

ALEKSANDER M. JABŁOŃSKI

THE OSKAR HALECKI INSTITUTE IN CANADA.
VERITAS ET RATIO



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

(photo by N.N., *Visuotinė Lietuvių Encyklopedija*;
Latvian Encyclopedia after WWII)

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2014, in Ottawa, the capital of Canada, the Oskar Halecki Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada (now the Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada, OHI) was created. In early 2015, it was incorporated as a higher public interest association at the federal level. The newly established Insti-

tute was composed mostly of members of the former Ottawa Branch of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada, which had existed from the early 1960s, first as part of the Canadian Branch of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (based in Montreal) and then in 1976–2014 as the Ottawa Branch of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada (PIASC).

The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (PIASA) was established in New York by Prof. Oskar Halecki together with a group of members of the Polish Academy of Learning to continue its work in exile, during the occupation of Poland by Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Thanks to Prof. Halecki the above-mentioned Canadian Branch of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America was established in Montreal. The founding members of this Branch included Prof. Józef Pawlikowski, Prof. Bronisław Szczeniowski from the University of Montreal, Dr. Tadeusz Poznański from Laval University, Dr. Tadeusz Brzeziński, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Montreal and Wanda Stachiewicz also from Montreal (sister of Brigade General Roman Abraham and wife of Major General Waław Stachiewicz) and foreign members of the Polish Academy of Learning from Canada.¹

The founding members of the Polish scientific community in Ottawa, associated with the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, included, *inter alia*, outstanding Polish Professors: Bogdan Zaborski, Professor of Geography at the University of Ottawa, Jerzy Wojciechowski, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Ottawa, Andrzej (André) Ruszkowski, Professor of Social Communications of the University of Ottawa and Saint Paul University, and Paweł (Paul) Wyczyński, Professor of French-Canadian Literature.

¹ A.M. JABŁOŃSKI, *Outline of Oskar Halecki's Activities in Exile 1940–1973 – a Swordman of Poland's Freedom* [w:] *Rola Polonii USA w kształtowaniu relacji polsko-amerykańskich w XX i XXI wieku*, ed. W. Gliński, Warszawa–Orchard Lake: Polskie Towarzystwo Historyczne, 2020, ss. 315-365.



Delegates of the Ottawa Branch of PIASC for the Annual General Meeting in Montreal ca. 2000 (in order from left: Prof. Paweł Wyczyński, Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński, P.Eng., Prof. Andrzej Ruszkowski, Attorney Irena Ruszkowska, Esq., Prof. Jerzy Wojciechowski (photo by N.N., from A.M. Jablonski's archive)

Professor Oskar Halecki belongs to a group of the most renowned Polish historians of the 20th century. He lived in the very difficult period of the Polish 20th-century history: during the First World War, the regaining of the independence after 123 years of occupation by three great powers (Russia, Prussia, and Austria), the war for establishing Poland's frontiers, the Polish-Bolshevik war of 1919–1920, the difficult time of building the Second Polish Republic and its very dramatic end in 1939. He also lived through the German occupation as well as the longer one by Soviets which brought not only physical but also psychological destruction of the nation and inability of pursuing independent activities including free scientific research. In 1918–1919 he was a part of the Polish Delegation under leadership of Roman Dmowski and Ignacy Jan Paderewski at the Versailles Peace Conference, as its secretary and acted as an expert of minority affairs. In 1939, he started his life abroad outside of Poland, and from 1940 lived in the US with his wife Helena until his death in 1973. His influence on the world's histori-

osophical thought was substantial. It will be difficult to find any Western historian studying European history who did not use his books during his studies.²

Established in 2014, the Institute adopted Oskar Halecki as its patron, and its purpose is to continue the work of the Polish scientific community in Ottawa, which started in the 20th century under auspices of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America founded by him (and continued as Ottawa Branch of the Institute).

ACTIVITIES OF THE POLISH SCIENTIFIC CIRCLES IN OTTAWA UNTIL 2014

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Polish scientific circles in Ottawa did not meet regularly to discuss important events on the Polish, Canadian or American scenes. One of important aspects underlined by the founders of these circles, those working at Canadian universities or in the Government laboratories, as well as representatives of free professions, was the opportunity to exchange thoughts and observations in the mother tongue – Polish. This was the main characteristic of all Polish scientific institutions on exile. Important activities took place in 1962–1966 and they were associated with the celebration of the Millennium of the Christianization of Poland in 966. However, at that time, the Polish Canadian Club (Klub Polsko-Kanadyjski) was the main organization of the Polish intelligentsia in Ottawa, and it was founded before WWII.³

The Ottawa Branch of PIASA voted and formally accepted its by-laws on November 4, 1972 – at that time still as the autonomous part of the Montreal Branch of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (PIASA). In 1976, after the successful 3rd Congress of Polish Science in Montreal, an independent organization was formed and called Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada with two branches in Ottawa and Montreal. However, in 1981 only, the Board of Directors of PIASC approved the Ottawa Branch by-laws.

