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“Biography of Tadeusz Cyprian in the context of his photographic and social activities”.

Abstract

The life of photographer and lawyer Tadeusz Cyprian (1898-19179) was governed by three factors: attachment to loved ones, awareness of the ethos of Polish intelligentsia and passion for photography. Their hierarchy could change; over time he went from photographer and lawyer to lawyer and photographer. From early years, however, his identity had a uniform and lasting outline, defined by upbringing and education. They prepared him to fulfil leading social roles as a representative of the intelligentsia in the reborn country, in 1919, and later, in the Polish government in exile in London. His extraordinary biography was enriched by the high position he held there in the years 1942-1945: on behalf of the Ministry of Justice he participated in all the most important commissions of the time, starting from the one investigating the causes of the September 1939 defeat, through the commission on the death of General Sikorski, to the United Nations Commission.

His sensitivity shaped by photography was not without significance in this activity – he had a photographic eye and a journalistic ear. After 1945, it led him to maximum involvement in trials against war criminals and tireless journalistic efforts to have their deeds accounted for. To stigmatize and punish crimes against humanity, and not allow them to be forgotten. Ultimately, this leader of the Polish intelligentsia exceeded the national framework of the mission of his social group. He replaced the national ethos with a humanistic, universal one, using both the culture of experts and the culture of trickery.

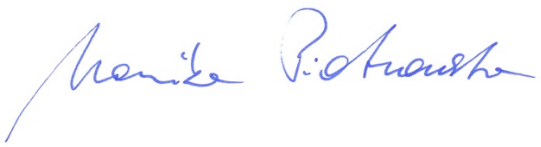
The dissertation, using all the concepts mentioned above, presents for the first time an extensive biography of a man who, as a Polish delegate to the most important trial of the 20th century – had the strength and skills to bring about the admission of Polish witnesses in front of the International Military Tribunal, It answers the question of how his two-track career developed towards taking on important social tasks, the burden of which became historical. How a descendant of a Polish intelligentsia family, educated in the diversity of cultures, in confrontation with several critical moments in history, was reborn through photography and journalistic sensitivity as a kind of reviewer of humanity. Such an approach avoids patterns and corresponds to the nature of Cyprian himself.

His activity in the world of photography and his position as a leader occupy an important place here, which leads to a reinterpretation of Jan Bułhak's significance. The analysis of the numerous interwar journalism also uncovers unknown threads or previously forgotten events.

The reconstruction of events is based on vast archival material from state institutions and several private collections. The basis constitute various personal documents in the sense of F. Znaniecki, i.e. official and private documents, journalism, priceless diaries of a photographer and lawyer from two wars, dozens of photographs, as well as memoir literature, interviews with living witnesses of his actions, and finally rare and invaluable audio and video, radio and television recordings for the understanding of his personality. The photographs have been included in the work in large numbers, completing the verbal narrative and forming their own, parallel one. A third, abbreviated one is also present in the text in bold print.

The form of the dissertation is dictated by the combination of methods of historians, art historians and sociologists, which has broadened the field of vision, enriched the perspective, and has led to new conclusions. The first part of the dissertation builds a picture

of the interwar community of Poznań photographers as a representation of the local intelligentsia - the environment in which Cyprian made his first career. The second part is the proper biography, containing a method in itself, as a microhistory bringing closer in a "tangible" way the image of life in the past. This form is close to reportage, one of the most effective forms of communication, which was also the aim of this work.



keywords

Tadeusz Cyprian, photographer, lawyer, Polish photography, ethos of the Polish intelligentsia, humanistic ethos, expert culture, culture of trickery, photojournalism, sports photography, Nuremberg trial, Supreme National Tribunal in Poland, Sanation judge, independence, interwar, Polish government-in-exile, Poznań, Society of Photography Amateurs, Jan Bułhak, Bolesław Gardulski, Antoni Wieczorek, Polish photographers, famous trials, Bohdan Winiarski, KZ, concentration camps, Buchenwald, war criminals, photography magazines, photo journalism of the interwar period, Leica, Leica-funs, Lviv photography, intelligentsia of Poznań, propaganda, war photography, Polish Army in France, aviator, French aviation, Polish aviation, aerial photographer, Polish-Bolshevik war, Gen. Sikorski, UNWCC, Katyn, Jerzy Sawicki, Mieczyslaw Siewierski, Geoffrey Lawrence, Telford Taylor, Robert H. Jackson, Jerzy Giertych, Rudolf Höß, Royal Photographic Society