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Professor Andrzej Tomaszewski – the end of the journey

Andrzej Tomaszewski was born in Warsaw on January 26, 1934. He was the only child of Eugenia and Stanisław Antoni Tomaszewski. His father was a Polish Army officer. His happy childhood was short and when the war broke out the family was in Jarosław. His mother took him to some relatives, first to Puławy, then to Starachowice, and finally they returned near Warsaw. After the fall of Warsaw Uprising they went to the camp in Pruszków and then to the manor in Rybno. They spent the end of war and the first few years after the war in Chodzież where the young boy went to primary school. He was an active pupil and a scout. He had a great artistic talent and kept some of the school newsletters with his own drawings.

After his father returned to Poland from England in 1947, they all went back to their relatives near Warsaw, and then to their reclaimed family home in Rembertów. After attending a few schools during the war, Andrzej passed an exam to the famous Władysław IV Secondary School in Praga in Warsaw. He was a very good student and in May 1951 at the age of 17 he passed the school final exams. He was very proud of the school's tradition and of a number of his schoolmates who later became famous. He participated in the school's graduates' meetings and reunions until the end. Unfortunately, his father's war engagement (he was a major in the Polish Army) was a political obstacle and prevented his dream studies. For a year, he worked as a drawer in the Commission on Research of Old Warsaw where he improved his artistic skills.

He liked to joke that it was the painting skills that helped him begin studies at the Faculty of Architecture. Building the Palace of Culture in destroyed Warsaw was an amazing undertaking which drew attention of the public. The monumental "portrait" of the Palace made by the would-be student which was hung at the Faculty of Architecture attracted great interest. The press also published it – already with the student's signature. A yellowed copy of the "Przyjaźń" Weekly is still kept in one

of the files. After the secondary school graduation and during his studies, he used his artistic skills and made various works and painting projects. He painted numerous postcards, calendars, posters and illustrations.

He was interested in art and architecture and soon his dream of studying two subjects came true. He liked to

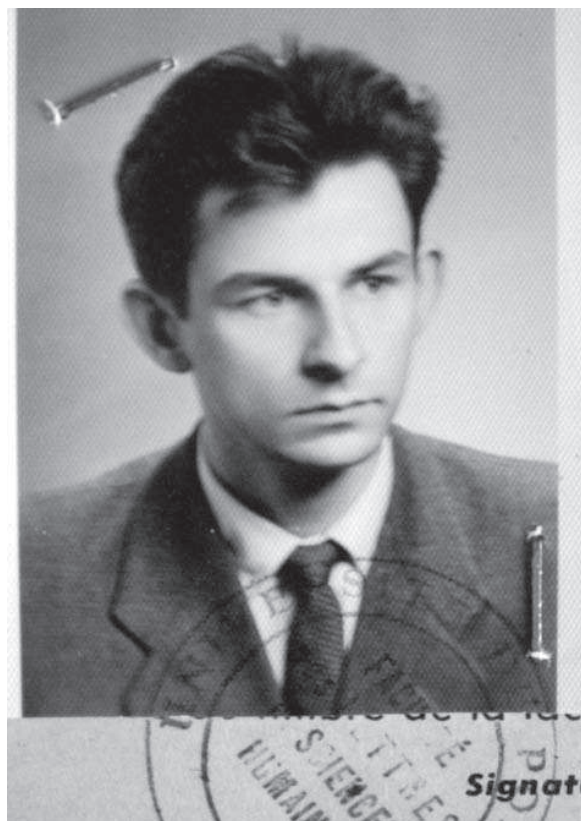


Fig. 1. Professor Andrzej Tomaszewski – circa 1958

Il. 1. Profesor Andrzej Tomaszewski – około 1958



Fig. 2. Professor Andrzej Tomaszewski – circa 1961

Il. 2. Profesor Andrzej Tomaszewski – około 1961

remember his first contacts with wall painting conservation. Still in his secondary school, he would go with his father on vacation to the Pieniny Mountains. The memories of his first meeting with art conservators on the scaffolding of the church in Krościenko stuck deeply in his mind; there he could help Ewa and Jerzy Wolski who together with Ewa Pilitowska conducted preservation works on Gothic paintings. Over a few years when the works were carried out, he visited the conservators as well as also after he completed his studies. After a year-long break when he worked as a drawer, he finally started his studies at the Faculty of Architecture of Warsaw University of Technology. He studied there in 1952–1962. As he was interested in art he also began to study at the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw in 1954–1959 where soon he was awarded the diploma. The student of the University of Technology was fascinated by art history so much that his diploma in architecture had to wait a little longer.

