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UNBINDING TIME. THE WOMEN'S ARCHIVE - AIMS, ACTIVITIES, METHODS

DOI: 10.36155/PLib.13.00013

ABSTRACT

This article presents the assumptions and results of two research projects funded by the National Programme for the Development of the Humanities and conducted at the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in the years 2013-2024: Women's Archive: Women Writers and Women's Archive: Continuation, that is the online database of women's autobiographical relics Women's Archive (<http://archiwumkobiet.pl>), the Women's Archive Repository (<http://repozytorium.archiwumkobiet.pl>) and the editorial series Women's Archive: Documents, including a digital edition of Maria Jadwiga Strumff's *Pamiętnik masażystki* (<http://edycje.archiwumkobiet.pl>). It provides information on the contents of the Database, the nature of the Repository, and the assumptions of the editorial series. It also highlights the ideas that guided the creators of the project.

KEYWORDS: online Women's Archive Database, digital humanities, scientific editing, feminist criticism, biographism

The Women's Archive (Archiwum Kobiet) is a scientific team of the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IBL PAN), conducting research on women's autobiographical writing.¹ Its mission is to revive the memory of women, their fates and the traces recorded in their personal documents.

The name Women's Archive may connote a place where manuscripts are stored. We abandoned this definition and treat 'archive' more broadly. We conduct searches for manuscripts in archives, museums, libraries, and private collections. We read the sources found, describe their content and index them in a digital bibliography. In addition, the Women's Archive popularises knowledge of women's autobiographical writing. We organise seminars, conferences and exhibitions presenting the results of our search and research. We have created a visual repository to supplement the Women's Archive Database. We also publish selected manuscripts in a series called: Archiwum Kobiet - dokumenty (Women's Archive - documents).

Autobiographical writing includes such genres of expression as diaries, calendar notes, accounts of travels, accounts of war or emigration, memoirs, autobiographies, and letters. Literary historians also refer to this type of writing as egodocuments, personal documents, or intimistics. Women's diaries, memoirs, and correspondence, especially from the 19th century, deserve special attention, as this is a hitherto almost unknown area of Polish culture, hiding many secrets that concern women's social, political, and intellectual activity, their identity and the genealogy of this identity, as well as their mutual contacts and family, environmental, and ideological relations. Uncovering them may contribute to a deeper knowledge of the specificity of Polish society, the problems of its individual classes, and the genealogy of the Polish intelligentsia in

1 The Women's Archive of IBL PAN (AK IBL PAN), as part of two research projects funded by the National Programme for the Development of the Humanities in the years 2013-2024, created an online Women's Archive Database, a digital repository and an editorial series with its digital platform.

particular. It is necessary to remember that for centuries women's writing was an elite practice, undertaken by a narrow group of women and girls of noble, aristocratic, and from a certain point on, bourgeois origin. It was not until the 20th century that women's autobiographical writing became more egalitarian, with the greater availability of education, greater presence of women in the labour market and, after the war, the top-down demand for memoir writing competitions. The social history is reflected in the social characterisation of the female authors of the documents we study.

Over the centuries, women's activity in public life was in no way similar to what we know from our social and political reality, has not been realised to the extent that we know today from our social and political reality. But this does not mean that women were inactive when it came to writing. They witnessed great historical events, but they also observed themselves, their surroundings, families, friends; they wrote about their interests, ambitions, plans, travels, but also about boredom, illnesses, and fears.²