² A.M. JABŁOŃSKI, *Oskar Halecki vel Chalecki, historyk zapomniany*, *Na Poważnie*, no 7/8(2013), pp. 58-61.

³ A.M. JABŁOŃSKI, J. CZARTORYSKI, *Obchody Millenium Polski chrześcijańskiej w Ottawie – przykład kanadyjski*, [w:] *Obchody Millenium na Uchodźstwie w 50. Rocznice* ed. R. Łatka and J. Żaryn, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe USKW-IPN 2016, pp. 425-435.

A number of meetings and lectures organized by the Ottawa Branch, mainly at Saint Paul University, had increased substantially after the rise of Solidarity in Poland. A detailed list of lectures and meetings (1973–1994) is presented in the 50th Anniversary Book (bi-lingual publication under leadership of Prof. Paweł Wyczyński), which includes a collection of articles presented during the 50th Anniversary Symposium of the Ottawa Branch of the Institute, at Carleton University on November 20, 1993.⁴ The celebration included the unveiling of the plaque dedicated to all Polish professors and researchers who taught and contributed to the University of Ottawa and the banquet at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.⁵

The leading members of the Ottawa Branch at that time were Professors: Bogdan Zaborski, Wiktor Szyryński, Juliusz Łukasiewicz, Jerzy Wojciechowski, Ludwik Kos-Rabcewicz-Zubkowski, Maria Łoś, Paweł Wyczyński, Adam Podgórecki, and Andrzej Ruszkowski. The latter, after his arrival from Lima, Peru, and assuming the professorship at the University of Ottawa and Saint Paul University, became the leading intellectual force in Ottawa Chapter.

After the sudden death of Prof. Ludwik Kos-Rabcewicz-Zubkowski, the presidency of the Chapter was resumed by Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński, at that time a research officer at the National Research Council of Canada. During this time, the Chapter established good relations with the Catholic University of Lublin based on the activities of Prof. Paweł Wyczyński, who was Chairman of the Canadian Branch of the Association of Friends of the Catholic University of Lublin. He was also known as a supporter of the expansion of the University campus in Lublin.

During Dr. Jabłoński's chairmanship, among others, the following were organized: the 50th Anniversary of PIASC-Ottawa Symposium in 1993, 60th Anniversary of PIASC-Ottawa (with an evening dedicated to poetry of Cyprian Kamil Norwid, directed by Ewa Karpińska, and a banquet) in the Museum of Man in Ottawa in 2003, and the 1st Oskar Halecki Symposium on Dilemmas of Post-Communist Societies of Central and Eastern Europe. Due to changes in Poland and an inevitable departure of the older post-war generation, it was necessary to change directions. It led to a greater involvement in cooperation with Poland, but also with other similar institutions of higher public interests in Canada and beyond.

⁴ *A Search for Knowledge and Freedom: the Polish-Canadian Perspective. Proceedings of A Symposium 20.XI. 1993/ À la recherche du savoir et de la liberté: Perspective polono-canadienne. Actes colloque, Anniversary 50 Anniversaire*, ed./sous la direction P. Wyczyński, A. Ruszkowski, R. Sokolowski, Ottawa: PROMYK Publishing 1995, p. 368.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

The new series called “The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada Lecture Series” was originated in 2008. Its main goal was to present important contemporary topics (not only Polish), but also presented by outstanding representatives of Polish science, both from Poland and from America. This series proved very popular. All lectures were organized in the largest auditorium of Saint Paul University. The event was challenging, both logistically and financially. Three lectures were delivered. Lecture 1 was presented on November 7, 2008, by Rev. Prof. Michał Heller, the winner of the Templeton Award 2008 and Professor of the Papal Academy of Theology in Cracow: *Did it start with a Bang? Science, Religion, and the Creation of the Universe*; Lecture 2 (February 17, 2011), was presented by Dr. John Lenczowski, President and Founder of the Institute of World Politics: *Poland, the Principles of Liberty, and the Defense of Western Civilization*; Lecture 3 (November 27, 2012) was presented by Dr. Richard Butterwick-Pawlikowski, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London: *Why Celebrate 3 May 1791? ‘Europe’s First Constitution’*.

The tragic presidential plane crash near Smoleńsk, Russia, on April 10, 2010, where the whole Polish governmental delegation died including President of Poland, Lech Kaczyński, and the way of its treatment by the Polish Government led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk, divided not only Polish society in Poland, but also Polish diaspora abroad. In 2012, under the leadership of the Ottawa Branch of PIASC, together with the Ottawa Chapter of the Association of Polish Engineers in Canada (APEC-Ottawa), Polish National Union in Canada and Canadian Polish Congress, the First Smoleńsk Conference in English was held successfully. The title of this Conference was “Unanswered Questions – The Polish Presidential Plane TU-154M Crash on April 10, 2010, in Smoleńsk, Russia.” Dr. Bogdan Gajewski, President of the APEC-Ottawa, chaired this conference and offered the opening presentation. The word of welcome was presented by Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński. The speakers were experts and members of the first Parliamentary Sub-Commission to Study Presidential Plane Crash of TU-154M near Smoleńsk: Prof. Wiesława Binienda, Prof. Kazimierz Nowaczyk along with Antoni Macierewicz, Member of Polish Sejm, as chairman.