The 1960s were an intensive period of archeological and architectural explorations so that the new findings could add to the celebration of the millennium of the Polish State. Still before he was awarded the diploma in architecture, in 1959, he started to work as assistant to Professor Piotr Biegański at the Chair of History of Architecture and Art at Warsaw University of Technology.

The collegiate church in Wiślica was the place where Andrzej Tomaszewski did his first archeological and architectural field research. During the second year of the excavation digs in Wiślica, Aleksander Gieysztor initiated the millennium jubilee interdisciplinary research conducted jointly by the University of Warsaw and Warsaw University of Technology. An interdisciplinary Team for Research on Polish Middle Ages was set up with eminent scholars, including historians, archeologists, anthropolo-

gists and architects. Due to his interest in history (for a number of years he participated in Professor Aleksander Gieysztor's seminars) already with his graduate diploma of master in art history but still studying at the University of Technology, Andrzej Tomaszewski became in 1959 the Team's secretary, and he held the position until the end of its operation in 1965.

For young architects from Poland the experience gained during the work in Wiślica was the first opportunity to enter into direct scientific cooperation with Western Europe, which was forbidden at that time. The discovery of the oldest architectural monument in Wiślica that is the relics of St. Nicholas Church from the 10th century was of great significance for further professional carrier of the young researcher but the discovery in the very collegiate church proved most important; in 1959, the famous engraved plaster floor slab was discovered 3.5 m below the level of the existing floor, in the ruins of the earlier church. The finds opened a number of doors for the young university scholar, not only in the research centers in Poland; they also initiated publications and future trips abroad. As he knew French very well he could talk to the scholars visiting Wiślica and make both scientific and personal contacts with them. Professor Gieysztor, who maintained relations with prominent European historians, was happy to present the finds from Wiślica. It was at his invitation that the French historian Jacques Le Goff came to Wiślica to see the already famous engraved floor slab from up close.

Andrzej Tomaszewski went abroad for the first time still before he finished his studies in 1960–1961. After he was awarded the scholarship from the French government he studied at the Centre d'Etudes Superieures de Civilisation Medievale at the University of Poitiers. He took the opportunity and visited for the first time such



Fig. 3. Professor Andrzej Tomaszewski – circa 1966

Il. 3. Profesor Andrzej Tomaszewski – około 1966

cities as Rome, Florence, and Venice and saw the greatest works of Italian art and architecture.

After his return he continued his study of Romanesque churches. It was not intentional on the part of the authorities of the communist state to join the fight against religion with the discovery of the rich history of ecclesiastical buildings in Poland. A few years ago, Andrzej Tomaszewski vividly described the research works in Wiślica both as regards facts and anecdotes in a series of radio shows recorded for Polish Radio. In 1965, a year before the celebration of the millennium jubilee, the study on Polish Middle Ages was suddenly put on hold for political reasons when the authorities of the communist state finally realized that by supporting the works on early architecture they in fact finance the research on the history of the church in Poland. As a result of that policy a lot of great historical finds and discoveries were never described and the open war of the government against the church began.

The research in Wiślica resulted in the work titled *The Romanesque Church with Crypt in Wiślica (architectural study)* which Andrzej Tomaszewski defended in 1967 and was awarded the degree of Doctor in Technical Sciences at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology.

In 1968–1969, he served his scientific internship at the Chair of History of Architecture of the University of La Sapienza in Rome and took a course in conservation in the ICCROM international center.