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- 2 On the subject of women's autobiographical writing, cf., for example, Benstock S. (ed.), 1988, *The Private Self. Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings*, London: Routledge; Brodzki B., Schenck C. (ed.), 1988, *Life/Lines. Theorizing Women's Autobiography*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Czerska T., 2011, *Między autobiografią a opowieścią rodzinną. Kobięce narracje osobiste w Polsce po 1944 roku w perspektywie historyczno-kulturowej*, Szczecin: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego; Gilmore L., 1994, *Autobiographics. A Feminist Theory of Women's Self-Representation*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Lionnet F., 1989, *Autobiographical Voices. Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Pekaniec A., *Czy w tej autobiografii jest kobieta? Kobięca literatura dokumentu osobistego od początku XIX wieku do wybuchu II wojny światowej*, Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2013; Smith S., Watson J. (ed.), 1992, *De/Colonizing the Subject. The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; Smith S., Watson J. (ed.), 1998, *Women, Autobiography, Theory. A Reader*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Including on the subject of women's diary writing, cf., for example, Blodgett H., 1989, *Centuries of Female Days. English Women's Private Diaries*, Gloucester 1989; Alan Sutton; Bunkers S.L., Huff C.A. (ed.), 1996, *Inscribing the Daily. Critical Essays on Women's Diaries*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press; Culley M., 1985, *A Day at a Time. The Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present*, Old Westbury: Feminist Press; Heyden-Rynsch V. von der, 1998, *Écrire la vie. Trois siècles de journaux intimes féminins*, Paris: Gallimard; Lejeune Ph., 1993, *Le moi de demoiselles – Enquête sur le journal de jeune fille*, Paris: Seuil; Lyons M.E., 1995, *Keeping Secrets. The Girlhood Diaries of Seven Women Writers*, New York: H. Holt and Co; Schiwy M.A., Woodman M., 1996, *A Voice of Her Own. Women and the Journal Writing Journey*, New York: Simon and Schuster; Simons J., 1990, *Diaries and Journals of Literary Woman from Fanny Burney to Virginia Woolf*, London: Macmillan.

The Women's Archive collects the preserved traces of these women's biographies.

The works of the French historian, sociologist, and literary anthropologist Philippe Lejeune was influential in the development of the study of egodocuments; he was the first to take interest in the practice of writing autobiographies and diaries by so-called 'ordinary' people, and then passed on his passion to his many disciples and followers, also working in the area we now call social archival studies. According to Lejeune, it is not only the autobiographies of statesmen or the diaries of eminent male and female artists that deserve attention. The need, desire, and practice of writing down the history of one's life, one's experiences and reflections has been quite widespread in Europe over the last two or three centuries, also - or perhaps especially - among women.³

Each written page of a memoir, a diary, or a calendar, significant to the writer at the time, was a trace of her existence and the circumstances of life in which it was written. Today, each of these pages has the potential to become an invaluable source for a better understanding of our history, especially its mundane aspects: the conditions in which women lived, the activities they performed, the feelings they had for others and for each other, their involvement in the lives of small and large communities, but also the meaning they gave to their own lives, and the ideas that were important to them and from which they drew the strength to live.

At the Women's Archive, we are less concerned with the literary aspect of the sources than literary historians are - we believe that the style and literary quality of the text or stature of the author are not the most important. We ask questions about when women wrote explicitly and when they were silent, about reasons behind strategies used to conceal events from their lives. We do not dif-

3 Cf. in particular Ph. Lejeune, *Wariacje na temat pewnego paktu. O autobiografii*, transl. W. Grajewski, S. Jaworski et al., ed. R. Lubas-Bartoszyńska, Kraków 2001; and by the same author "*Drogi zeszyt...*", "*drogi ekranie...*". *O dziennikach osobistych*, transl. A. Karpowicz, M. & P. Rodakowie, selection, introduction, and ed. P. Rodak, Warszawa 2011.

ferentiate between known and unknown women – rather, we look for ‘traces of existence’ (everything is worth placing in an archive, every piece of writing is valuable) and autobiographical practices. We cherish the practice of life writing.⁴ In our assumptions, we refer to Walter Benjamin’s understanding of history and messianism.⁵ In line with his message, we believe that the past needs our attention and empathy, and needs to be ‘liberated’ from oblivion and concealment.⁶ By recalling the anxieties, conflicts, injustices, and the unfair silencing of important issues for women of past eras, we help them, as it were, to symbolically ‘depart in peace’. We bring our female autobiographers back from oblivion and concealment, thus making our own lives richer and more mature with their experiences and reflections.