In 2013–2014, the special commemoration program of the 150th Anniversary of the January 1863 Uprising was carefully arranged. The commemorative celebrations took place on February 23, 2013, at the Saint Hyacinth Church in Ottawa, on March 10, 2013, at the Madonna of Częstochowa Church in Montreal, QC, and on January 24, 2014 at the Sanctuary of the

Holy Mother of Ludźmierz (and St. Eugene de Mazenod Church) in Brampton, ON (near Toronto). Each commemorative celebration consisted of a Holy Mass, a special program of poetry by the Mieczysław Kotlarczyk Theatre of Word from Ottawa and an exhibition of prints by Arthur Grottger (from a private collection). The special exhibition of collectibles from the January 1863 Uprising was also organized in Ottawa.⁶

The first signs of the differences between the Executive Committee of PIASC and the Executive Committee of the Ottawa Branch, started in May 2013 or earlier. At the beginning of September, it was obvious that reaching some sort of agreement had not been possible. The Ottawa Chapter always had some form of autonomy and because of its position in Montreal, it was decided to call the Extraordinary Meeting of the Ottawa Branch on December 14, 2014. At this meeting a new independent organization for the continuation of the activities of the Ottawa Branch was established, and was called the Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada.

ACTIVITIES OF THE OSKAR HALECKI INSTITUTE IN CANADA

The Institute was founded as the Canadian higher public interest institution in November 2014, and it was approved by the Corporations Canada in January next year. The objectives of the Institute from January 20, 2015, are as follows:

- to advance research on history and culture of Canadians of Polish origin;
- to promote Polish history and Polish heritage;
- to foster cooperation among Canadians of Eastern and Central European origin;
- to illuminate and publicize historical ideas of Oskar Halecki;
- to popularize those topics of natural and applied sciences that are of particular significance to the 21st century.

The Institute is an open organization to everyone who has higher education (Category A), but also to those who do not have higher education, such as students (Category B), and agree with its objectives. This year, Category C has been also introduced for corporations that support the Institute's goals. The amount of the annual membership fees is determined by the Institute's

⁶ Link to the commemorative celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of the January 1863 Uprising 2013–2014, <http://halecki.org/archiwum-inne>.

Management Committee (Board of Directors) and may be changed by the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members.

Category A members have active and passive voting rights and Category B members have active voting rights only, and they cannot stand for and hold office at the Institute. The implementation of the statutory objectives was not easy in the past and is not easy in the current external situation (the pandemic in Canada and other countries, the war in Ukraine and the related tensions, as well as the difficult situation on the Canadian scene) and internal one in the Polish community itself, where the social attitude has been depreciated. The Institute is managed by the Board of Directors (Management Committee) elected at the General Election Meeting for three years.

In addition to the lecture series, the Institute continued to screen historical films (mainly documentaries) in the Ottawa Film Discussion Club. In 2021, the Institute contacted Norbert Rudaś, a Polish documentary film director, who produces documentaries on the Polish military history in association with Warsaw's Central Military Library. A special show was the screening no. 33 of the documentary of this director entitled *Engineer Waclaw Struszyński: A Polish winner of the Battle of the Atlantic*. Before this film, an interview was presented with Ewa Struszyńska-Smithwick, a daughter of Struszyński, who resides in Calgary, AB. All the shows (also virtual ones) were liked very much.

From 2014 (even before the final establishment of the new Institute), a new lecture series was launched under the title "The Oskar Halecki Memorial Lecture Series". There were four lectures organized so far and mainly at Saint University in Ottawa, including:

Lecture 1 (October 9, 2014) by Prof. Andrzej Nowak, UJ, PAN: *Western "Appeasement" and Its Eastern European Victims from World War One to World War Two*.

Lecture 2 (October 5, 2016) by Prof. Ewa Thompson, Rice University, Houston, Texas: *The Soviet Occupation of Eastern Central Europe: Was It Colonialism?*⁷

Lecture 3 (October 5, 2018) by Bernard Margueritte, a well-known French press correspondent in Warsaw: *Should the Poles be proud to be Poles?*⁸

Lecture 4 (February 25, 2022) by Dr. Andrzej Kurnicki, Ambassador of Poland in Canada: *The Legacy of Dr. Zbigniew Brzeziński*, on Zoom plat-

⁷ <http://halecki.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Komunikat-nr-4-21-October-2016-.pdf>.

