

## IN MEMORIAM HALINA NAJDER (1926-2017)

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Halina Najder, neé Paschalska (*primo voto* Carroll) was born in 1926 in Warsaw. She was home-schooled at Konstancin and she passed the exams in Emilia Plater's lycée in Warsaw.<sup>1</sup> After the outbreak of World War II in 1943, aged 17, she joined the "Gray Ranks" (*Szare Szeregi*), the underground paramilitary Polish Scouting Association (*Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego*) which became part of the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*). She served as a nurse and liaison and used the pseudonyms "Danowska" and "Hala". Her battalion led a successful attack on the Mostowski Palace.<sup>2</sup>

On 1 September 1944 Paschalska together with other soldiers moved out of Warsaw's Old City through the underground sanitary sewers. After the war she recalled with horror the atrocities of that passage when she tripped over the dead bodies in complete darkness: "We got lost; then we had to stand still because we heard the German cries over our heads. There was a manhole somewhere above but we didn't know where because it was dark and we couldn't have any light. It was horrible".<sup>3</sup>

After the war she began her studies of Polish philology on the University of Warsaw. Due to Stalin's repressions against former Home Army soldiers she emigrated to Great Britain. She returned to Poland in 1969 with her second husband Zdzisław Najder. When martial law was introduced in Poland in 1981 she remained abroad to return only in 1989 after the fall of Communism. She bequeathed her private collection of books to the National Library of Poland; additionally, along with her husband Zdzisław Najder, she presented the "Karta" Center with valuable archives of the conspiracy and opposition in Poland after 1945.

For many years Halina Carroll-Najder worked as a translator of English literature. The most well-known are her translations of Joseph Conrad's prose "Typhoon," "Secret Sharer," "Prince Roman," as well as *The Selected Letters*. Thanks to her translational effort and skills the English readers gained access to Polish documents related to Conrad's life because she rendered Tadeusz Bobrowski's correspondence

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.rp.pl/Wspomnienia/302099868-Zmarla-Halina-Najder-tlumaczka-literatury-pieknej.html#ap-1> (access: 1.06.2017).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.1944.pl/archiwum-historii-mowionej/halina-najder,1704.html> (access: 1.06.2017).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

to his nephew (*Conrad's Polish Background. Letters to and from Polish Friends*) and the documents connected with Konrad Korzeniowski and his parents (*Conrad under Familial Eyes*). Last but not least, it was Halina Najder who translated Najder's magisterial biography of Conrad (*Joseph Conrad: A Life*). Moreover, she translated Zbigniew Herbert's dramas, the analyses of Nicholas Copernicus books and political essays on European integration and citizens' society. According to the Online Computer Library Center the books translated by her into Polish or English are in more than 800 libraries all over the world. Halina Carroll-Najder was decorated with Armia Krajowa Cross, Cross of the Warsaw Uprising, Medal "Poland for Her Defender" and medal for the veterans [Weteran Walk o Niepodległość]. Till the end of her life she was taken care of by her husband. She died on 4 February 2017 in Warsaw. She was laid to rest in a family tomb at the Powązki Cemetery.

