Institute's full autonomy and independence. As a reply, the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (in Poland) had decided to cancel memberships of all professors who were members of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America. Among them were such professors like Oskar Halecki, Jan Kucharzewski, Henryk Arctowski, Alfred Tarski and Antoni Zygmund. As Dr. Jan Cisek commented in his study:

*Independence and resistance had some bitter taste. Unfortunately, also the Polish Government in Exile in London, set aside, because of course some other reasons, financial aid to the Institute in New York<sup>28</sup>.*

Soon after, the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences was suspended and her estate was taken over by the Polish Academy of Sciences, organized following an example of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

During this period, *The Sixth Partition of Poland*<sup>29</sup>, one of the remarkable papers by Oskar Halecki, was published. In this paper Halecki, in a very innovative manner, characterized subsequent partitions of Poland, in the eve of the newest one (called by him the sixth partition of Poland) and confirmed by the disgraceful conference at Yalta, when the former Allies of Poland conceded Poland to Stalin. In addition to old three partitions from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Halecki added also decisions reached in 1815 during the Congress of Vienna, the Pact Molotov-Ribbentrop in 1939,

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<sup>28</sup> *Oskar Halecki: Historyk – Szermierz Wolności*, wybór i tł. Janusz Cisek, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2009. s. 39.

<sup>29</sup> Oskar Halecki - *The Sixth Partition of Poland*, "The Review of Politics", 1945, nr 2, s. 142-155.

and finally the partition of Poland reached and sealed in Yalta. The following are excerpts from this paper in relation to fate of Poles after the last partition of Yalta:

*The fate of Poles in the divided Poland is difficult, but it is also worth mentioning the fate of Polish emigrants scattered all over the world. Their tragedy can be expressed in one expression: if they remain faithful to the spirit of Poland, they will never see their country again. There is one group, which deserves the special attention. This is the Polish Armed Forces in the West, who fought arm to arm with Allies on many fronts of the war. [...] There is no doubt, that they being faithful to the old Polish tradition, will fight to the end. The level of feeling troubling them, shows, the number of suicides after the Yalta conference<sup>30</sup>.*

Halecki wrote a great number of different journal texts and he started his great lecturing effort at American and also some Canadian universities. In 1944-1950 he lectured at Université de Montréal, and in 1945-1962, at the University of California at Berkeley. In 1955, Columbia University hired him as the Visiting Professor and this contract lasted until 1962. In total, Professor Halecki lectured permanently or occasionally at 81 colleges and universities in America. This was a real record!

In these very laborious years, he had many meetings and presentations at the different Polish-American fora, like the Polish American Congress (PAC), the Joseph Piłsudski's Institute in New York and at the founded by himself, the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (PIASA) also in New York, It is worth to mention that in 1943, the Canadian branch of the latter was established in Montreal, and it was separated in 1976, as the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada (PIASC).

During years spent in America, especially in the 1940's, he followed footsteps of Ignacy Jan Paderewski and he became his successor in the fight for a free Poland. Professor Thaddeus V. Gromada, wrote:

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<sup>30</sup> Ibidem (tłum. prof. Janusza Ciska, and English translation of the Polish version by the author)

*This is true that Halecki was not a famous artist and man as Paderewski, but the cause of “Free Poland” couldn’t have the better fighter, more eloquent and fuller of passion as it was Oskar Halecki at that time*<sup>31</sup>.

One of his best papers was his lecture in English, on the occasion of the anniversary of 200 years of Columbia University. Three outstanding Polish-American scientists and professors presented separate lectures: Florian Znaniecki, a sociologist, Waław Lednicki, a slavist, and Oskar Halecki, a historian. The Halecki’s lecture was titled: *The Polish Scholar - Soldier of Liberty*.

