

'A Path by the Road': Woman-Made Material in Men's Archives in the Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw

"My intuition whispered to me that I was downright predestined to become a scientist, albeit I am a woman and my background is a milieu where scientific ambitions were not too well comprehended. ... In my family, a woman studying at the University was considered to be some weirdo, one whom no regular man would ever marry". So wrote Maria Turnau-Morawska (1899–1980), a geology professor whose legacy is kept at the Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw.¹

The Archive presently houses a total of 521 sets of manuscripts of scientists, social workers, and cultural personalities.² A dozen among them are described as shared – produced by a married couple or a family;³ plus, there are 76 personal archives of women. The first such archive was the legacy of

¹ Archiwum Polskiej Akademii Nauk (Polish Academy of Sciences – the Archive in Warsaw [hereinafter: APAN], Materials of Maria Turnau-Morawska, class. no. 80, ii.

² The statistics as of 2016, in reference to the archival material stored at the APAN, Group III – Personal archives of Polish scientists and other persons. I do not take so-called 'small legacies' into consideration. For the present purpose, I only take account of the manuscript sets that have been elaborated on.

³ Zygmunt Batowski, Natalia Batowska, class. no. III-2; Tadeusz Dzierżykraj-Rogalski and Elżbieta Promińska class. no. III-342; Ludwik and Hanna Hirszfelf, class. no. III-157; Roman and Jadwiga Kobendzowie, class. no. III-299; Seweryn Krzemieniewski, Helena Krzemieniewska, class. no. III-174; Władysław Ostrowski, Teresa Ostrowska, class. no. III-264; Ananiasz Rojecki, Nadzieja Rojecka, class. no. III-230; Kazimierz Dobrowolski, Hanna Dobrowolska, class. no. III-429; Jan Garewicz, Hanna Buczyńska-Garewicz, class. no. III-515; the families of Baudouin de Courtenay, class. no. III-298; Gieysztor, class. no. III-62; Grodecki, class. no. III-154; Kalinowski, class. no. III-228; Schuch, class. no. III-377; Załęski, Dunin-Wąsowicz, class. no. III-479; Kałużny, class. no. III-516.

historian Helena Salska, acquired in 1956.⁴ The next such records – of Jadwiga Zanowa, historian and pedagogue⁵ – were acquired eight years later. Of 21 sets received by the Archive in 2016, five were women’s records.⁶

I focus herein on material generated by women and presently forming part of the legacies compiled by men. To this end, I have identified the sorts of documents that are received at the Archive when legacies of scientists are supplied. In most cases, it is the dead scholar’s widow who prepares the documents for use of the Archive. Material produced by women (typically wives) appears in larger quantities when the manuscripts are provided by their children or relatives; such persons tend to think about their dead in terms of a whole family. The archivists who arrange the scientist’s legacy in an order and catalogue it, place the material of the compiler’s family in a separate group. Materials that show the activities, or even the very existence of the scientist’s wife, often form merely a single archival unit wherein one can find everything that has remained of the woman who once accompanied her scientist husband. The path of such women is set beside the road men travel along – to paraphrase the title of Kazimiera Iłakowiczówna’s book.⁷ Accompanying their husbands, some of them would – in the spirit of the age – completely ‘lose’ their own name (both surname *and* first name) – a telling example being ‘Ignacowa Mościcka’, denoting the wife of Ignacy Mościcki (prewar President of the Republic of Poland).⁸ It happens at times that the material of a wife must be looked for in her husband’s manuscripts, as wives happened to be assistants, co-authors of their husband’s studies, or helped gather scientific material. The husband would sometimes mention his wife’s contribution in his memoirs or letters. Being partners to scientists, women did not care much about their own archives. Based on such remnants, can we learn today who they were, and what their actual position was? The research undertaken these days into archives of families, farmsteads or estates, and into collections of photographs, is meant to gather even the tiniest historical titbits that offer the opportunity to arrange the past into a possibly detailed whole.