We assume that the Women’s Archive can contribute to the knowledge of hitherto unknown lines of women’s genealogies and unknown relationships between women, including friendship and love; that it will reveal records of women’s unique existence and traces of the emotional and intellectual lives of women of past generations; that it will make available knowledge of sources for learning about the histories of everyday life, customs, emotions, the history of medicine, or the history of education, as well as

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- 4 The concept of life writing – writing about life, emphasises phenomena such as individual experience, the experience of trauma, the closeness of the researcher and the cases she describes. Cf., among other things, B. de Haan, *The Eclipse of Biography in Life Writing*, in: ‘Theoretical Discussions of Biography. Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing’, ed. H. Renders, B. de Haan, Amsterdam 2014, pp. 177–194; A. Culley, *British Women’s Life Writing, 1760–1840. Friendship, Community, and Collaboration*, Basingstoke–New York 2014; S. Haslam, D. Neale, *Life Writing*, London–New York 2009; *Essays on Life Writing. From Genre to Critical Practice*, ed. M. Kadar, Toronto–Buffalo 1992; Z. Leader, *On Life-Writing*, Oxford 2015; J. Olney, *Memory & Narrative. The Weave of Life-Writing*, Chicago–London 1998; *Working in Women’s Archives. Researching Women’s Private Literature and Archival Documents (Life Writing)*, ed. M. Kadar, H. M. Buss, Waterloo (Ontario) 2001; *Women’s Life-Writing. Finding Voice/Building Community*, ed. L. S. Coleman, Bowling Green 1997; L. Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses. Criticism, Theory, Practice*, Manchester–New York 1994; *Encyclopedia of Life Writing. Autobiographical and Biographical Forms*, ed. M. Jolly, London 2001.
 - 5 W. Benjamin, ‘O pojęciu historii’, in: *Konstellacje. Wybór tekstów*, transl. A. Lipszyc, A. Wołkowicz, Kraków 2012.
 - 6 More on this topic – <https://archiwumkobiet.pl/manifest>.

knowledge of sources for writing women's biographies, history of a community, a nation, and a country.

We are aware that our archive is a place that belongs not only to the present, but also to the future, as our activities not only fill a gap in our historiography or in memory studies, but develop an area that will require continued research and work on further sources.

The tools for treasuring the memory of the past are the Women's Archive Database and the Women's Archive Repository, which are available to all interested parties. Thanks to the Database, it is now possible to read descriptions of over 2500 sources. The Repository is a set of collections presenting visual archives of specific women writers.

The combination of autobiographical research with the achievements of the digital era and the tools of information technology is guided by the idea of overcoming the inevitable laws of evanescence. On our platforms, space takes precedence and time is only a variable modality. In this way, the Women's Archive ceases to be a storehouse for the stories of our heroines and becomes a meeting place for the living and the departed. Although the physical lives of these women came to an end, their spiritual corporeality continues in their notes, letters, diaries, and memoirs, and is also present in their photographs. Their past and present continuance together with our material transitory nature establishes our collective memory and work.

WOMEN'S ARCHIVE DATABASE

The Women's Archive Database, which was created in the years 2013–2018 but is still open to growth, contains primarily information on selected, hitherto unpublished relics written in Polish by women living in the territory of historical Poland from the 18th century to the present day, stored in Polish and foreign archives. However, it also contains descriptions of documents in other languages, such as those from the workers' community in Russia, written in the 1905–1906 period. At present, we also have a collec-

tion of women's autobiographies from Slovakia, written in Slovak, and entries on sources in French - personal documents from the 18th and 19th centuries, when Polish autobiographers coming from the landowning gentry were following a trend of using French as an upper-class distinction.