This is a portion of this very important lecture of Professor Oskar Halecki, in which he discussed a very important issue of defense of freedom by representatives of the Polish science in the historical perspective. Before characteristics of works of Joachim Lelewel and August Cieszkowski, Halecki presented some of his own points of view, but also included a very interesting opinion of the known to him personally, an American historian, Robert H. Lord:

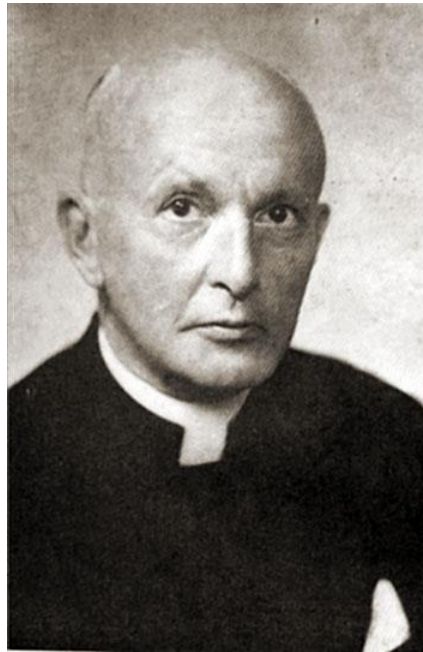


Prof. Florian Znaniecki (1882-1956), a world-famous sociologist,  
a founder of modern sociology, worked in the U.S.A. since 1939 (Photo N.N., after WWII, Internet)

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<sup>31</sup> Thaddeus V. Gromada - *Oscar Halecki: Historian and Activist 1942-1946*, Paper presented at the Meeting of the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies, March 29, 2003, Savannah, Georgia.

*An excellent American historian and specialist of partitions of Poland, Robert H. Lord, in a very convincing way has proven that neither the constitutional reform, nor the cultural revival in spirit of freedom, were not able to prevent Poland from being destroyed by aggressive and disproportionately stronger neighbors [AMJ - at the end of the 18th century]<sup>32</sup>. Among those who made possible the liberation of Poland after a hundred years of slavery, not only „the unknown soldier” of all national uprisings, but also „the unknown scientist and teacher”, from daily life, who was faithful to tradition of freedom, deserves a monument in every Polish city<sup>33</sup>.*



Ks. prof. Robert Howard Lord (1885-1954), Harvard University,  
historyk i dyplomata amerykański (fot. N.N. po 1945 - Wikipedia)

*Among those, who once again deserved to be called the swordsmen of freedom, it is possible to point to two specific examples. These persons are already not alive, and they cannot be subject to reprisals. Those two scientists were historians, and also political scientists, and they first had to*

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<sup>32</sup> R. H. Lord - *Second Partition of Poland: A Study in Diplomatic History*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1915  
(polskie tłumaczenie: *Drugi rozbiór Polski*, Warszawa, 1973).

<sup>33</sup> Oskar Halecki - *The Polish Scholar - Soldier of Liberty* [w:] Florian Znaniecki, Waclaw Lednicki, Oscar Halecki,  
*Three Columbia Bicentennial Lectures*, New York 1954, s. 39-47.

*endure the German atrocities, when they were taken with other professors of the Jagiellonian University and sent to the concentration camp, and probably because the University of Paulus Vladimiri had to be punished for being a fortress of patriotism for 500 years. They both had to experience soon what „liberation” by the Red Army really meant for free people who believe in the truth*<sup>34</sup>.

Those not alive in 1954, were mentioned by Halecki, were two Professors of the Jagiellonian University: Stanisław Kutrzeba and Władysław Konopczyński<sup>35</sup>. However, this Halecki's lecture can be also treated as the next presented socio-political trend of his activities.

### ***Socio-political Trend***

The socio-political trend for Halecki, was inherently connected with his journalist trend of work. It had also many elements in relations to his main activities – a trend of his scientific work. The main issue discussed in his papers, was the defense of widely considered Polish cause, in relation to the situation of Poland after the war.