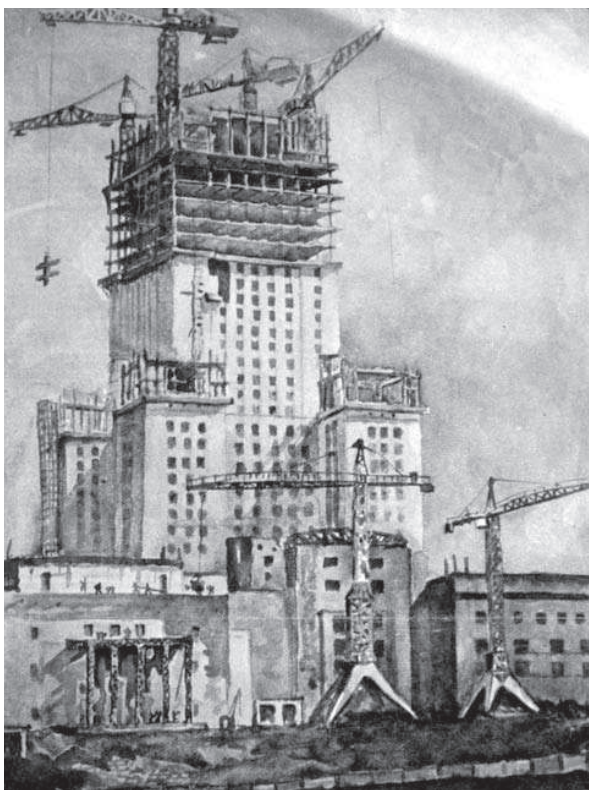


Fig. 4. Watercolor by Andrzej Tomaszewski, construction of the Palace of Culture 1952, *Przyjaźń* Weekly No. 43 (250) 25 X 1953, p. 9

Il. 4. Akwarela Andrzeja Tomaszewskiego przedstawiająca budowę Pałacu Kultury 1952, tygodnik *Przyjaźń* nr 43 (250) 25 X 1953, s. 9



Fig. 5. In his study

Il. 5. W swojej pracowni

In 1971, he was awarded the postdoctoral degree of *Doctorus Habilitatus* in Technical Sciences and in 1973 the degree of Assistant Professor. In 1976, the title of Associate Professor was conferred on him by the State Council.

When the Director of the Chair of History of Architecture and Art – Professor Piotr Biegański turned 65 and in compliance with the directive of the University President he had to retire from that post, Andrzej Tomaszewski became the youngest Director of the Institute at the Warsaw University of Technology as the unit was transformed into an Institute of Basics of the Development of Architecture and Art and in 1985 into the Institute of History of Architecture and Art. He held that position in 1973–1981, and then after his return from abroad – in 1987–1988. He was also the representative of the University President for Humanization of Technical Studies.

In 1973–1976, he was a member of presidium and research secretary at the Committee of Architecture and Urban Planning at the Polish Academy of Sciences.

The first real beginning of his large-scale international activities was the Congress of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in Rome in 1981 where he met a lot of prominent figures connected with the organization of protection and care for cultural heritage. In 1984–1993, he was President of the International Committee for Conservation Education and Training and member of the Advisory Committee of ICOMOS. At that time he organized numerous conferences on teaching conservation e.g. in Dresden, Warsaw, Edinburgh, Ferrara, Montreal and Jerusalem.

In October 1981, he went for two years to Berlin to Wissenschaftskolleg as Fellow Professor. There he con-



Fig. 6. With Professor O.P. Agrawal, founder of modern conservation in India, former Vice-Director in ICCROM, during his visit in Warsaw
 Il. 6. Z profesorem O.P. Agrawalem, twórcą nowoczesnej konserwacji w Indiach, byłym wicedyrektorem w ICCROM podczas jego wizyty w Warszawie

ducted research on activities of Polish artists and aristocrats in 19th-century Berlin. Later, also in Germany, during the academic year 1986–1987, he headed the Chair of Polish Culture (*Schwerpunkt Polen*) at the University of Mainz.