The Women's Archive Database is a special type of online catalogue with descriptions (records) of female authors and their manuscripts. We go through libraries and archives, search for women's manuscripts in library collections, read the sources and describe their content, appearance, circumstances of creation, and provide the information we find about female authors. Many of these memoirs and diaries had not been read until the Women's Archive was created. The index of sources is intended to serve scholars interested in women's history and history written from women's perspective. We describe the documents in an original manner that uses the standards for the creation of library databases but goes far beyond them. In fact, an entry includes not only the author's bio, but also a range of detailed information on the nature of the document and an original essayistic description of the document, along with a list of keywords and topics discussed in the work. The original descriptions of the relics in the form of mini-essays are a testimony to our research, reading and encounters with women who lived in the past.

Researchers from the Women's Archive team conducted library queries in archives in Warsaw (the National Library Manuscripts Department, the Museum of Literature, the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the University of Warsaw Library, the Archive of New Files), Poznań and Kórnik (the Poznań Society for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences, the Raczyński Library in Poznań, the Kórnik Library), Wrocław (Ossolineum), Lublin (Hieronim Łopaciński Library) and Nałęczów, Kraków (Jagiellonian Library, Archive of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences), as well as in Lviv, Kyiv (Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine), Vilnius, Prague, Bratislava, Paris (Polish Library, Maison-Laffitte), Rome, Turin (Royal Library), Vienna, and Berlin. At present, the Database covers relics from approx. 70 archives.

The Database includes special collections such as a collection of women landowners from Greater Poland, a collection of Polish women landowners from Lithuania and Ukraine, accounts of the Holocaust from the Museum at Majdanek and the collections of the Jewish Historical Institute, accounts of women deported deep into the USSR during World War II collected by the 'Karta' Centre for Social Archivistics, a collection of memoirs sent for post-war diary competitions, and a collection of women's diaries from the period of martial law. Shortly after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, we collected a series of interviews with women who had experienced the war, conducted by Dr. Anna Nakoneczna of the University of Lviv.

THE IT OF THE WOMEN'S ARCHIVE DATABASE

Dominik Purchała, who heads the University of Warsaw Digital Competence Centre team (CKC UW), was responsible for the IT aspect of the Database development. The core of the system on which the Database is based was constantly updated, and modifications were introduced in accordance with the changing needs of the scientific team. The Women's Archive and CKC teams developed a unique description of a given relic: in addition to the basic bibliographic data collated in accordance with the Dublin Core and MARC21 standards, it included a material description of the relic, a biographical questionnaire about the author (comprising over 20 categories, such as the author's origin, religious affiliation, class affiliation, type of schools completed) and a manuscript questionnaire with a historically contextualised description, problematising the manuscript's content and keywords relating to fields such as history of traditions, history of ideas, anthropology, sociology, political science, pedagogy, cultural and literary studies.

The platform is equipped with a search engine that allows for basic and advanced searches of the collected data. The Database can be searched by the names of authors, collections of diaries or journals. It contains about 20 collections of diaries, which sometimes consist of as many as 30 descriptions of individual volumes

(this applies to authors such as Janina Żółtowska, Adela Kieniewicz, Matylda Wełna, Alicja Wahl). It can also be searched by the names of archives, cultural and social life institutions (e.g. political parties, publishers, libraries), keywords and any phrase present in it. In this way, we can juxtapose sources that were created at the same time but in different places; we can look at the same historical event through the eyes of several female observers; we can look at how women, their interests, passions, and ambitions changed over the centuries – in one town, in one family. The Database also allows us to search networks of related sources – through people, events, places, or topics.

We can see, for example, the links between the diaries of Adela Kieniewicz and the ones of Janina Żółtowska (née Puttkamer) – the two authors, who were related to each other and were friends for some time despite the considerable age difference, repeatedly mentioned this relationship in their diaries. Żółtowska's post-war diary tells us about Kieniewiczowa's fate from the period when she no longer wrote her diary (or it was not archived). We can also observe that a topic favoured by female diarists is melancholy or depression. This word, typed into our search engine, will put together the diary collections of Marcelina Kulikowska, Ludwika Dobrzyńska-Rybicka, Adela Kieniewicz, Aniela Gruszecka, Ewa Szumańska, Matylda Wełna, Alicja Wahl, or Aleksandra Leitgeber, among others. It turns out that inner anguish associated with low self-esteem, a sense of guilt and a feeling of alienation, but also attempts to extricate oneself from it through creativity or social work, are fairly constant components of the condition of women over the last two centuries at least.