After WWII, Halecki clearly saw dangers for Poland and the Polish nation. It is necessary to mention another fragment of the earlier mentioned paper titled *The Sixth Partition of Poland* published in 1945. Halecki pointed out that Poland belongs to the Atlantic community having the same spiritual character, built on “tradition of humanism, freedom and democracy”. However, he stressed its foundation on a Christian ideology<sup>36</sup>. In the final fragment of this paper Halecki presented a very important thought:

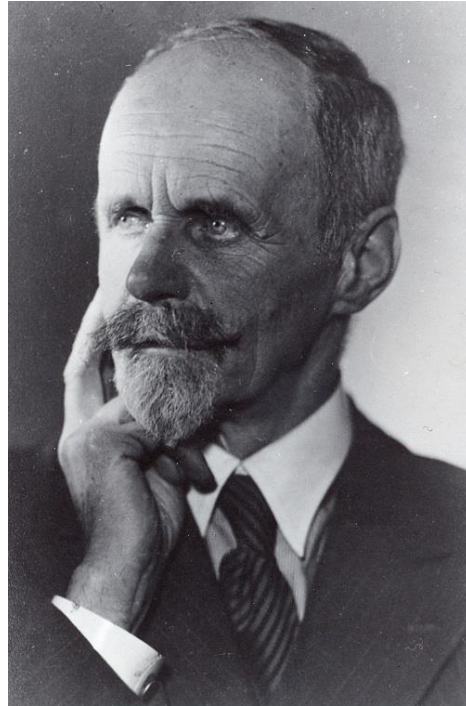
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<sup>34</sup> Ibidem

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem

<sup>36</sup> Andrzej Maciej Brzeziński – *Oskar Halecki a Liga Narodów – Poglądy i działalność*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2016, s. 9-10.

*The so-called Great Emigration (after the November Uprising of 1830-31 – AMJ) tried to establish a new philosophy of national and international life based on Christian ideas. Today, our subsequent emigration must take on this task, to serve, in this particular manner, Poland and humanity, both crucified after WWII* <sup>37</sup>.



Professor Władysław Konopczyński (1880-1952), a famous Polish historian,  
A member of secret National League and national-democratic movement, the founder of the Polish Biographical Dictionary, prosecuted by communists after WWII. (Photo N.N., after WWII - Internet)

During the Yalta Conference it was decided that Poland will be represented at the conference founding the United Nations in San Francisco, on April 25, 1945, by the puppet government of “national unity” with some representation of Poles from London, England (despite this government could not possibly be created before the start of this conference).

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<sup>37</sup> Oskar Halecki - *The Sixth Partition of Poland*, "The Review of Politics", 1945, nr 2, s. 142-155, Tłum. J. Ciska [w: *Oskar Halecki: Historyk – Szermierz Wolności*, wybór i tł. Janusz Cisek, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2009., s. 215, English translation by AMJ].

Invitations for participation in this conference, were sent on March 5, 1945 to governments of 39 countries, with exclusion of the legal Polish Government in Exile in London. Then the Government led by the old socialist, Tomasz Arciszewski, sent on March 12, 1945, diplomatic protest notes to the Great Britain, the United States and China, that it is the only “legal and independent representative of the Polish State”. The situation became more complicated after the statement of the Soviet government, demanding participation of the delegation of the puppet government of Edward Osóbka-Morawski<sup>38</sup>. Oskar Halecki presented a harsh criticism in his radio interview in the WMCA Station in New York City, titled: *Who will speak for Poland in San Francisco?* He said that the Soviet veto against the invitation of the Polish legal government is in fact, *another step to the liquidation of Poland’s independence*. He also stated the best solution for Poland will be an “empty chair”. Poland’s absence, according to him, would be the strongest protest against decisions of Yalta, which he demanded, should be revised. Halecki finished his interview that in Yalta, nobody talked louder than “Ivan Grozny, Peter the Great and Catherine II”, but the first who opt for Poland will be “George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson<sup>39</sup>. Attorney Charles Rozmarek, President of the newly established Polish American Congress (PAC), turned to Oskar Halecki to be a consultant to the PAC, on historical and political affairs. The Polish American Congress was established during the largest meeting in the history, of the Polish-American organizations in the U.S.A. It was held in Buffalo, NY, May 28 – June 1, 1944. Charles Rozmarek obtained permission of the State Department for participation of the PAC’s delegation as an observer during conference in San Francisco, with a special status given for non-governmental organizations. Rozmarek appointed Professor Oskar Halecki as a historical counselor to the PAC’s delegation<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Andrzej Maciej Brzeziński – *Oskar Halecki a Liga Narodów – Poglądy i działalność*, Wydawnictw Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2016, s. 299.