⁴ Materials of Helena Salska, class. no. III-55 (purchased, donated).

⁵ Materials of Jadwiga Zanowa, class. no. III-140, (purchased 1964).

⁶ Materials of Ritta Szymczak, class. no. III-507; Alina Kowalczyk, class no. III-510; Ewa Korzeniowska, class. no. III-513; Krystyna Kamińska-Trela, class. no. III-511; Joanna Jurewicz, class. no. III-519.

⁷ Kazimiera Iłakowiczówna (1892–1983) was a poet and translator, women’s activist; served as a medical orderly during the First World War, she was employed in the interwar period as a ministerial official. She is widely recognisable chiefly as personal secretary to Józef Piłsudski. Her memoirs entitled *Ścieżka obok drogi* [A Path by the Road] focus mainly on her work for the Marshal and collaboration with him.

⁸ Invitation to a social gathering, issued by the President of the Republic of Poland and Ignacowa Mościcka, APAN, the material of Stefan Rygel, class. no. III-112, unit 99, sht. 30.

Female archival materials, meaning fragments of the legacies of male scientists, can be classed into three groups: (i) **materials of women who collaborated with their husbands** in various scientific or social activities; (ii) **small personal documents** providing basic biographical data on the women authors, sometimes their correspondence or a single study (this is the largest group). In case the material is larger, it often concerns actions taken in order to consolidate the memory of the deceased husband; (iii) **diaries or memoirs of women, treated as a family heirloom** and added to the compiler's manuscripts mostly as a curiosity, or a source useful in historical research. I will herein below develop this typology, illustrating it with selected examples.

ASSISTANT – ASSOCIATE AND CONTRIBUTOR – WIFE

The material that belongs to the first proposed type of the Archive collection is extremely interesting: namely, the archival materials of women who collaborated with their scholar-husbands on various scientific or social planes. Not all of them are mentioned as co-authors of the manuscripts. The proposed typology can be complemented with information on the woman contributor's co-authorship in the shaping of the legacy, or with a mention that her name (first name or surname) is absent in the legacy's name.

An example of the latter solution (no mention of wife's name) is the private archive of Władysław Tomkiewicz, historian and art historian.⁹ In his manuscripts, the material of his wife Maria is placed within a single archival unit which comprises a few documents related to her work as referendary with the Ministry of Public Administration plus a commission for an article on nobility's and magnates' attires. The latter piece of information has inspired me to search through the entire inventory of W. Tomkiewicz.¹⁰ Evidence of her own scientific work have been found among the husband's materials, including a typescript of the once extremely popular book *Dawna Polska w anegdocie* (1961), which they wrote and had published together; another finding was the workshop materials for the study on Polish sixteenth- to eighteenth-century attire (*Ubiór polski XVI–XVIII w. na tle kultury materialnej*).¹¹

Olga Zarzycka-Regorowicz was, likewise, an associate of her husband. A graduate of Lwów's John Casimir [Jan Kazimierz] University, she attended doctoral studies at the Jagiellonian University. In 1922, she married Ludwik Regorowicz, a historian, educational activist, and pedagogue.¹² They both actively participated in the Third Silesian Uprising; the written records include

⁹ APAN, Materials of W. Tomkiewicz, class. no. III-280.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, arch. unit 148.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, arch. units 51–53, 74–75, 78.

¹² APAN, Materials of Ludwik Regorowicz, class. no. III-111.

extant documents attesting to their contributions to the plebiscites in the Spisz/Spiš and Orawa/Orava areas, along with Mr. Ręgorowicz's activity with the said Uprising as Deputy Head of the Political and Press Division with the 'East' Group; in parallel, his wife Olga was co-editor of the magazine *Powstaniec* [The Insurgent] and wrote patriotic poems. After her husband's death, Olga Ręgorowicz embarked on editing and preparing for print his study entitled *Moje wspomnienia związane z działalnością społeczno-polityczną na Ziemiach Zachodnich Polski (1919–1939)* [My recollections connected with social and political activities in Poland's Western Lands, 1919–39].¹³ The material regarding Olga herself is contained in a fragment of her doctoral thesis on Polish Baroque poet Wacław Potocki and some minor articles, mostly concerning the Silesian Uprising. Olga's political and social interests are attested by the documents of the Committee of Women's Labour Exhibition, a section of the Universal National Exhibition in Poznań; also, by small-sized biographical records, including notes taken at lectures by Kazimierz Twardowski, all forming part of the collection.¹⁴