In cooperation with Dethard von Winterfeld, professor of art history at that university, they decided to begin the study of architecture and art of Silesia, Pomerania and former Prussia. The Working Group of Polish and German Art Historians which was set up then started its operation and its first result was the conference organized at the University in Mainz in 1988. The regular meetings of the scholars from both countries which were originally planned were disturbed by the stormy events and historical transformations. The next meeting was held at the International Cultural Centre in Krakow only in 1995; fortunately the following meetings took place every year alternately in Germany and Poland. The Group has been operating actively to date, involving the new generation



Fig. 8. On a tour at the congress of PTTK (Polish Tourist Country Lovers' Society), September 2010

Il. 8. Podczas objazdu na kongresie PTTK we wrześniu 2010 r.

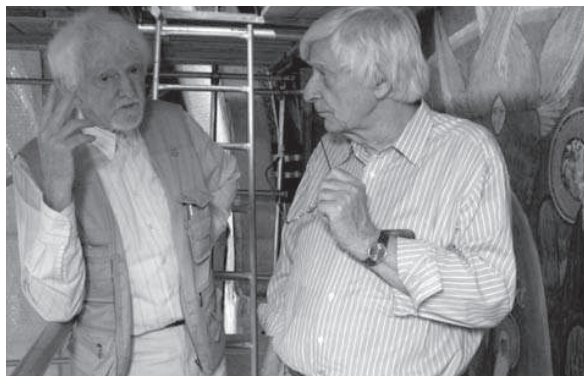


Fig. 7. With Professor Władysław Zalewski, old friend, director of conservation works in the presbytery of the Cathedral in Sandomierz, June 2010

Il. 7. Z profesorem Władysławem Zalewskim, wieloletnim przyjacielem, kierownikiem prac konserwatorskich w prezbiterium sandomierskiej katedry, czerwiec 2010 r.

of art historians, architects and conservators who continue to pursue the founders' original ideas.

In 1988–1992, Andrzej Tomaszewski was Director General of the International Centre for the Study of the Protection and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in Rome – inter-governmental organization with over a hundred member states. He was appointed that position in an open competition. It is worth noting that this is the highest position in the international structure of protection of cultural property. Apart from organizing the daily operations of the Centre, the responsibilities of its director include the constant maintenance of cooperation with UNESCO (delegate at the General Conference) as well as with the World Heritage Committee (delegate at the sessions of the bureau and plenary sessions). As Director of ICCROM he also maintained regular contacts with such international organizations as ICOMOS and ICOM. He participated in a number of ICCROM missions on four continents. Apart from the existing trainings in Rome, Andrzej Tomaszewski initiated new postgraduate conservation courses, e.g. conservation of paper in Vienna, conservation of Japanese copying paper in Tokyo, conservation of sun-dried brick (adobe) in Grenoble, together with CraTerre. After returning to Poland, he maintained his contacts with ICCROM as an *ex officio* Council Member and participated in General Assemblies as the delegate of Poland.

In 1995, he assumed the position of the General Preservation Officer of the Republic of Poland on the basis of the result of open competition for that post announced by the Minister of Culture and Art. While holding that position, he introduced a number of organizational changes such as introduction of three deputy positions: for architectural heritage, for works of art and movable monuments and for archeology; these positions were assumed by acclaimed specialists in their fields. He also organized regular contacts, conferences and meetings of the Provincial Preservation Officers who were then a strong, loyal, and opinion-forming group that enjoyed high scholarly recognition. Unfortunately, as a result of later administrative reforms of the state those



Fig. 9. Memories by the relics of old architecture in the underground of "Małachowianka" Secondary School in Plock, September 2010

Il. 9. Wspomnienia przy reliktach dawnej architektury w podziemiach plockiej „Małachowianki” we wrześniu 2010

structures do not exist anymore today. Many attempts which were made later by Professor Tomaszewski in order to résumé the former organization of the state care for historic monuments unfortunately failed.

Furthermore, while holding that position, he was actively involved in operations of the circles connected with the protection of cultural property in Poland and abroad. He developed closer relations with the Polish National Committee of ICOMOS, the Association of Monument Conservators, the Association of Art Historians, and the Society for Preservation of Historic Monuments; he also cooperated with the International Cultural Centre in Krakow, being there a Member of the Program Board. As the delegate of Poland at the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, he actively participated in the preparation of application and inscription of the following on the World Heritage List: Medieval Town of Torun, Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork (both sites inscribed in 1997), Old Town in Gdansk, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska (inscribed in 1999) and the Churches of Peace in Świdnica and Jawor (inscribed in 2001).