<sup>39</sup> Archiwum Instytutu Polskiego i Muzeum im. Generała Władysława Sikorskiego, AHE/941. Powielony tekst broszury *Who will speak for Poland in San Francisco?*

<sup>40</sup> Andrzej Maciej Brzeziński – *Oskar Halecki a Liga Narodów – Poglądy i działalność*, Wydawnictw Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2016, s. 305.

During his life in exile, Halecki did not write much about his activities at the League of Nations, for the cause of international intellectual cooperation. However, he mentioned it in his large volume titled *Millennium of Catholic Poland*, as a part of the series *Sacrum Poloniae Millennium*:

*Resurrected Poland needed a stable peace, and because of the insufficiency of the Western Allied system, based on the deceptive concept of European forces balance, she supported, despite of all its shortcomings, the League of Nations. According to him, the League, was in general sense, based on a Christian idea, as an international organization, which respected the law before the force<sup>41</sup>.*



Att. Charles Rozmarek, President of the Polish American Congress (PAC) with Richard J. Daley, Mayor of Chicago in the office of the Polish National Alliance (PNA), after 1945 (arch. PAC, Chicago, Illinois)

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<sup>41</sup> Oskar Halecki – *Pierwsze Tysiąclecie Katolickiej Polski*, Edizioni Hosianum Roma 1966, s. 30-31. [w: *Oskar Halecki, Historyk - Szermierz Wolności*, wybór i tł. Janusz Cisek, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2009., s. 58-74].

Halecki, after WWII, realized that the new international organization (the United Nations), would not longer have much in common with Christian ideas. However, he hoped that his idea of the “moral disarmament” for avoiding the future war, which was proposed by Poland in 1932 at the League of Nations, could reach a new formulation at the newly created United Nations.

Halecki was also deeply concerned about false opinions circulated about Pope Pius XII by unfavorable circles to Holy See, even suspecting him of collaboration with Nazi Germany. It is true that the Holy See, for the Church’s survival, was highly neutral and at the same time secretly continuing its monumental activities helping people and protecting them from prosecution in Italy, Germany and occupied countries in the West. To counter these unfounded opinions, he wrote jointly with his student, James F. Murray, Jr., a book, titled *Eugenio Pacelli, Pope of Peace*<sup>42</sup>. This book had several editions including one in Spanish. At this time, Halecki also continued his Catholic activities including defense of the religion rights of the Church and of religion freedom in the occupied by Communists, Poland and other countries. During the special *Week of Religious Freedom* in November of 1953 he circulated a special open letter signed by outstanding members of laity and clergy of various denominations to the *Editor of The New York Times*, reminding the world about imprisoned by Communists outstanding cardinals like Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Pimate of Poland, Cardinal József Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary, and Cardinal Alojzij Stepanić of Croatia (now declared a martyr by the John Paul II). He also inquired for fate of the Greek-Catholic and Orthodox clergy, suppressed and prosecuted by communists.

He had performed many studies and scientific queries associated with the Millennium of Christianity in Poland. He also most probably impacted the 9-year novena proposed and implemented by Cardinal Wyszyński, as a special preparation of the nation for celebration of Millennium in Poland. Oskar Halecki believed in a special role played by the Church in history of Poland, and that it was a source of the strength of the nation and its fight throughout centuries. He underlined the value of faith in the resistance against new repressive occupation, and he soon

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<sup>42</sup> Oskar Halecki and James F. Murray, jr. – *Eugenio Pacelli. Pope of Peace*, New York 1951, VIII + 355 s.

became most hated by communists, Catholic intellectual through his whole life in exile. His voice stood in the frontline of voices rejecting the communist dictatorship. His voice had to be very loud, because the communist censorship curtailed almost everything from his works before, during and after the war time.