The Database is available at www.archiwumkobiet.pl. Statistics of its use and correspondence with the Women's Archive staff show that the Database is very popular among scholars, hobbyists and the authors' families, who find valuable information about the lives and output of their relatives. By June 2024, we recorded 45,000 accesses by 19,000 users. The Database was accessed mainly by users from Poland, but there were about 500 entries each from Ger-

many and the United States, and about 200 in total from the United Kingdom, France, and Belgium. Hits were recorded not only from Europe and North America, but also Asia and Australia.

THE WOMEN'S ARCHIVE REPOSITORY

The Women's Archive Database is complemented by a digital repository, where digitised archival sources related to the Women's Archive Database are deposited: scans of selected manuscripts and prints, graphic materials such as photographs from the authors' archives and other sources, thematically related graphics, multimedia materials, as well as scholarly materials on autobiographical writing and women's archival studies.⁷

The Repository is a set of collections selected by the Women's Archive team from the vast material we come across – sometimes by chance – in our scholarly activities. We aim not only to create a gallery of known and unknown women writers, but also to practise history by expanding it, as the recovery of documents written by women allows the past to be reconfigured and made more comprehensive by restoring women's importance. Through the creation of such history, the women's continuum becomes more visible. A community emerges, with similar experiences, sensibilities, and goals. What all the women have in common is not that they wrote, but that they had a need to record themselves and what was happening around them. This need is a symptom of dissent from the world, its oppression and injustice; it is a desire to constitute themselves, to seek salvation for their own existence.⁸

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- 7 The Women's Archive Repository, prepared by Dominik Purchała and the CKC UW team, is a digital infrastructure for collecting, managing, and sharing, and was built with Omeka software and expanded with a web application. The website structure preserves the relational data model and allows the Repository's resources to be linked to those of the Women's Archive Database. In order to increase interoperability, the website has an application programming interface (API) implemented and an OAI-PMH protocol to enable the exchange of metadata. It meets the accessibility criteria of WCAG 2.0.
 - 8 It is worth mentioning here the studies of Harriet Blodgett, who pointed to the diarists' common need for self-expression as a female gesture of resistance to a patriarchal culture that demands their submission and silence, equating such an attitude with femininity in general or feminine virtue. Cf. H. Blodgett, op. cit.

These are often biographies fraught with various twists and turns, tragedies, nervous breakdowns, suicide attempts, but not devoid of moments of happiness and fulfillment. Suffice it to mention the personal documents written by Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska, Maria Jadwiga Strumff, Lucyna Kotarbińska, Antonina Machczyńska, Łucja Hornowska, Józefa Kodisowa, Marcelina Kulikowska, Zofia Zaleska, Pelagia Dąbrowska, Maria Faleńska, Zofia Dzieduszycka, Helena Ziemiałkowska, Karolina Bylinianka, Alicja Wahl, Maria Towiańska, Hanna Nałkowska-Bickowa. The juxtaposition of these women is not dictated by a random choice or a planned search. They found themselves in the research horizon because their paths crossed ours.

Currently, the Repository consists of 18 named personal collections with 154 digital objects (4,197 scans).⁹ Users will also soon find a virtual version of the *Maria Konopnicka – wróciłam* exhibition (an exhibition co-organised by the Women's Archive with the Museum of Literature and the Museum of Independence in 2022 as the nationally celebrated Year of Konopnicka) and an accompanying album, in the form of an e-book *Maria Konopnicka. Wróciłam*¹⁰.

These resources are being successively supplemented. Currently, further collections and their elaborations are being prepared, such as a collection of diaries, private photographs, and photographs of paintings and prints by Alicja Wahl, Maria Konopnicka, Maria Towiańska, and Hanna Nałkowska. In the future, the Repository will also include scholarly works, especially articles thematically related to the project.