Four women researchers are mentioned as co-authors of private archives, all being orderly archival fonds of the respective married couples. All of these couples dealt with the same or a similar domain of science and collaborated with one another so strictly that the material is at some points hard to arrange or ascribe to the specific person. This is a rather unique situation, for we generally endeavour to make each legacy form a separate fond with a separate classification number attached. The manuscripts of the physicians Hanna and Ludwik Hirszfild form one such indivisible output.¹⁵ Hanna's material is arranged into 69 archival units, whereas Henryk's has 116 units. Some of the units forming part of Hanna's group are related to posthumous publication of her husband's works. Almost the entire career path of the biologists Helena and Seweryn Krzemieniewski was their shared road.¹⁶ The couple have co-authored some twenty publications. After Seweryn's early death in 1945, Helena Krzemieniewska worked as full professor at the Chair of Plant Physiology, University of Wrocław. The couple's private archive comprises a group of archival units, similar in size, with materials concerning both spouses and a common group of materials about the legacy's authors and their families. The materials of Jadwiga and Roman Kobendza show how the two strong personalities, researchers specialising in two areas of science can cooperate in a mutually satisfactory way; most of their studies and technical materials have been produced as a result of their strict collaboration.¹⁷ Roman was a botanist and dendrologist; before the Second World War he was adjunct

¹³ *Wspomnienia śląskie i poznańskie z lat 1919-1934* (Opole, 1976).

¹⁴ Materials of L. Ręgorowicz, arch. unit 62, sht. 12; arch. unit 67.

¹⁵ APAN, Materials of Ludwik and Hanna Hirszfildowie, class. no. III-157.

¹⁶ APAN, Materials of Seweryn and Helena Krzemieniewscy, class. no. III-174.

¹⁷ APAN, Materials of Roman and Jadwiga Kobendzowie, class. no. III-299.

professor at the Botanical Garden of the University of Warsaw; Jadwiga was a geographer and geomorphologist, who after receiving her PhD based on a project on the Kampinos Primeval Forest worked as a librarian at the Warsaw University's Department of Geography. After the Second World War the couple cooperated on an institutional basis, jointly designing a National Part at the Kampinos Primeval Forest. Another common legacy is the materials of the art historians Natalia and Zygmunt Batowski.¹⁸ Natalia studied English philology and history of art, eventually resolving to devote herself to the latter. She helped her husband Zygmunt as an assistant; during the war, she manually copied his works. Her biographical material includes documents of the search for Zygmunt who got lost in the course of the Warsaw Uprising, and subsequently the documents related to the exhumation of his corpse and the burial. The family material included in this part of the archive relates to the memory of Zygmunt. Most of the scientific studies comprised in the section labelled by his name have been complemented by the notes made, or outright reconstructed, by Natalia.¹⁹ Natalia Batowska's doctoral thesis, written after her husband's death, was a reconstructed and complemented version of Zygmunt's dissertation, of which merely notes, sketches, jottings, and samples or segments had survived.²⁰

Let me remark that the Archive moreover contains a group of fonds comprising materials of families, three of which are mostly composed of women's materials. The fond of Stanisław, Ewa, and Zofia Kalinowski is an example of collaboration of an entire family. The material relates for most part to their work at the Geophysical Observatory in Świder near Warsaw and its separation is difficult, thus demonstrating how strong the cooperation of a father and his daughters was and how the daughters continued their father's works, while in parallel solidifying the memory of him.²¹ Stanisław Kalinowski initiated in 1905 the measurements of magnetism in Polish lands. His endeavours led to the opening, in 1911, of a Magnetic Observatory in Świder. The Observatory's activities were joined in the interwar years by Stanisław's daughters Zofia and Ewa. A graduate of the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of Lodz-based Free Polish University, Zofia Kalinowska contributed to the preparation of a report and compilation of the outcome of the Observatory's work for use at the 4th Congress of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics in 1930. Ewa Kalinowska graduated from the University of Warsaw in Experimental Physics. The Second World War over, the sisters followed up their deceased father's work at the Observatory and had the latter named after him.