Professor Marek Kornat mentioned in his paper titled *Oskar Halecki and the Holy See*, citing also another known Polish historian, Jerzy Kłoczowski:

*Halecki is “a European strongly identifying himself with religious-cultural roots of European civilization”<sup>43</sup>. He promoted a vision of the Atlantic civilisation as a formation acquiring the heritage of European civilisation as its historical continuation. He could not visualize its survival without religion – without Christianity and the Roman Church<sup>44</sup>.*

Until the 90-ties Halecki he had remained practically an unknown historian and writer in Poland. Even today knowledge of his name is rare in the circles of specialists. The real breakthrough was a series of symposia, organized in 2010-2014, by Professor Maria Dąbrowska, and dedicated to achievements of the scientific career of Oskar Halecki. Three valuable volumes of the proceedings from this series titled *Oskar Halecki and His Vision of Europe*, were published<sup>45</sup>.

In 1964, his beloved wife Helena passed away. It resulted in Halecki's breakdown and he stopped his studies and work during a period of mourning. However, he managed with extreme will, to return once more, to the public stage during celebration of Millennium outside of Poland. In Rome,

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<sup>43</sup> Jerzy Kłoczowski – *Oskar Halecki i jego walka o miejsce w Europie* [w:] *Z dziejów polityki i dyplomacji polskiej. Studia poświęcone pamięci Edwarda hr. Raczyńskiego, Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na wychodźstwie*, red. H. Bulhak, Warszawa 1994, s. 397-406.

<sup>44</sup> Marek Kornat – *Oskar Halecki a Stolica Apostolska* [w:] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy*, red. Małgorzata Dąbrowska, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Uniwersytet Łódzki, t.1, Warszawa-Łódź 2012, s.150.

<sup>45</sup> *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy*, red. Małgorzata Dąbrowska, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Uniwersytet Łódzki, t. 1, Warszawa-Łódź 2012, 286 s.; t. 2, Warszawa-Łódź 2014, 318 s.; t. 3, Warszawa-Łódź, 2014, 423 s.

in a presence of the Pope Paul VI, he gave a lecture in Italian on the Millennium of Christianity in Poland. This lecture was published later, and also translated into Polish<sup>46</sup>. In it, he provided an overview of the history of Poland, in chronological order and about the impact of introduction of Christianity in 966. In the second part of his lecture, he also included some reflections of political nature, but at the same time expressing hope in the strength of providence and its impact on the course of history:

*There are three serious reasons for hope. The first is in the history of Poland: our nation lived one thousand years with numerous, dangerous crises and it will pass through the present world crisis. Catholic Poland continues under the leadership of the Church, the only one institution, which from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries supported all noblest endeavors, and it can direct its future efforts in the "lights of the Millennium". The second reason is transnational and relatively easy to find in the universal world history. In 962 [...] the empire was established, which was Christian, but often fighting papacy and threatening the independence of its neighbors, especially of Poland. In 1962, the new Second Vatican Council II was called with participation of all Catholic countries, also with a very active presence of Poland. The council has opened unforeseen prospects for the unity of the Christian world and for the lasting peace, based on the truth, justice, love and freedom [...]. And it leads us to the last reason of hope [...]. Poland, which always was in the care of saints, is enjoying this privilege amidst her defeats<sup>47</sup>.*

It is also worth mentioning that at the end of this overview, Halecki was always a great proponent of the federation in the East Central Europe, which could be recognized while reading eulogies and reflections of representatives from different scientific societies of the Captive Nations by the

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<sup>46</sup> Oskar Halecki - *Pierwsze tysiąclecie katolickiej Polski*, „L'Osservatore Romano", 15 I 1966, Roma [cytat za Oskar Halecki, *Historyk - Szermierz Wolności*, wybór i tł. Janusz Cisek, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2009, s. 29-30].