⁸ http://halecki.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Opis-wykladu-Bernarda_Margueritte_05_10_2018.pdf.

form. Later Ambassador Kurnicki gave a special interview in Polish, based on this lecture.⁹

Lectures of this series supposed to be organized every two years, but the pandemic of COVID-19 changed this plan. Then the lectures were organized based on their availability.

In 2013, as already mentioned, the series of the Oskar Halecki Symposia started. They are listed below.

November 16, 2013: The 1st Oskar Halecki Symposium “Dilemma of the Post-Communist Societies in Central and Eastern Europe” (it was also the 70th Anniversary of the PIASC-Ottawa Symposium) at Saint Paul University, Ottawa; and on November 17, the Anniversary Concert was organized with a recital of young Polish American pianist Konrad Binienda from Akron, Ohio, and a special performance of a choir of Maria Knapik, known soprano from Ottawa, accompanied by Michel Brousseau, also from Ottawa, at Franklin Place in Ottawa.¹⁰

October 27–28, 2017: The 2nd Oskar Halecki Symposium “Polish Canadians’ Contribution to Canada – Commemorating Canada’s 150th Anniversary” (with the participation of 15 speakers in three sessions: *Polish Missionaries in Canada*, *Canadian-Polish Military Cooperation* and *Polish Engineers in Canada*, two key note lectures (Prof. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, Institute of World Politics, Washington, D.C., and Prof. Kazimierz Braun, University of New York at Buffalo, NY), one Special Presentation (Dr. Joanna Pyłat) and Opening Lecture by Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński. Concurrently, Canadian Polonia Institute of Historical Studies from London, ON, presented an exhibition entitled “Canada’s Role in the Rebirth of Poland,” explaining the role of Canada in military training of volunteers to the “Blue Army” in the Kościuszko Camp in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Another exhibition was entitled “The Contribution of Canadian Polonia to Canada.”¹¹

November 23, 2019: The 3rd Oskar Halecki Symposium “The Polish Defensive War of 1939: The Outbreak of World War II and Beyond” with the participation of Prof. Marek Kornat, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński, OHI, Dr. Andrzej Kurnicki, Ambassador of Poland in Canada, Brigadier-General (ret.) Robert Williams, Ph.D.,

⁹ <http://halecki.org/wywiad-dr-andrzeja-kurnickiego-o-znaczeniu-dr-zbigniewa-brzezinskiego-w-historii-usa>.

¹⁰ See the program of 1st Oskar Halecki Symposium at <http://halecki.org/archiwum-inne>.

¹¹ See the program of 2nd Oskar Halecki Symposium at <http://halecki.org/the-2nd-oskar-halecki-symposium/>. See a video of 2nd Oskar Halecki Symposium in the archive TVinter POLONIA, <http://www4.tvinterpolonia.com>

Royal Military College, and Edward Poznański, B.A. (Hon.), M.A. from Ottawa. A discussion panel concluded the symposium.¹²

The Institute joined and led (to some extent) other important events in Polish Canadian Community in Ottawa. One of the most important events was the unveiling of the commemorative plaque for victims of the 1940 Katyń massacre and the 2010 Smoleńsk tragedy in 2012. Under the plaque, there are placed two ampoules with soil collected in Katyń and in Smoleńsk and donated by the Association Smoleńsk 2010.



Participants of the 3rd Oskar Halecki Symposium in 2019, in order from left: Kazimierz Samujłło, Andris Kēsteris, Central Eastern European Council in Canada, Krzysztof Grabkowski, OHI Vice-President, Dr. Andrzej Kurnicki, Ambassador of Poland to Canada, Prof. Marek Kornat, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, Brigadier-General (ret.) Robert Williams, Royal Military College, Edward Poznański, Ottawa, Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński, President OHI, Bożena Serafin, Member of BOD, OHI (photo by J. Jabłońska, from Dr. Jabłoński's archive)

¹² See the program of 3rd Oskar Halecki Symposium at <http://halecki.org/the-3rd-oskar-halecki-symposium>. See a video of 3rd Oskar Halecki Symposium at, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHgxDCEttJNXjgsQZqG8safLj0pgw-Oa>. See a photo report from 3rd Oskar Halecki Symposium at http://halecki.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/KOMUNIKAT_7.pdf

Since 2012, every year the Institute together with the Embassy of Poland in Canada organized together with the Saint-Hyacinth Parish, the special Holy Mass, and the laying of flowers under the plaque.¹³ Another important event was a celebration of the 1050 Years of Christianization of Poland organized with cooperation of the Institute and the Theatre of Word of Mieczysław Kotlarczyk on June 17–19. This event was also sponsored by other Polish Canadian organizations in Ottawa. Dr. Jabłoński presented on June 18, 2016, a jubilee lecture entitled *Reflections on 1050. Anniversary of the Baptism of Poland*. A valuable program of poetry and music entitled “Testimony of Faith and Religious Songs” was presented by The Theatre of Word of Mieczysław Kotlarczyk and the St. Hyacinth Parish Choir on June 19, and under direction by Maria Berwid-Gawalewicz.