9 The Repository offers a convenient administration panel for depositing and processing materials, both individually and in larger collections. The basic unit of the archive is a single digital object (photograph, manuscript, source text, document), which is a file or a cluster of files in TIFF and JPG format. The resources are made available with metadata that describe them, in accordance with the common Dublin Core standard for describing digital resources. They are grouped in named personal collections (according to their association with a particular author), but links can be made between them independent of taxonomic division. The Women's Archive Repository provides a professional presentation of digitised source materials in an attractive and easy-to-browse form. It is possible to browse resources not only in the order of the Collection, but also through common topics, keywords, or other metadata. The website also allows resources to be searched according to preset criteria.

10 Muzeum Literatury – IBL Wydawnictwo, Warszawa 2024.

The Repository can be found on a separate website: <https://repozytorium.archiwumkobiet.pl/>

WOMEN'S ARCHIVE. DOCUMENTS - THE EDITORIAL SERIES

The work of the Women's Archive team is not limited to the creation of the Database and the Repository. An important activity is the editions of egodocuments published as part of the *Archiwum Kobiet. Dokumenty* (*Women's Archive. Documents*) series. Our aim is to look for new ways of telling stories that describe women's perception, reflection, and experience acquired over the course of their lives. We believe that history enriched with knowledge of hitherto little-known relationships between women, their friendships, professional alliances, political coalitions, loves - not only those falling into recognisable narratives of engagement, marriage, or romance - will contribute to a better understanding of the intellectual and emotional lives of past generations of women and of society as a whole. Hitherto unknown lines of women's genealogies - grandmothers, mothers, and daughters; teachers and students; socio-political activists and their continuators - are waiting to be incorporated into a broader historical perspective. On the one hand, thanks to the manuscripts, we can write more boldly and in an original way about the biographies of selected women, providing comprehensive, pertinent commentaries on the documents we publish. Thus, we contribute to historiography that describes the life of our community and country in the last two centuries in an innovative way, broadening our knowledge and deepening our sensitivity. On the other hand, personal documents such as Bronisława Waligórska's letters or Maria Jadwiga Strumff's diary encourage us to look at the great 'History', traditionally established by the landmarks of uprisings and wars in the history of Polish society, from a female perspective. The political events in these diary notes create a discrete history, which often reveals itself indirectly and usually doesn't become a topic of reflection. On the basis of the archival materials, it should be assumed that treat-

ing women's autobiographies of the last 200 years as a dominant perspective enables a non-traditional look at the history of the Polish lands. This look is not limited to women's history, because it sets new directions for research, interpretation, and representation of history in terms of gender, class, religious, national, and other divisions. The diaristic/letter/memoiristic experience often reveals conflicts that arise from the clash between personal life and political events which are perceived as traumatic. The writer often marks her own turning points that are derived from her personal and political history. For this reason, it is useful to focus on individual, subjective milestones that produce divisions frequently incompatible with the traditional classification. The personal perspective weakens the cause-effect dyad that produces a linear history. In sources of this type, the writing person, immersed in a specific moment in history, did not necessarily understand but certainly felt the immediate effects of changes, which means that the private accounts of events recorded in diaries or letters may, but do not have to, agree with the official picture of the past reconstructed on the basis of historical research.

We argue that women's personal documents allow us to look at a political event from the sidelines and see the shadow it cast on society after each socio-political change: war, crisis, or disaster that women and their families had to deal with. The fundamental thing for this approach to history is to look at the various forms of women's emancipation, particularly those that were not associated with an organised feminist (women's) movement. The presentation of history that transpires from egodocuments shows how women - wives of exiles, aristocrats, nuns, scholars, writers, workers, prisoners, teachers, students, etc. - built their own lives and the lives of their loved ones in new situations. Even at first glance, the diversity of viewpoints is surprising: from total commitment to politics to its rejection, from overt political statements to their undisclosed or disclosed traces.

