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Toruń in the photographic legacy of Jerzy Serczyk

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Weronika Krajniak, MA, is an employee of the Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (hereinafter: NCU); graduate of history with a specialization in Archival Studies and Document Management. She received the first place award for her Master's dissertation entitled *Theatre posters from 1946 - 1990 in the collection of the Provincial Public Library - Copernicus Library. Catalogue*, in the 4th edition of the competition for the best diploma dissertation under the name of Ryszard Mienicki in the field of Archival Studies and Document Management granted by the Toruń department of SAP. In the years 2012-2016 she conducted classes for students in the field of development and management of non-file documentation. Under her supervision, a dozen or so students carried out their apprenticeships. She was the co-author of the exhibition "Strike at Nicolaus Copernicus University 1981" presented in 2016 and the author of the multimedia exhibition, prepared on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Archives of NCU titled "Private archives of managers of the Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University". Her articles concern ephemeral materials, legacies, and the history of Nicolaus Copernicus University. She is a co-editor and co-author of the publication of *Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Guide to the archival resource* (as of December 31, 2017), edited by A. Supruniuk and W. Krajniak, Toruń 2018.

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eywords: Toruń; Jerzy Serczyk; photography, monuments of Toruń; Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University

S

ummary: This article is a discussion and presentation of photos concerning Toruń, which are stored in the personal archive of Professor Jerzy Serczyk, and kept in the Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University. The presented fragment of the professor's photographic legacy has a great documentary and historical value. The oldest surviving photograph comes from the early 1940s, while the most recent one is from 2005. The main part of the text is preceded by a short biography of the professor. In the pictures we will find the city, its monuments, elements of the changing landscape and infrastructure. The photographer focused his attention especially on those fragments that had undergone some changes - streets, buildings, communication routes. Jerzy Serczyk photographed various events taking place in Toruń, especially those which concerned the city's cultural life - jubilees, anniversaries of

societies and persons, as well as events specific to the period of Polish People's Republic, such as marches of 1 May or decorations related to state holidays. A large number of photos refer to visits of various well-known persons in Toruń, most of whom were scholars. Some photos document the professor's social life during the period of Polish People's Republic, such as marches of 1 May or decorations related to state holidays. A large number of photos refer to visits of various well-known persons in Toruń, especially, but not only to scientists. Some photos document the professor's social life.

The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University (hereinafter: NCU) in Toruń collects materials concerning not only the university's academic and administrative staff, but also people associated with the institution. This group of documentation includes the personal archive of Professor Jerzy Serczyk, an outstanding historian and researcher of the history of historiography, but also a photographer who in his spare time tried to record the surrounding and changing world. While developing the professor's legacy, a census of 90 items was prepared, including a detailed list of negatives and positives that inspired the author of this article to write it¹. The photographic part of the legacy occupies nine units (archival boxes). The oldest surviving photograph dates back to the early 1940s, and the most recent one was taken in 2005. Not all photographs were taken by Jerzy Serczyk, as Professor himself appears on some of them. Currently, one may only estimate the total number of photos - nearly 3,000 inventory units, as they are still being digitized. All negatives and positives have their own description prepared by the professor. Unfortunately, not all photos bear a date. It is planned to publish digitized photographs of Toruń and its surroundings in the form of an album.

The main aim of this article is to discuss and present photos of Toruń, which are found in materials provided by Jerzy Serczyk. Toruń is just one of the cities that one can see among many others recorded on Serczyk's films; the collection also includes photos of Warsaw, Poznań, Malbork, and such smaller towns as Kruszwica, Mogilno and Ciechocinek. The content of the article is complemented by 7 photographs that present a scope of themes which Serczyk dealt with in his photographs. The main part of the text is preceded by a short biography of the professor.

Jerzy Serczyk was born in 1927 in Cracow. He was associated with Toruń almost all his life. He settled down in Toruń with his parents in the district of Bydgoskie Przedmieście in 1933 and started going to school in this city. He spent the German occupation in Cracow, where he attended the underground Junior High School under the name of Jan III Sobieski. It was there that in 1943 he passed the "secondary school-leaving examination" [Polish: *mała matura*] and began working in the office of the Regional Agricultural Society in Cracow as a secretary. He was a soldier of the Home Army and an activist of the anti-communist group, which was