The Institute has pursued biographical studies initiated as its own series called *Prominent Poles in Canada* (40 biographical extended notes have been developed) and for the monumental series of Biographical Dictionaries published by the Institute of Heritage of National Thought of Roman Dmowski and Ignacy Jan Paderewski in Warsaw. Dr. Jabłoński, OHI President, was nominated a member of the Program Council for a period 2019–2023, of this Institute, by Prof. Piotr Gliński, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and National Heritage. Prof. Jan Żaryn, who is Director of the Institute of Heritage of National Thought of Roman Dmowski and Ignacy J. Paderewski, is a member of the Program Council of OHI.

Since the fall of 2020, the Institute has maintained formal care over media center in Calgary, AB, called TVinterPOLONIA.¹⁴ This center, through a website operated by Wojciech Grabowski and Ewa Struszyńska-Smithwick, members of the Institute, broadcasts daily news from Poland, important lectures, programs of Radio Maryja and TV TRWAM, and other Polish TV stations, broadcasts of Holy Mass from Calgary and Warsaw, and important Canadian-Polish events.

The Institute participates, as the only Polish organization in Ottawa, in the effort of the Black Ribbon Day, which is led by the Central Eastern European Council in Canada, which grouped at the federal level, all Canadians of Eastern and Central European origin. On August 24, each year, special events are organized in many Canadian cities to commemorate victims of World War II. The Institute was one of the organizers of this event in Otta-

¹³ A link to a video of the ceremony at the Smoleń-Katyń commemorative plaque at St. Jacek Odrowąż Church in Ottawa (2018) is available at <http://halecki.org/wideo> (in Polish).

¹⁴ www.TVinterPOLONIA.com.

wa, together with other communities like Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Czech, and Slovak, Belarusian, Hungarian and others.

The OHI also maintains its normal series of monthly or bi-monthly meetings and lectures open to the public. Speakers are selected carefully to contribute different topics, not always related to history, to the audience. The topics include important national anniversaries, Polish and international technological advancements, and problems associated with contemporary society. Some examples of interesting lectures and meetings are presented below:



A commemorative logo for the 1050th Anniversary of Christianization of Poland in
Ottawa

(designed by Lucyna Bąkowska, from Dr. Jabłoński's archive)

April 14, 2018: Krystyna Piórkowska, Ph.D. Candidate, Polish Academy of Sciences, New York, *The Case of English-Speaking Witnesses to Katyń*. The lecture was part of the 78th Anniversary of Katyń Massacre (Polish Parish Hall of the Saint Hyacinth Church).

May 17, 2018: Prof. Aleksandra Hnatiuk, University of Warsaw, Kyiv Mohyla Academy: *The Architects of Polish-Ukrainian Relations in the Interwar Periods: From the Pilsudski-Petlura Alliance to the Politics of Normalization* – together with Shevchenko Scientific Society of Canada – Ottawa Branch (St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Shrine in Ottawa).

October 8, 2020: Mateusz (Matt) Wojciechowski, Vice-President, Campaign Life Coalition – Canada, Toronto, ON, *Be not afraid – CLC’s Mission in the Defence of Life and Family* (Zoom platform).

October 9, 2020: Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński, OHI President, *Outline of Oskar Halecki’s Activities in Exile 1940–1973 – A Swordman of Poland’s Freedom*, a lecture presented during the International Conference (online) “The Role and Participation of the Polish American in Shaping Political and Social Relations Between the USA and Poland in the 20th and 21st Centuries”, Orchard Lake, MI (Zoom platform).

April 10, 2021: Andrew Kavchak, B.A., L.L.C., M.A., OHI, a grandson of Katyń victim, Major Stanisław Kawczak, *Overview of Katyń Massacre of 1940*, a lecture during the commemoration of the 11th Anniversary of the 81st Anniversary of the Katyń Massacre and the 11th Anniversary of the Smoleńsk air disaster (Zoom platform).

July 3, 2021: Rev. Prof. Tadeusz Guz, Ph.D., D.Sc., KUL, *The Contemporary Value of Ideological Message of the Millennium Primate Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński* (lecture and discussion on Zoom platform, arranged with Montreal Meetings and led by Krzysztof Lipiński).

In 2018–2021, Dr. Aleksander M. Jabłoński presented 3 lectures on the occasion the 100th anniversary of Poland’s regained independence in 1918 and 3 lectures on the 100th Anniversary of Battle of Warsaw.

▪ First Series: “Unknown Creators of Regaining of Independence”: Lecture 1 (July 2, 2022), *Engineer Aleksander Malinowski (1869–1922) (Władek, Roman I – Friend of Wiktor and Ziuk)*; Lecture 2 (October 27, 2022), *Ludwik Popławski (1854–1908): Towards Great Poland*; Lecture 3 (January 12, 2023), *Jakub Bojko (1857–1943) – Peasant’s Skarga*.