¹⁸ APAN, Materials of Zygmunt and Natalia Batowsky, class. no. III-2.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, archival units 8, 9.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, archival units 16–18.

²¹ APAN, Materials of the Kalinowski family, class. no. III-228.

The fond composed of archival records of the Grodecki family encompasses documents of Józef Grodecki, a teacher and educationalist, and his wife Katarzyna, teacher of music and social activist, plus small-sized of two of their daughters (the couple had six kids): Anna-Katarzyna and Ewa.²² Katarzyna has 26 archival units in the family legacy, which attest to the sway of her sociopolitical and educational activities.

However, the fond of the Baudouin de Courtenay family is seemingly the most diverse, and recognisable.²³ It comprises documents of the family's progenitor Jan Niecisław Baudouin de Courtenay, his wife Romualda, his sister Bronisława, and Jan Niecisław and Romualda's daughters Cezaria-Anna, Zofia, and Ewelina. The fond is divided into a total of 127 archival units, most of which – as many as 106 units – are women's materials. Romualda's manuscripts contain articles and notes of use in her lectures for women, along with the memoirs she wrote for her family's use. A graduate of Higher Courses for Women in Petersburg, involved in social actions, she accompanied her husband, who was a linguistics professor, in his removals to a number of university cities; while bringing up their five children, she never neglected her own scientific and educational work. Apart from records of everyday life, the memoirs offer much information of historical importance. Among the materials of Bronisława, Jan Niecisław's sister, who lived for some time with her brother's family, a short literary piece has been found, along with a fragment of a diary and minor biographical materials. Before it was decided to compile a family archive, Cezaria Ehrenkreutz-Jędrzejewiczowa, Jan Niecisław's daughter, was initially regarded as the fond's maker. Nineteen archival units contain materials connected with her creative activities in the areas of science and organisation, also biographical material, correspondence, family and alien materials. The family material contains minor documents of Cezaria's son, Andrzej Ehrenkreutz, and her granddaughter Marta. The family's other female members were Zofia and Ewelina, Cezaria's sisters. Zofia's materials prevalently contain studies on painting as well as sketches and designs; Ewelina dealt with literature and her materials mainly contain Jan Baudouin de Courtenay's daughter's recollections of her father. The family archive is complemented by materials of Ewelina's husband Stanisław Małachowski-Łempicki, who dealt with history of freemasonry; among the materials of persons from outside the family is a unit related to Helena Syrkus, the family's acquaintance.²⁴

²² APAN, Materials of the Grodecki family, class. no. III-154.

²³ APAN, Materials of the Baudouin de Courtenay family, class. no. III 298.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, arch. unit 124. Materials of Helena Syrkus are also part of Stanisław Tołwiński's legacy, class. no. III-185.