¹ More detailed information on the legacy of Jerzy Serczyk, as well as a review of the content of the inventory of materials was described in the article of the author published in the pages of „Archeion”, see: W. Krajniak, *Jerzy Serczyk i jego materiały w zasobie Archiwum Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu*, Archeion, t. 119: 2018, p. 331–348; W. Krajniak, *Spuścizny po pracowników Uniwersytetu oraz osobach związanych z Uczelnią*, [in:] *Archiwum Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu. Informator o zasobie archiwalnym (Stan na dzień 31 grudnia 2017 roku)*, red. A Supruniuk i W. Krajniak, Toruń 2018, p. 334–335.

quickly exposed and its members were brought to trial. In autumn 1946, having been released from prison, where he had spent several months, and having passed his final exams, he returned to Toruń, where he graduated from History at NCU. He associated all his professional life with this university, passing all levels of his scientific career. At the university, apart from teaching, he was a spokesperson; he also participated in many trips with the president of NCU Prof. Witold Łukaszewicz – e.g. to Berlin, Rostock and Greifswald. In addition, he participated many times in the reception of foreign guests whom he showed around Toruń. He had journalistic talent. He was excellent at observing the world around him and passing on his own observations to others. In addition to scientific articles, he wrote columns that were published weekly in such dailies as Toruń's *Nowości*. However, he did not only write about what surrounded him, but he also tried to record it in photographs.

It was noticeable that he did it with real passion. As an avid explorer he got to know not only the surrounding towns of Toruń, such as Cierpice, Mała Nieszawka, Ołoczyn or Barbarka, but also the places where he went with his friends or wife Barbara in his Fiat 126p (Kwidzyn, Frombork, Karwia, Cracow, Zakopane). He died in 2006 in Toruń and here he was buried in the cemetery in Wybickiego Street.

A significant part, if not the majority, of Toruń's photographic heritage definitely concerns Toruń and I would like to characterize it briefly. Jerzy Serczyk was mentally connected with this city; he remembered the Toruń of his pre-war childhood, which he wrote about in his publications. After the war, he participated in the city's life as a conscious university employee and member of many local societies, which was reflected in his achievements as a local amateur photographer. In the pictures one will find the city, its monuments, elements of the changing landscape and infrastructure. The photographer focused his attention especially on those fragments that had undergone some changes – streets, buildings, communication routes. A good example are photographs presenting the construction of a tram line in Odrodzenia Street near Kaszownik Lake, the junction at Sienkiewicza Street, or trams crossing the bridge under the name of Józef Piłsudski or the Old Town (photo 1). Another evidence may be photos of blocks of flats in Kraszewskiego Street and the housing estate of Dekert, the church of the Michaelite Fathers in the district of Rybaki along with various types of "street scenes" such as the last tram in Grudziądzka Street, the ruins of the Teutonic Castle or the reconstruction of Toruń's Town Hall (photo 2).

Serczyk photographed various events taking place in Toruń, especially in its cultural life – anniversaries, jubilees of societies and people. An important event immortalized in the photographs was the opening of the building of the Scientific Society in Toruń (hereinafter: SST) by Konrad Górska at 16 Wysoka Street in 1981, the 100th anniversary of SST celebrated in 1975, or exhibitions organized by the SST in Toruń's Town Hall (photo 3).

What is more, he recorded many events from the life of the university. Examples include the defenses of doctoral dissertations of Mieczysław Wojciechowski of 16 April 1962, Sławomir Kalembka of May 1964, Maksymilian Grzegorz of 1967, or the presentation of the honorary doctorate *honoris causa* on 24 June 1979 to

Professor Karol Górska. Serczyk also immortalized the first student *juwenalia* [yearly student carnival], which took place on 6-8 May 1960 and the 25th anniversary of the Faculty of Humanities of NCU (photo 4) along with university entrance exams.

He photographed events specific to the period of People's Polish Republic, such as processions of 1 May (photo 5) or decorations related to state holidays. Some of the photos concern the celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi on the streets of Toruń. The professor also managed to capture the queues in front of the shop in Chełmińska Street (photo 6) and strike leaflets of 1981 stuck on shop windows and on the walls.

A large number of photos refer to visits of various well-known personalities in Toruń, especially, but not only to scholars. Among them there were many outstanding German and Czechoslovak historians, including: Prof. Gotthold Rhode, Prof. Werner Jochmann, or Prof. Ivan Hlaváček. They were guests of the city or the university, the example of which is the visit of American astronauts of the Apollo 15 crew – James Irwin, David Scott, Alfred Worden on 19 January 1972.