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem

Soviet Union<sup>48</sup>. This vision of building the independent federation but consisting of sovereign nations in this European region, takes a new life with a renewed vision of Intermarium, which includes from the North, Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, and in the South. Slovenia, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria<sup>49</sup>. Is this vision going to reflect, on some pursuits of the Halecki's thought? It cannot be fully answered. The influence of the immense force of the culture of European Christianity currently has decreased. The rebuilding of bilateral contacts has started, not only in the political sphere or economic one, but also in the cultural sphere to renew the importance of a common, albeit extremely difficult history.

### **Instead of Conclusion**

Each of us performs his own pilgrimage. Parts of it, for people interesting of studies, are libraries. The author could place his hand for the first time, on the book co-authored by Oskar Halecki and titled *Cambridge History of Poland*, in the Finish National Library (Kanaslliskirjasto – Nationalbibliotek) in 1969.

Oskar Halecki was a devoted Polish patriot, despite he was a Pole by choice, not by birth. He was a man of the deep faith, he maintained in his work, fidelity to Christian identity, to the Church and expressed love to freedom and democracy in the European culture. He emphasized the distinct values of the East Central Europe and her cultural ties with the Western civilization (including the Atlantic civilization). As someone rightly pointed out – his works written in English and French, shaped, to a large extent, Western imagination about history of Poland: first as the bulwark of Christendom, and then as the first victim of two totalitarian systems of the Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. For his faithfulness of ideas, he was fought with determination by the communists

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<sup>48</sup> *Oskar Halecki (1891-1973) – Eulogies and Reflections*, Edited by Thaddeus V. Gromada, Tatra Eagle Press, Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey 07604, 2013, 71 s.

<sup>49</sup> Jan Parys – *Trójmorze w Europie*, „Do Rzeczy”, Nr 33/386 10-16 sierpnia 2020, s.64-65.

in Poland, and also by the left circles in America. His legacy is represented by his many works mainly in English and Polish, and also in German, French, Italian and Spanish. On October 20, 1973, Cardinal John Król, Archbishop of Philadelphia, celebrated a special Holy Mass for His soul in the Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Eulogies were delivered by many representatives of scientific circles of Intermarium.

Professor Oskar Halecki was honoured with many awards and decorations. The most valuable are four doctorates of *honoris causa* of University of Lyon in France, University of Montreal, DePaul University in Chicago, and Fordham University in New York. The list of his high decorations includes: a Knight of Grace and Devotion of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, a Chevalier of the Order of Polonia Restituta, a Chevalier and Commander of the French Legion of Honour, a Chevalier of the Hungarian Order Croix de Merita and a Knight Commander's Cross of the Order of St. Gregory the Great (Holy See). His works remain still not very known in his homeland, beloved Poland.

Posthumously, his loyal student Professor Thaddeus V. Gromada, had prepared and published the last book by Oskar Halecki, titled *Jadwiga Anjou and the Rise of East Central Europe*<sup>50</sup>. The new editions (amongst them first Polish editions) of his earlier works, were finally published<sup>51</sup>. However, to this date, there is no a monography, the edition of chosen works, or complete works in Polish, nor in English.

Walking along the Royal Castle Wawel's walls, I studied the embedded special donation bricks. In them, there is hidden a great love towards homeland - Poland. There were donated with funds for the restoration of the beauty of the Royal Castle Wawel after WWI. Accidentally I found

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<sup>50</sup> Oskar Halecki – *Jadwiga Anjou and the Rise of East Central Europe*, with Foreword of T.V. Gromada, Boulder (Colorado) – Highland Lakes (New Jersey) 1991, s. 400.

<sup>51</sup> *Oskar Halecki (1891-1973) – Eulogies and Reflections*, Edited by Thaddeus V. Gromada, Tatra Eagle Press, Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey 07604, 2013, s.71.

a donation brick funded by Oskar and Helena Halecki (nee Szarłowska) in 1922. This donation brick has a number 1703. I remember when I entered slowly to the Wawel's Hill through the King Wladyslaw IV Vasa's gate, where the Thaddeus Kosciuszko's monument is standing.