GUARDIANS OF MEMORY:
(UNDER)APPRECIATED WOMEN ASSISTANTS

An example of a type of female archival material belonging to the group of small or minor materials related to the lives of women is the legacy of Piotr Bańkowski, historian and archivist, editor of scientific journals.²⁵ The collection contains slight traces of presence of his wife Janina Szlachetkówna, who attended lectures in Polish Studies at the Jagiellonian University and whom he married in 1916, apart from her notes from Professor Ignacy Chrzanowski's lectures, there is a trace of her reading of pamphlets published by the Polish Association of Women with Tertiary Education. The legacy of Kazimierz Drewnowski, professor at the Warsaw University of Technology, lacks the basic biographical information on his wife Helena Moczulska-Drewnowska.²⁶ The collection of his documents only contains those concerning Helena's journey to Belgium where she arrived when the Second World War was over, in order to take care about her husband, recently released from the Dachau concentration camp. Kazimierz's last will finally sheds some light on their relationship: upon bequeathing his estate on her, he wrote, "to Halina [*sic!*] Drewnowska, née Moczulska, who brightened my life with joy and happiness".²⁷ The materials in other legacies of (male) scientists look quite the same: a birth certificate, a school report card, rarely a photograph, is all that remains of their wives.

Some of the scientists' widows focused over the years on reinforcing and preserving the memory of their husbands, making the husband's life and work the main point of reference for their actions. One such case in point is Maria Batycka, wife of the geographer Stanisław Srokowski (1872–1950).²⁸ The records group related to his family includes seven archival units connected with his wife's activities, which however concern her as a person to a rather slight extent. Active during the First World War, Maria Batycka was associated with the Women's Association as a representative of women who worked in the frontline area in Lithuanian Minsk, and with the Central Civic Committee of the Kingdom of Poland as a secretary of the Legal Department. After her arrival in Warsaw, she worked for the Reading Rooms Association of the City of Warsaw; in 1920 she joined the Workers' Company of the Board of Defensive Labours. She married Stanisław Srokowski in 1920, quitting her own job and interests and devoting herself to working for her husband and his career as a scholar and diplomat. After his death, she prepared his correspondence from the years 1920–6 for publication.²⁹ She moreover compiled his biography, wrote a necrology, and stayed in touch with the authorities

²⁵ APAN, Materials of Piotr Bańkowski. class. no. III-217.

²⁶ APAN, Materials of Kazimierz Drewnowski, class. no. III-28.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, arch. unit 100, sht. 8.

²⁸ APAN, Materials of Stanisław Srokowski, class. no. III-22, unit 127-133.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, arch. units, 128, 129.

of Drengfurth/Dryfort, a locality in Varmia which in December 1946 was renamed as Srokowo, to commemorate the geographer and diplomat.³⁰

A wife's diary may have the characteristics of a piece written in honour of the husband – as is the case with Leokadia Śliwińska, spouse of Artur Śliwiński, politician, historian, publicist, and man of letters.³¹ Her recollections primarily deal with her husband's actions and describe him and his personality. Leokadia, a Sorbonne graduate, has left scarce information about herself in her diary, with the result that we know virtually nothing about her childhood or her studies. She merely appears and disappears in her text as a background against which the figure of her admired husband stands out: she traces his biography with a flourish, reminiscing the circumstances in which they first met and married, and inserting her husband's pamphlet on the Polish-Bolshevik War.³² The scene in which she describes her heavy illness epitomises her complete submissiveness to her husband's requirements and work. While she lay stricken with severe fever, her two small daughters, unattended to, were running across the house making noise, and her mother sat by the sick woman's bed, praying and crying, Śliwińska thus commended her husband: "Artur was seated in the nearby room, writing. It ought to be emphasised that he could not write under normal circumstances, whenever someone made a move in the adjacent room: any sound would interrupt the course of his thoughts and he then would not be able to focus his mind anew".³³ The heroic aspect is emphasised by a passage on Śliwiński's everyday routine: "In the years 1917–1922, Artur worked eighteen hours a day. I never met any people, or even heard of a man, who would be able to work on a permanent basis, as intensively and as valuably".³⁴

An attempt at submitting to discussion the role of assistant or guardian, assigned to women by way of social contracts, was made by Janina Lipińska, wife of Edward Lipiński, economist and social activist who joined the ranks of political dissenters in communist Poland.³⁵ In a short diary, bestowed by her son together with her father's legacy, she wrote, frustrated: "As for myself, my life is very much diversified. I act as a secretary to my husband, and an adjuvant to my assistant. The father has to be served his dinner at two o'clock punctually, so before Celina [the housekeeper] is back from town, the time is short for her to prepare the dinner, and so I have to give her a hand very often. I cannot remember the time I last went to a cinema. ... also, my loneliness exerts no good impact on the condition of my

³⁰ *Ibidem* arch. unit 126; arch. units 132–5.