▪ Second Series: “In the Field of Glory in the Polish-Bolshevik War of 1919-1920”: Lecture 1 (August 20, 2020), *Fr. Chaplain Major Ignacy Skorupka (1893–1920)*; Lecture 2 (November 14, 2020), *General-Lieutenant Filip Stanisław Dubiski (1860–1919), In the Field of Glory in Bobrujsk on September 28, 1919*; Lecture 3 (January 17, 2021), *Lieutenant-Colonel Antoni Jabłoński “Zdzisław” (1896–1920), In the Field of Glory in Nowa Sieniawka on October 12, 1920*. All lectures were presented on the Zoom platform.

In 2021, the Institute started a new lecture series entitled *The Professor Andrzej Ruskowski Memorial Series*. The first lecture of this series was also dedicated to Cyprian Kamil Norwid, a great Polish poet, named the fourth Polish bard on the 200th anniversary of his birthday. This lecture started the

Norwid Year in Ottawa co-sponsored by the Institute and the Polish Embassy in Canada.

February 27, 2021: Prof. Kazimierz Braun, Ph.D., D.Sc., University of New York at Buffalo, NY – *Cyprian Norwid – Yesterday and Today. On the 200th Anniversary of Birthday of the Poet* (Zoom platform).¹⁵

In the audience sat distinguished guests including Prof. Grażyna Czubińska, Pro-Rector of the Polish University Abroad (PUNO) in London. Subsequently, Prof. Kazimierz Braun was invited as a keynote speaker for the inaugural lecture of the International Conference “Cyprian Norwid – Yesterday and Today – on the 200th Anniversary of the Birthday of Poet and Immigrant” (September 9–11, 2021) (a hybrid conference partially on the Zoom platform) organized by PUNO.

Simultaneously, the Oskar Halecki Institute together with the Polish Embassy in Canada, and in collaboration with the Polish Teacher’s Association in Canada, the Union of Poles in Canada, the Institute of Heritage of the National Thought of Roman Dmowski and Ignacy Jan Paderewski, the Polish Embassy in Canada, and the Canadian Polish Congress, organized the Norwid Youth Contest (14–18 years old). It is important to mention the very good participation of the students from the Polish Wiktor Podoski Memorial School in Ottawa.¹⁶

In 2020, the Institute started collaboration with the Polish Institute of Heritage and Culture “Kaszuby” in Barry’s Bay, ON, where there is very special Polonia centre. This region was the first place of the Polish immigration (mainly from the region of Kashuby) from the Prussian dominated territory. After the WWII because of the natural beauty of this region, Poles from Toronto, and Ottawa, started to build some summer cottages. The largest aggregation of them was around Lake Wadsworth and Lake Kamanisseg. Based on the initiative of Rev. Fr. Rafał Grzondziel, Father Ignacy OFM, Colonel of Polish Armed Forces and Chaplain of the Second Polish Corps, and Polish Scouting Abroad, and together with other Polish Scouting leaders, a scouting center was established in Kashubia, ON, with the Cathedral under Pines and the Chapel. This is an open field chapel with a large image of the Madonna of Częstochowa, painted on a canvas, hung from a wooden altar. Two conferences were held: the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of

¹⁵ <http://halecki.org/film-z-wykladu-prof-dr-hab-kazimierza-brauna-cyprian-norwid-wczoraj-i-dzis-w-dwustulecie-urodzin-poety> or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_a4C7cxxn6s&t=2s (in Polish).

¹⁶ <http://halecki.org/komunikat-ohi-nr-12-zakonczenie-konkursu-norwidowskiego-11-grudnia-2021> (in Polish).

Warsaw (after Holy Mass), September 10, 2020; and the 77th Anniversary of the Battle of Falaise and the 101st Anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw (also after the Holy Mass), August 14–15, 2021. On Saturday, August 15, a tribute was paid to Major S/L (Col.) Janusz Żurkowski at his monument in Barry's Bay, ON, and in the evening a special Holy Mass took place in the Saint Kazimierz Church in Round Lake, near Wilno, ON. After the Mass, the flowers were laid under the plaque dedicated to Canadian soldiers from this parish, who died during WWII (and some during the Battle of Falaise). The flowers were laid on their monuments by Dr. Kurnicki, Ambassador of Poland to Canada, and Dr. Jabłoński, OHI, at Saint-Mary Cemetery.¹⁷

The Institute, depending on its capabilities, participates in other important projects like for example the project of the monument "Spiral of Victory" built near the Saint John Paul II Centre in Mississauga, ON. The main manufacturer of this monument dedicated to the Polish Airmen of the Polish Air Forces who served in the fight with allies, especially together with Royal Air Force in England, was Cyclone Mfg Inc., led by its President Engineer Andrzej Sochaj, member of the Polish Engineers Association in Canada, Mississauga Branch, and the member of OHI.¹⁸