Professor Oskar Halecki, a Knight of Malta, a specialist of heraldry and genealogy, a Byzantinist, a historian of Middle Ages and of Poland, the European historian, the modern federationist, the Catholic intellectual, the Polish and Vatican diplomat, the Polish activist in America, was above all, the great and staunch swordsman, serving God and his Country.



A brick donation for the Wawel Castle No. 1703, 1922 of Oskar and Helena (nee Szarłowska) Halecki (Photo by A.M. Jabłoński, 2011, private archives)

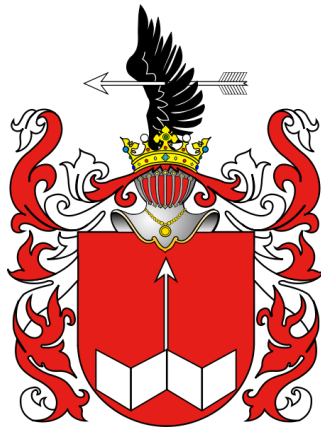
Oskar Halecki was also a poet, but he wrote poems mainly for his wife, but sometimes also for others. The liberal Polish journal published in London, England, and called *Wiadomości (News)*, in the overview of the artistic evening dedicated to Jan Lechoń (a great Polish poet), cited a fragment of the poem written for him by Halecki<sup>52</sup>:

*I supposed to welcome you with a light joke,  
Because all are tired and wanted to be gay.  
I prefer to stand with you in the open window,  
From which I saw a sad white figure leans out.  
The Old Polish Past appeared for a while  
Hidden in the Syrokomla's larch wooden manor,  
Which cannot be reached by the Mongolian turmoil  
Marching to destroy our palaces and houses of God (churches).  
She lost somewhere, her crimson coat,  
As well as the golden crown from eagle has disappeared,  
And instead of polonaises or epic speeches  
She listens aria with courant and verses of Or-Ot.  
I do not know, if she recognizes us, when from trails of exile  
Our longing steps deviate to her.  
She is not opening a gate for us. She only absorbs our spirit  
Through the window of thousand-year memories deep spell.  
In a moment, we will come back homeless and submerge in the contemporary noise,  
You with a poem, and I with a prose preaching the same news,  
And none of us will forget, a quiet Polish manor house,  
Where Past of Poland lives behind its closed gate.  
[English translation by AMJ]*

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<sup>52</sup> *Debiut aktorski Lechonia*, „Wiadomości” 1955, nr 39, cyt. za - Sławomir M. Nowikowski – *Oskar Halecki na łamach „Wiadomości”* [w:] *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy* pod. red. Małgorzaty Dąbrowskiej, t.1, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Warszawa-Łódź 2012, s.165.

*Powiniem Cię witać dzisiaj lekkim żartem,  
Bo wszyscy są zmęczeni i chcą być weseli.  
Lecz wolę stanąć z Tobą przed oknem otwartym,  
Z którego wychyla się smutna postać w bieli.  
Zjawiała się na chwilę przeszłość staropolska  
Ukryta w Syrokmlu modrzewiowym dworze,  
Gdzie zawierucha do niej nie dotrze mongolska  
Idąca na pałace i kościoły Boże.  
Zagubił się jej tylko płaszcz karmazynowy,  
Tak jak korona Orla znikła szczerozłota,  
A zamiast polonezów lub epickiej mowy  
Słucha arii z kurantem i rymów Or-Ota.  
Nie wiem, czy nas poznaje, gdy ze szlaku wygnania  
Zbaczają do niej dzisiaj nasze tęskne kroki.  
Bramy nam nie otwiera. Tylko duch nasz wchłania  
Przez okno tysiącletnich wspomnień czar głęboki.  
Za chwilę w gwar współczesny wrócimy bezdomni,  
Ty z wierszem, a ja prozą głosząc wieść tę samą,  
Bo żaden z nas o cichym dworze nie zapomni,  
Gdzie przeszłość Polski żyje – za zamkniętą bramą.*



The Polish coat-of-arms Chalecki (a variation of Abdank) - Wikipedia