He was the delegate of Poland at the Council of Europe's Cultural Heritage Committee. He expressed his experience and concern for the condition of the heritage in many cultures in the application submitted in May 1996 by Poland to the Council of Europe at the 4th Conference of Ministers of Culture of the Council of Europe's Member States in Helsinki. He was a member of the Council of Europe's Group of Experts which was established to develop a strategy of protection of the cultural property in multi-cultural areas. In 1999–2000, he was also in the group developing the Council of Europe's campaign "Europe – Common Heritage".

He cooperated with NATO, co-organizing and chairing the international conference organized in Krakow in 1997 titled "The protection of cultural property in the case of threats in war and peace time" within the "NATO Partnership for Peace" program. He co-organized the international conservation workshops: "The protection of historic monuments against threats especially flood", in Warsaw and in Silesia in 1998. He also actively partici-

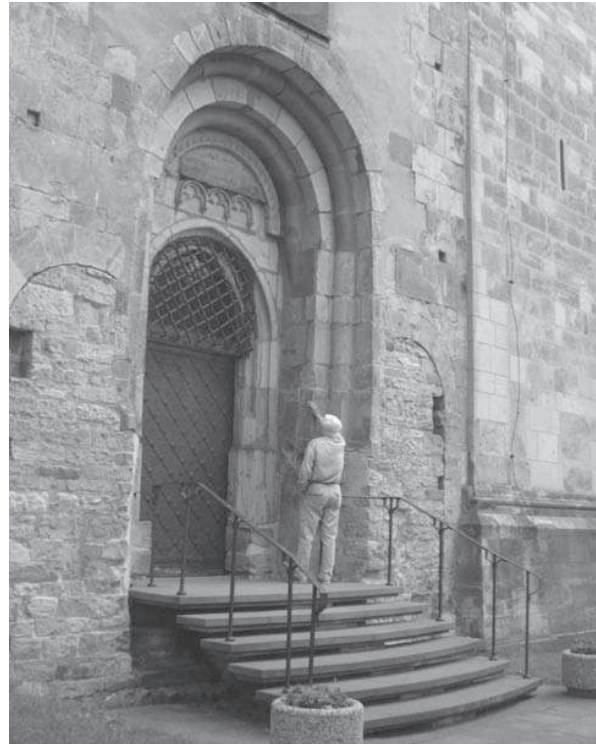


Fig. 10. In the face of Opatów mystery

Il. 10. W obliczu opatowskiej tajemnicy

pated in the Conference of the NATO Civil Defense Command in Budapest in 1998.

It was important for Andrzej Tomaszewski to be involved in the operations of the German-Polish Foundation for the Preservation of Cultural Monuments. With the use of the funds that the organization raised it undertook a number of activities in the scope of rescue conservation as well as research of architecture structures in Silesia, Pomerania and Masuria. As a result of the efforts made by the Foundation Professor Tomasz Niewodniczański presented a collection of Polish priceless historical maps to be deposited in Poland. It is exhibited at the Royal Castle in Warsaw whose interiors were specially prepared for this exceptional exhibition.

Being an active member of ICOMOS, he set up a new International Committee of Theory and Philosophy of Conservation which he chaired until the end. After its first meeting, at the conference connected with the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the International Cultural Centre in Krakow in 2006, the Committee started its cooperation with the Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation in Florence, where a few meetings of the Committee were held. Its members also met in Prague and Vienna.

Andrzej Tomaszewski had a lot of publications. At the beginning they mainly included reports from archeological and architectural research which he conducted in Romanesque churches in Zagość, Opatów, Kije, Wiślica. He did research also abroad in Hungary, Belgium, France and Italy. The years spent in Germany were a source of international experience and that is why a number of articles published later regarded the Polish-German cultural contacts and especially the protection of common heritage. The most

important publications by Andrzej Tomaszewski were based on his international activities and the ease with which he worked in the organizations established to care for cultural heritage at national level as well as their teams and scientific associations or societies. He was the scientific editor of a lot of books, numerous publications from conferences on protection and preservation of historic monuments.