The Institute organizes an annual laying of flowers on tombs of important Poles, including Polish generals of the former Second Republic, who are buried at Notre-Dame Cemetery in Ottawa-Vanier. This commemoration takes place close to September 17, on both anniversaries of the Soviet invasion on that day and German Nazi invasion of Poland on September 1. Time to time, the visit to another important cemetery in Saint-Sauveur-de-Monts in Quebec is organized. This is a place that many important Poles are buried like the Consul General of Poland in Montreal, Dr. Tadeusz Brzeziński with his wife, General-Lieutenant Antoni Szylling, a commander of the Army "Kraków" during the September campaign of 1939, and many other outstanding Poles, including members of the Polish diplomatic corps (e.g., the last envoy of free Poland to Canada, Waclaw Babiński, before the Western powers withdrew their recognition to the Polish Government in-Exile in London, England.

¹⁷ <http://halecki.org/uroczystosci-z-okazji-77-rocznicy-bitwy-pod-falaise-i-101-rocznicy-bitwy-warszawskiej-14-15-sierpnia-2021-na-kaszubach-ontaryjskich>.

¹⁸ <http://halecki.org/instytut-naukowy-im-oskara-haleckiego-patronem-honorowym-pomnika-spiral-of-victory>.

IN PLACE OF A CONCLUSION

In this article we have seen an outline of the activities of the Polish scientific circle in Ottawa, which is led at the present time by the Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada. During its history the Ottawa circle have undergone an evolution from strictly a scientific circle gathering only members with higher education to an open circle encompassing in addition to them, all other persons (after introducing two types of membership, categories A and B) who desired to get to know the history of Poland and Polonia, and to participate in the multifaceted program of the Institute. The Institute will continue its website, www.halecki.org, but also to continue a steady low-scale publishing activity, which it has not had until now, a continuous or pre-planned character.

The Institute adopted as his patron Professor Oskar Halecki, one of the most outstanding Polish historians, whose thought and work requires still studies and reflection.¹⁹ The Institute's Latin motto VERITAS ET RATIO obliged us to learn the truth using a rational approach to the surrounding world. The Institute's logo is modeled on the Polish eagle from the coat-of-arms on the sarcophagus of King Władysław Jagiełło – that is, the first Jagiellonian eagle, in the Wawel Cathedral in Cracow. Two maple leaves were added to the tips of the wings, emphasizing the Canadian context of the Institute's existence.

An important aspect of the previous activities of both OHI and PIASC-Ottawa was presentation of topics related to the activities of the anti-Communist underground after 1944 in the Polish People's Republic (oppressed by communists and controlled by the Soviet Union) and the issue of the penetration of the Canadian Polish community by communist secret services. When the first topic was discussed, the second topic mentioned above, was discussed less frequently due to the lack of access to source materials. The Institute established closer relations with the Institute of National Remembrance and in the early spring 2011, Professor Jan Żaryn, at that time Director of the Educational Office of the Institute of National Remembrance and Professor of History at the Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński University, presented two lectures, listed below.

¹⁹ M. KORNAT, *Oskar Józef Halecki (1891-1973), historyk, nowożytnik* [w:] *Słownik Biograficzny Polskiego Katolicyzmu Społecznego*, vol. 2, ed. R. Łątka, Warszawa: Instytut Dziedzictwa Myśli Narodowej im. Romana Dmowskiego i Ignacego Jana Paderewskiego–Wydawnictwo Neriton 2021, pp. 145-158.



After the laying of flowers at Major/Colonel S/L Janusz Żurakowski's monument on August 14, 2021. In order from left: Stanisław Kulina, APEC-Mississauga, N.N., Iwona Proszek-Mooney, daughter of Major Roman Proszek, Kim Love, Mayor of Madawska Valley, Mary-Rose Dawes, Chair of Żurakowski Park Committee, Dr. Andrzej Kurnicki, Polish Ambassador to Canada, Anna Psuty, president of the Polish Heritage and Culture Institute "Kaszuby", Anita and Paweł Midura with their children (scouts), Dr. Joanna Jabłońska (from Dr. Jabłoński's archive).

The first lecture was on March 22, entitled *The Security Apparatus of the People's Republic of Poland*, and second one on March 24, 2011, entitled *Cursed Soldiers*. They enjoyed a great success based on the number of participants. Professor Jan Żaryn also visited Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, and Vancouver, where all his presentations were met with applause. A large attending crowd during Prof. Żaryn's lecture in Ottawa reportedly exceeded the number welcoming General Władysław Anders in Dom Polski SPK in the late 1960s.