The common ground turns out to be "looking from one's own inner life" at the major events taking place. One's own inner life

can be defined broadly; it is sometimes synonymous with home, but often remains homeless. Homelessness, or alienation, is a feature of many women's personal documents. This condition was defined by women's helplessness, despair, but also agency, anger, civil resistance, often consolidating microcommunities of women and children – all these translated into reconstructing/rebuilding/restructuring/repairing/creating reality.

Until recently, historians have paid little attention to contextualised emotionality; now, thanks to autobiographical sources, it seems to be a fundamental principle. Emotions in personal documents should be seen as part of the process of women's emancipation and the formation of their modern consciousness. Moreover, sources of this type make it possible to reinterpret women's conditions and roles in terms of responsibility, support, and also care (considered in the context of women's history). For the question arises: are we dealing with a cultural code, the performance of certain behaviours in particular historical periods, or with an individual strategy that has nothing to do with a traditional or progressive understanding of femininity?

The following nine items have been published in our series so far:

- Bronisława Waligórska, *Listy z cytadeli*, ed. Monika Rudaś-Grodzka, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2018.
- Anna Moszyńska, *Listy z Pirny*, ed. Emilia Kolinko, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2018.
- Urszula Ledóchowska, *Listy do Marii Sternickiej-Deymer 1921-1937*, ed. Małgorzata Krupecka USJK, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2022.
- Maria Towiańska, *Córka Mesjasza. Listy 1866-1906*, ed. Marlis Lami, Katarzyna Kaczmarek, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2024.
- Hanna Nałkowska, *Dzienniki czasu żałoby 1942-1945*, ed. Anna Dżabagina, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2024.

- Maria Renata Mayenowa, Roman Jakobson, Krystyna Pomorska, *Korespondencja 1946–1986*, ed. Maria Prussak, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2024.
- Kazimiera Iłakowiczówna, Józefa Grabowska, *Korespondencja 1939–1956*, ed. Lucyna Marzec, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2024.
- Maria Konopnicka, *Listy do Nikodema Erazma Iwanowskiego 1887–1889*, ed. Monika Rudaś-Grodzka, Jolanta Żyndul, Barbara Stępniań, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2024.
- Maria Jadwiga Strumff, *Pamiętnik masażystki 1894–1916*, ed. Monika Rudaś-Grodzka, Jolanta Żyndul, Barbara Stępniań, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN (Archiwum Kobiet: Dokumenty series), Warszawa 2024.

DIGITAL EDITION OF *PAMIĘTNIK MASAŻYSTKI*

In 2024, the Women's Archive and the CKK UW prepared a multilayered digital edition of Maria Jadwiga Strumff's diary,¹¹ inspired by innovative digital editions of publications such as van Gogh's letters¹² or Flaubert's works.¹³

An appropriate platform was established to make it available at <http://edycje.archiwumkobiet.pl>.

Aneta Wysztygiel, Dominik Purchała, and the University of Warsaw Digital Competence Centre team, were responsible for the encoding of the source text, in line with its critical elaboration, and for the programming work.¹⁴ The digital edition has the ad-

11 (ed. Monika Rudaś-Grodzka, collaboration Katarzyna Nadana-Sokołowska, Barbara Stępniań).

12 Cf. online platform vangoghletters.org.

13 Cf. online platform flaubert.univ-rouen.fr.

14 *Pamiętnik masażystki*, as Dominik Purchała explains, is elaborated, annotated and prepared for release as a TEI XML file, which means that the data and metadata are stored in a machine-readable format and are available for further research and scientific analysis. Facsimiles are provided using the Cantaloupe image server according to the IIIF standard. The XML files of the transcriptions are stored in the free XML eXist-DB database. The presentation part of the transcrip-

vantage making the text spatial in a particular way. Readers can follow the words in a traditional manner, but are additionally offered a non-linear reading – layered, critical, and, above all, individualised. This dynamic structure helps in browsing contextual commentaries, historical and factual explanations. The main text is overlaid with circles devoted to themes extracted from the diary narrative – family, work, and love – allowing us to move through Strumff's story in a way different from that imposed by the linear form of recording. These digital topic reconfigurations are useful as a research tool for all those interested, but also offer the possibility of new interpretations of Maria Strumff's notes.¹⁵ Moreover, several essays are included in the digital publication in addition to commentaries and footnotes.¹⁶