Andrzej Tomaszewski was deeply affected by the mutual dislike and animosity between different people and always tried to mediate between conflicting parties. If it was possible, he alleviated tensions with a joke; he would always stand by the people who were treated wrongly or hurt by unjust opinions. When defending others he frequently would attract undeserved unkindness of less thoughtful adversaries. Due to his active participation in many international bodies he was a universally recognized figure among the world specialists engaged in protection of cultural property. It is amazing that in the world of international and often contradictory interests he could apply simple mechanisms of solidarity, which helped to achieve (although not always) the set objectives. This quality can be best illustrated by the complicated efforts connected with the inscription on the World Heritage List of new properties often from the most remote corners of the world such as for example Hiroshima Peace Memorial in Japan. He achieved a high position in various councils, commissions, and bodies not only because of his great specialist knowledge but also because of his knowledge of human nature and the ability to find what is best in every person.

He did not weigh coldly the hierarchy of events. For him the lectures at a university abroad were as important as some special occasion celebrated in a small town, meetings of a prestigious body or his colleagues' requests for a review, opinion or recommendation. He did not know how to decline such requests and until the end his

schedule was full of events where his appearance was impatiently anticipated. Unfortunately, he did not get to the museum in Opole or to the lecture in Wrocław. He did not personally finish the unforgettable speeches at a few scientific conferences that were held under his patronage or supervision as President of the Polish National Committee of ICOM: Olsztyn, Pułtusk, Szreniawa.

We have lost an excellent and knowledgeable expert in the field of protection of historic monuments, a respected participant in international academic colloquia, a debater who could present the point in a few sentences and summarize a lengthy discussion, as well as a Friend.

A tired wanderer has left us. A very good person who was curious of the world and people. We will all miss him. It is not true that nobody is irreplaceable.

Fortunately, there are some continuators. This is one of them.

Regardless of what we believe and how we imagine after-life, from time to time we all let our imagination run free and think about eternity of our own and others. Will we meet those who passed away before us? Will we be able to visit the places that once were most beautiful and later totally changed? Will it be possible to ask questions which were left unanswered during our lifetime? Will it be possible to rewind time like a film to see images and people who lived before us? If yes, I am sure Andrzej Tomaszewski, once on the other side, would begin with Opatów. Every trip to the south of Poland included a long stopover in front of Opatów's portal, stroking the stones, going round and round to finally come to the same conclusion "So many tried to find the answer and still we don't know anything..."

Ewa Świącka

Photos from author's archives

Profesor Andrzej Tomaszewski – koniec podróży

Andrzej Tomaszewski urodził się w Warszawie (1934–2010). Jego aktywna działalność w wielu gronach międzynarodowych sprawiła, że był postacią powszechnie rozpoznawalną w kręgu światowych specjalistów zaangażowanych w ochronę dóbr kultury. Zadziwiające, że w wielkim świecie międzynarodowych, często przeciwstawnych interesów umiał zastosować proste mechanizmy solidarności, co pomagało osiągać (choć nie zawsze) wytyczone cele. Najlepszą ilustracją tej cechy były skomplikowane zabiegi w przypadku wpisywania na Listę Światowego Dziedzictwa kolejnych obiektów, niejednokrotnie z bardzo odległych rejonów świata, jak na przykład japońska Hiroszima. Wysoką

pozycję w rozmaitych radach, komisjach i gremiach zdobywał nie tylko z powodu ogromnej wiedzy merytorycznej, ale także dzięki znajomości natury ludzkiej i umiejętności znalezienia w każdym tego, co dobre. Straciliśmy wybitnego eksperta, znawcę problematyki ochrony zabytków, cenionego uczestnika międzynarodowych kolokwium naukowych i dyskutanta, potrafiącego w kilku zdaniach sprecyzować sedno i podsumować przedłużającą się polemikę, ale także Przyjaciela. Odszedł od nas zmęczony wędrowiec. Ciekawy świata i ludzi dobry Człowiek, którego będzie nam wszystkim brakowało. To nieprawda, że nie ma ludzi niezastąpionych.