

The Polish Eagle Has Landed

Aquila Polonica is a publishing house in Los Angeles cofounded by Terry Tegnazian, a former attorney, who became so interested in the Polish experience in WWII she decided to specialize in books that bring to light the Poles who bravely helped underground resistance fighters.

The company's latest release, Julian Kulski's *The Color of Courage*, is one example of the little-known part of WWII that was suppressed by postwar communist propaganda campaigns aimed at keeping the West from supporting Poland, one of its allies during the war. Kulski, whose ancestors include a chief rabbi of Warsaw and a king of Poland, was a 10-year-old Boy Scout when the Germans invaded Poland in 1939. At the age of 12, he was recruited by his scoutmaster into the clandestine Underground Army and trained in military tactics and the use of weapons. At 13, Kulski joined his commander on a secret mission into the Warsaw ghetto to assist the Jewish leadership. Taken prisoner by the Germans and sent to a POW camp, at 16 the war ended for Kulski when he made a risky dash for freedom onto an American truck instead of waiting for "liberation" by the Soviets.

The 86-year-old Kulski lives in Washington, D.C., and wrote *The Color of Courage* in diary form when he was 16 and living in England. Suffering from PTSD as a result of his war experiences, he wrote the book as a therapeutic exercise for himself. Henry Holt thought it so compelling and well written that the publisher put out Kulski's book in 1979. Tegnazian tracked down the author of the long-out-of-print book in Washington, signed him as a client with Aquila Polonica, and redesigned *The Color of Courage* as a new edition. It joins such titles as *The Auschwitz Volunteer: Beyond Bravery*, by Capt. Witold Pilecki; *The Mermaid and the Messerschmitt: War Through a Woman's Eyes 1939-1940*, by Rulka Langer; and *The Ice Road: An Epic Journey from the Stalinist Labor Camps*, by Stefan Waydenfeld. Tegnazian has bought the rights to another 30 titles in Poland, which she will have translated and publish over time.

Aquila Polonica, which means, "Polish eagle" in Latin, is distributed by NBN. All of its books have won at least one award, including several Ben Franklins from the Independent Book Publishers Association.

Tegnazian is of Armenian descent. "People are surprised when I tell them I'm not Polish. I fell in love with the incredible heroism of the Poles while doing research for a novel and decided, 'I have to get this out into the world.'" Her dedication extends to the editorial content of the list, for which she has written a 10-page "Historical Horizon" that summarizes the story of Poland in WWII and appears at the back of each book. You can check out Aquila Polonica's books at the National Book Network booth (1439). —Wendy Werris