Some photos also document his social life. It is worth emphasizing that Jerzy Serczyk was friends with many people who played an important role in the scientific and cultural life of Toruń, and they were recorded in his photographs. Examples include the honorary citizen of the city of Toruń, professor of the Polish Academy of Sciences and NCU – Marian Biskup, or an emigrant poet from Toruń – Bolesław Taborski (photo 7).

The fragment of Jerzy Serczyk's photographic legacy devoted to the subject of Toruń has great documentary and historical value. Pictures of the city itself, its fragments, as well as the surrounding area, illustrate the former appearance of the lands that throughout the second half of the 20th century underwent major changes. Moreover, events characteristic of the period of the Polish People's Republic and visits of many famous persons in Toruń were documented. The professor also recorded many people who played a significant role in the life of this city.

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II. 1. Trams running along the Old Town Square and Szeroka Street, around 1955
Source: The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Photographic legacy
of Jerzy Serczyk, sign. 309/110/VIII/85



II. 2. Reconstruction of Toruń Town Hall, September 1959
Source: The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Photographic legacy
of Jerzy Serczyk, sign. 309/110/VIII/85



II. 3. Exhibition organized by SST in the Old Town Hall, Toruń, November 13, 1975.
In the photo: Professor Jerzy Dygdała, author of the scenario of the exhibition
Source: The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Photographic legacy
of Jerzy Serczyk, sign. 309/110/VIII/87



II. 4. The 25th anniversary of the Faculty of Humanities of NCU in Toruń, January 13, 1971. Professor Konrad Górska on the rostrum
Source: The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Photographic legacy
of Jerzy Serczyk, sign. 309/110/VIII/87



II. 5. March 1st march, [1960s]. From the left: prof. Jerzy Wojtowicz, prof. Jacek Staszewski and prof. Sławomir Kalebka

Source: The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Photographic legacy of Jerzy Serczyk, sign. 309/110/VIII/8



II. 6. Queue in front of the store at F. Dzerzhinsky Street (now Chełmińska Street), spring 1981

Source: The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Photographic legacy of Jerzy Serczyk, sign. 309/110/VIII/87



II. 7 Bolesław Taborowski – an emigre poet at the town hall tower. In the background, the Old Town and the railway bridge on the Vistula, April 15, 1958.

Source: The Archives of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Photographic legacy of Jerzy Serczyk, sign. 309/110/VIII/87

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Mgr Weronika Krajniak jest pracownikiem Archiwum Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu; absolwentka kierunku historia o specjalności archiwistyka i zarządzanie dokumentacją. Otrzymała I miejsce za prace magisterską pt. *Afisze teatralne z lat 1946 – 1990 w zbiorach Wojewódzkiej Biblioteki Publicznej – Księźnicy Kopernikańskiej. Katalog*, w IV edycji konkurs na najlepszą pracę dyplomową im. Ryszarda Mienickiego z zakresu archiwistyki i zarządzania dokumentacją przyznawaną przez toruński oddział SAP. W latach 2012-2016 prowadziła zajęcia dla studentów z zakresu opracowania i zarządzania dokumentacją nieaktową. Pod jej kierunkiem kilkunastu studentów odbywały praktyki zawodowe. Była współautorką wystawy pt. „Strajk UMK 1981”, prezentowaną w 2016 r. oraz autorką wystawy multimedialnej, przygotowanej z okazji jubileuszu 70-lecia Archiwum UMK pt. „Prywatne archiwa kierowników Archiwum UMK”. Jej artykuły dotyczą materiałów ulotnych, spuścizn, a także historii UMK. Jest współredaktorem i współautorem publikacji *Archiwum Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu. Informator o zasobie archiwalnym* (Stan na dzień 31 grudnia 2017 r.), pod red. A. Supruniuk i W. Krajniak, Toruń 2018.

Toruń w fotograficznej spuściznie Jerzego Serczyka

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łowa kluczowe: Toruń; Jerzy Serczyk; fotografia, toruńskie zabytki; Archiwum UMK