This subject will be continued, as the activities of communist and post-communist agents of influence among the Canadian Polish community are still visible. The lack of the self-evaluation of the Polonia community postulated by the Institute, has never been accepted. There is still opposition to patriotic activities among the Polish diaspora, after divisions due to the Smoleńsk disaster on April 10, 2010.

The current situation, the acute world crisis related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the cruel war waged there, is not conducive to the Canadian Polish activities. However, in some circles, including the OHI community, this led to the mobilization and provision of financial and humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian population. It should be emphasized here that because of the pandemic and most online meetings and lectures, the number of listeners and viewers has increased significantly. This contributed to increasing the range of the Institute's influence.

An important element of the Institute's work is the fostering of the Polish national identity and sharing Polish historical thought in truth, as well as contemporary achievements of natural and applied sciences. In this way, we emphasize the richness of the Polish history and science, and social thought in the Canadian mosaic.

Professor Andrzej Ruszkowski,²⁰ in his important speech to the Ottawa Polonia, entitled *Tradition Is the Inspiration of the Nation*,²¹ given during the celebration of the National Day of Independence of November 11, 1984, after the cruel murder by the Communist Secret Service (SB) of Rev. Jerzy Popiełuszko, the Chaplain of *Solidarity*, presented a very novel view of the importance of the tradition for the preservation of national identity. Prof. Rusz-

²⁰ Andrzej (André) Ruszkowski [bio], [in:] *Słownik Biograficzny Polskiego Obozu Narodowego*, vol. 1, ed. K. Kawęcki, Warszawa: Instytut Dziedzictwa Myśli Narodowej im. Romana Dmowskiego i Ignacego Jana Paderewskiego–Wydawnictwo Neriton 2020, pp. 271-280.

²¹ A. RUSZKOWSKI, *Tradycja natchnieniem Narodu*. A speech given in 1984 during a November 11 ceremony in Ottawa (manuscript in Dr Jabłoński's archive) (in Polish).

kowski recalled the words of St. John Paul II delivered to UNESCO in Paris on June 2, 1980:

“I am a son of the nation,” he said [Ruszkowski], which survived the most terrible experiences of history, which was repeatedly sentenced to death by its neighbors; yet it stayed alive and true to himself. It retained its identity and sovereignty as during the partitions and the occupation – not thanks to other means of physical power, but thanks to its own culture, which in this case turned out to be a power greater than other powers... There is a basic independence of society that expresses itself in the Culture of the Nation...

The Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada faces many challenges, such as, above all, maintaining the national awareness and identity among the Polish diaspora and sharing the richness of Polish culture – to preserve it, if it is still possible, in Canada and in the difficult transatlantic space.



Coat-of-arms (logo) of the Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada
(designed by Lucyna Bąkowska; from Dr. Jabłoński's archive)

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THE OSKAR HALECKI INSTITUTE IN CANADA.
VERITAS ET RATIO

The purpose of this article is to present the activity of the Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada, founded in 2014, which continues the work of the Polish Scientific Institute in Canada established in 1942. The past activities of Polish scientific circles in Ottawa since the 1960s, and the reasons for the establishment of the OHI are presented as a historical background. The purpose of the Institute is to promote knowledge about Poland, to foster the development of the national identity of the Polish community, and to share Polish historical thought and the richness of Polish culture through the organisation of meetings and lectures as well as events that activate the Polish community in Ottawa, also in collaboration with other organisations gathering people of Polish and other European descents. The Institute's scientific activity also includes research into the history and culture of Canadians with Polish roots.

Keywords: The Oskar Halecki Institute in Canada; Polish Diaspora in Canada; Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in Canada; Oskar Halecki.

INSTYTUT NAUKOWY IM. OSKARA HALECKIEGO W KANADZIE.
VERITAS ET RATIO

Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie działalności założonego w 2014 roku Instytutu Naukowego im. Oskara Haleckiego w Kanadzie, który jest kontynuacją Oddziału Ottawskiego Polskiego Instytutu Naukowego w Kanadzie funkcjonującego od 1942 roku. Jako tło historyczne została ukazana dotychczasowa aktywność polskich kręgów naukowych w Ottawie, tj. od lat 60., a także przyczyny powołania OHI. Celem Instytutu jest propagowanie wiedzy o Polsce, dbanie o rozwój tożsamości narodowej Polonii, dzielenie się polską myślą historyczną i bogactwem polskiej kultury, co realizowane jest poprzez organizowanie spotkań i wykładów oraz wydarzeń aktywizujących ottawską i kanadyjską Polonię, również we współpracy z innymi organizacjami zrzeszającymi osoby polskiego pochodzenia lub Kanadyjczyków pochodzących z Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej. Działalność naukową Instytutu uzupełniają badania nad historią i kulturą Kanadyjczyków mających polskie korzenie.

Słowa kluczowe: Instytut Naukowy im. Oskara Haleckiego w Kanadzie; Polonia Kanadyjska; Polski Instytut Naukowy w Kanadzie; Oskar Halecki.