
NEWS OF THE PROFESSION

OSCAR HALECKI, 1891–1973

Dr. Oscar Halecki, internationally renowned Polish historian and professor emeritus of history at Fordham University, died on September 17, 1973, in White Plains, New York. The noted academician, who was the foremost representative of Polish scholarship in the non-Communist world, was eighty-two. He was the last of the six founders of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, a learned society organized in 1942 in order to make possible the continued development of Polish scholarship and culture at a time when Poland was occupied by Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. He was the Institute's first executive director from 1942 to 1952, president of the Board of Directors from 1952 to 1964, and honorary president from 1964.

Professor Halecki received his Ph.D. degree from the Jagellonian University in Cracow in 1913. From 1916 to 1918 he was lecturer in Polish history at the Jagellonian University. From 1919 to 1939 he was professor of East European history at the University of Warsaw; he was also dean of the faculty of arts of the same university during the years 1920–21 and 1930–31.

Before the outbreak of World War II in 1938, Professor Halecki found himself in the United States as a Kościuszko Foundation visiting professor, and lectured with great success at leading American universities. With his country occupied, he went to France, where he helped organize the Polish University in Exile in Paris. He was president of the university from 1939 to the collapse of France in May 1940. Returning to the United States, Professor Halecki resumed his scholarly and teaching activities. In 1940–42 he taught at Vassar College, and from 1944 to 1961 was professor of East European history at Fordham University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. He was also associated with the University of Montreal between 1944 and 1951, and from 1955 to 1961 he was adjunct professor at Columbia University, where he contributed a great deal to the distinction of the Institute on East Central Europe.

Even after he went into semiretirement in 1961, Professor Halecki lectured as visiting professor at Loyola University in Rome (1962–63), University of Fribourg (1963), University of California at Los Angeles (1963–64), and Good Counsel College (1964–67). The eminent Polish historian received honorary doctorates from the University of Lyon, the University of Montreal, De Paul University, Fordham University, and St. Peter's College. He also received many honors and decorations from the Vatican and various governments—he was Papal Chamberlain and Knight of the Grand Cross, Order of Malta. He was decorated Commander of the Order of Polonia Restituta, Commander of Saint Gregory (with star), Commander, Hungarian Croix de Mérite, and Chevalier, Légion d'honneur, France, officer.

Professor Halecki served as a diplomat and international civil servant with the League of Nations, and deeply believed in international cooperation and the Wilsonian concepts that brought the League into existence. He was an expert attached to the Polish Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, a member of the Secretariat of the League of Nations in Geneva (1921–24), secretary of the

Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (1922–24), and assistant delegate of Poland to the League of Nations Assembly (1924). He was very active in the International Committee of Historical Sciences, which organized international congresses in leading cities of the world, and he organized one such congress in Warsaw in 1933.

Professor Halecki is the author of many books in Polish, German, French, and English. Those in English include *The Limits and Divisions of European History* (1950), a great contribution to the field of historiography in which he presented the thesis that East Central Europe is no less European than Western Europe; *Borderlands of Western Civilization: A History of East Central Europe* (1952); *A History of Poland* (1942); *From Florence to Brest (1439–1596)* (1958); and *The Millennium of Europe* (1963). He coauthored *Eugenio Pacelli: Pope of Peace* (1951) and coedited the two-volume *Cambridge History of Poland* (1941, 1950). He also contributed many articles to Polish, American, and European scholarly journals and was for many years on the editorial board of the *Slavic Review*, the *Polish Review*, and the *Journal of Central European Affairs*.

He was a member of many scholarly organizations: American Historical Association, American Catholic Historical Association (president in 1956), American Academy of Political and Social Science, Medieval Academy of America, American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, fellow of the prewar Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow, Royal Historical Society in London, corresponding member of the Institut de France in Paris, the Polish History Society in Exile, London, and many other European learned societies. He was a Fulbright research scholar in Italy in 1952–53 and a Guggenheim research fellow in 1957–58.

Professor Halecki was married to Helen de Sulima-Szarlowska, who died in 1964.

THADDEUS V. GROMADA
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OTAKAR ODLOŽILÍK, 1899–1973

Otakar Odložilík, professor emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania, died suddenly on July 14, 1973, while vacationing at a summer resort in Bohinj, Yugoslavia. The scion of an old Protestant family, he was born January 12, 1899, in Moravia, where he received a good classical education and graduated with distinction in 1918 at the classical gymnasium in Kroměříž. He studied at the Charles IV University in Prague, taking courses in general and Czech history, and graduated with honors in 1923. From 1920 on he also studied at the state archivist school in Prague and was then employed at the National Archives of the Ministry of the Interior in Prague from 1923 to 1924. In 1926 he was appointed as *Docens* at the Charles IV University, and in 1934, after the death of his favorite teacher, Professor Václav Novotný, he became associate professor of Czech history. In 1938 he was promoted to the rank of *ordinarius*, which, because of the subsequent Nazi domination of the country, did not become effective until 1945. He was in touch with Anglo-Saxon scholars when he was a visiting lecturer at the School of Slavonic Studies in London from 1928 to 1930. He left Prague in June 1939 at the invitation of the University of Colorado to conduct a summer school, and remained in voluntary exile until June 1945, living in the United States until