S

treszczenie: Niniejszy artykuł jest omówieniem i przedstawieniem zdjęć dotyczących Torunia, które znajdują się w archiwum osobistym profesora Jerzego Serczyka przechowywane w Archiwum UMK. Zaprezentowany wycinek spuścizny fotograficznej Profesora posiada dużą wartość dokumentacyjną i historyczną. Najstarsze zachowane zdjęcie pochodzi z początku lat 40. XX w., a najmłodsze z 2005 r. Zasadniczą część tekstu poprzedza krótki życiorys Profesora. Na zdjęciach odnajdziemy miasto, jego zabytki, elementy zmieniającego się krajobrazu i infrastruktury. Fotograf swoją uwagę skupiał zwłaszcza na tych fragmentach, które ulegały jakimś zmianom – ulice, zabudowa, szlaki komunikacyjne. Jerzy Serczyk fotografował rozmaite wydarzenia dzieżące się w Toruniu, zwłaszcza w jego życiu kulturalnym – rocznice, jubileusze towarzystw i osób, a także wydarzenia charakterystyczne dla okresu Polski Ludowej, jak np. pochody pierwszomajowe, czy dekoracje związane ze świętami państwowymi. Duża liczba zdjęć dotyczy wizyt różnych znanych osobistości w Toruniu, szczególnie, choć nie tylko, uczonych. Część zdjęć dokumentuje życie towarzyskie Profesora.

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Mag. Weronika Krajniak ist Mitarbeiterin des Universitätsarchivs in Thorn; Absolventin der Geschichte (Archivkunde und Dokumentenverwaltung). Sie erhielt den ersten Preis für ihre Magisterarbeit *Afisze teatralne z lat 1946–1990 w zbiorach Wojewódzkiej Biblioteki Publicznej – Księźnicy Kopernikańskiej. Katalog* (Theaterplakate aus den Jahren 1946–1990 in den Beständen der Öffentlichen Woiwodschaftsbibliothek – Kopernikusbücherei. Ein Katalog), im IV. Ryszard-Mienicki-Wettbewerb für die beste Diplomarbeit im Bereich der Archivkunde und Dokumentenverwaltung, verliehen von der Thorner Abteilung des Vereins der Polnischen Archivare. 2012–2016 Dozentin im Bereich der Bearbeitung und Verwaltung von ephemerischen Blättern. Betreuerin von Studentenpraktiken. Sie war Mitautorin der Ausstellung „Strajk UMK 1981“ (2016; Streik der NKU 1981) sowie Autorin einer multimedialen Ausstellung zum 70. Jubiläum des Universitätsarchivs „Prywatne archiwa kierowników Archiwum UMK“ (Privatarchive der Leiter des Universitätsarchivs). Ihre Artikel beziehen sich auf die ephemerischen Schriften, Nachlässe und die Geschichte der NKU. Sie ist Mitredakteurin und Mitautorin von *Archiwum Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu. Informator o zasobie archiwalnym. Stan na dzień 31 grudnia 2017 r.* (Archiv der Nikolaus-Kopernikus-Universität in Thorn. Ein Führer durch den Archivbestand. Stand vom 31. Dezember 2017), hg. v. A. Supruniuk und W. Krajniak, Toruń 2018.

Thorn im fotografischen Nachlass von Jerzy Serczyk

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Tichworte: Thorn; Jerzy Serczyk; Fotografie, Thorner Sehenswürdigkeiten; Archiv der Nikolaus-Kopernikus-Universität in Thorn

Z

usammenfassung: Der vorliegende Beitrag schildert die Fotografien Thorns, die sich im Privatarchiv von Prof. Jerzy Serczyk befinden und im Archiv der Nikolaus-Kopernikus-Universität in Thorn aufbewahrt werden. Der dargestellte Ausschnitt des fotografischen Nachlasses hat einen großen dokumentarischen und historischen Wert. Das älteste Foto stammt aus dem Anfang der 1940er Jahre, das jüngste 2005. Dem Hauptteil des Textes geht ein kurzer Lebenslauf des Professors voran. Auf den Bildern finden wir die Stadt, ihre Sehenswürdigkeiten, Elemente der sich ständig ändernden Landschaft und der Infrastruktur. Der Fotograf konzentrierte sich vor allem auf jene Fragmente, die einem Wandel unterlagen – auf die Straßen, Bebauung, Verkehrswege. Jerzy Serczyk fotografierte verschiedene Ereignisse in Thorn, vor allem sein Kulturleben – Jubiläen der Gesellschaften und Personen,

die für die Volksrepublik Polen charakteristischen Ereignisse wie etwa die Maiumzüge oder die Dekorationen während der Staatsfeiertage. Eine Vielzahl von Fotos bezieht sich auf die Besuche verschiedener bekannter Persönlichkeiten in Thorn, insbesondere, obwohl nicht nur, Gelehrter. Ein Teil der Fotos dokumentiert das gesellschaftliche Leben des Professors.