³¹ APAN, Materials of Artur Śliwiński, class. no. III-59.

³² Artur Śliwiński, *Warszawa podczas najazdu bolszewickiego* (Warszawa, 1928).

³³ Materials of A. Śliwiński, arch. unit 327, p. 82.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 109.

³⁵ APAN, Materials of Edward Lipiński, class. no. III-274.

nerves”.³⁶ Although, as we know from the reminiscences of Zdzisław Sadowski, student and assistant, Edward Lipiński was an exquisite lecturer, he never considered his own wife a conversation partner, as is attested by a note of Janina, who kept their shared house: “he would say something to me, that is, talk to me, when he is in need of something”.³⁷

A CHEST OF FEMALE KEEPSAKES – “PERCHANCE, OF USE TO SOMEONE?”

Legacies left by scholars or scientists oftentimes comprise memoirs written by women several decades ago and unrelated to the scientific/scholarly activities of the author of the manuscripts: such memoirs have been attached to his family archive and kept there as a family heirloom, certificate of origin, or document of its time. For example, the manuscripts of the historian Adam M. Skałkowski contain a memoirs of his grandmother Justyna Skałkowska, née Sikorska, who described the events of the Galician slaughter of 1846 in the vicinity of Tarnów, and portrayed Julian Goslar, a democratic activist from the former half of the nineteenth century.³⁸ Preserved in the family, the diary was meant to testify to the martyr’s death of Justyna’s husband and to preserve a heirloom for her little boy. Two other diaries, written in the twentieth century, have come down as part of the manuscripts of Janina Bemówna, a teacher and educationalist,³⁹ and Natalia Gąsiorowska-Grabowska, a historian.⁴⁰ These two diarists offered the legacies of their closest relatives to the Archive. Beata Łysińska⁴¹ described the outbreak of the Second World War; Alicja Ostrowska⁴² took down her reminiscences from a camp in Berlin and her journey back home. The motto that accompanied Łysińska as she described her work at the Operating Theatre of the University of Warsaw’s Surgical Clinic in September 1939 can be taken as the central message behind these records: “I was taking my notes in leisure moments, on slips of paper I kept in my apron’s pocket; I would write with a pencil on my lap. Later, I gathered all this and wrote it down, changing nothing, just adding some explanations. Perchance, of use to someone?”⁴³

Women’s materials in men’s archival legacies is a very broad topic. This article merely outlines the issue, using the example of the Polish Academy

³⁶ *Ibidem*, arch. unit 112, sht. 34v; letter to unknown addressee.

³⁷ Materials of E. Lipiński, arch. unit 112 sht. 34v.; letter to unknown addressee.

³⁸ PAS Archive, Materials of Adam M. Skałkowski, III-21.

³⁹ PAS Archive, Materials of Janina Bemówna, class. no. 15.

⁴⁰ PAS Archive, Materials of Natalia Gąsiorowska-Grabowska, class. no. III-152.

⁴¹ Materials of J. Bemówna, unit 11.

⁴² Materials of N. Gąsiorowska, unit 95.

⁴³ Materials of J. Bemówna, unit 11, sht. 2.

of Sciences' Archive. I have recently noticed that supplying the Archive with private archives of women scholars or scientists has become an increasing trend. Still, however, it is much easier to learn in more detail about the legacy's female author, compared to the wife, daughter, or associate of the collection's (male) author. As a matter of fact, these often underappreciated remains can deliver a wealth of important information – about the community constituted by the married couples, and the extent to which their fortunes and interests coincided and were mutually complementary. The trifles deposited in the portfolios assigned to the wives can be like some lost puzzle pieces, complementing the scholar's path and restoring the proportions of merits that have been lost, somewhere, in the history of science.

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