The Women's Archive was responsible for the substantive part of the edition. Our historical and genealogical research and close

tion, together with the manuscript, is based on TEI Publisher software, which has been adapted to the needs of the project. The visualisation and contextual part was prepared in terms of programming on the WordPress system. For the presentation of this layer of the digital edition, software solutions were created from scratch and implemented to interactively tie together many aspects of layers of meaning and additional content, tailored strictly to the specificity of the project. The source edition of the digital edition is published in open access, free of charge, without restriction, for all interested parties (along with the TEI XML source files).

- 15 The platform, as agreed with the CKC UW, is adapted to provide access to scientifically developed source texts in the form of a multi-layered digital edition, and further items may be uploaded to it in the future. The Women's Archive edition platform enables multifaceted reading and learning about the source text together with its contexts: it offers a TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) tagged transcription of the source text with footnotes, explanations, and additional information; it provides a parallel preview of the digitised source document; it enables reading and analysis of the text together with scientific elaboration, including historical, social, and interpretative contexts, in the form of an interactive visualisation and a network of markup and substantive commentaries.
- 16 Essays published in the digital edition: Monika Rudaś-Grodzka, *Za wcześniej urodzona. Maria Jadwiga Strumff*; Jolanta Zyndul, *Duma i uprzedzenie*; Zuzanna Kołodziejska-Smagala, „Nazwisko na berg przerażało mnie” – wyznania Marii Jadwigi Strumff na temat Żydów; Katarzyna Stańczak-Wiślicz, *Ciało, uroda, starość i brzydota w pamiętniku Marii Jadwigi Strumff*; Barbara Stępiak, „Niewiasta ma rodzić mężczyzn, ale...”; Iwona Misiak, *Seksualność Masażystki*; Alicja Urbanik-Kopeć, „Straszne to jest brać się do pracy ludziom zepsutym dostatkami”. *Klasa robotnicza, służba, praca seksualna w pamiętniku masażystki Marii Jadwigi Strumff*; Julia Wesołowska, *Edukacja, wychowanie i wiedza Marii Jadwigi Strumff. Drogi rozwoju kobiety na przełomie XIX i XX wieku.*

reading were another step in disseminating Strumff's memoirs, which have been of great interest to cultural and historical researchers in recent years. The new analysis of the text uncovered areas that were not of interest to the editors of the previous publication.¹⁷ Our research revealed the hitherto untold history of Maria Jadwiga Strumff's family, adding to our knowledge of the document and the author's life.

The basis for the edition was Maria Jadwiga Strumff's memoir, held in the collection of the Wola Museum of Warsaw under the reference number MHW A/II/456/1-2. The manuscript consists of two notebooks of memoirs, each with a title given by the author: *Spostrzeżenia nad ludźmi w końcu czwartego roku mej praktyki, czyli poznanie ludzi* [Observations over people at the end of my fourth year of practice – getting to know people] and *Badanie życia i ludzi* [Exploring life and people].

The text contains recollections of different years: the author wrote three year numbers on the penultimate page of the second notebook: 1894, 1904, and 1908, which marked the turning points in her life. The two notebooks were probably written in time intervals. However, all indications are that Strumff probably jotted down her memoirs in the years 1894–1910. The first notebook has 20 pages. The manuscript is written on both sides and contains crossing-outs and annotations added by the author or members of her family. The second notebook has 70 pages. The title cover is dark orange. The manuscript of the memoirs comprises 61 pages, with a further seven being notes on purchases and expenses for several months of 1915 and 1916. A third notebook contains copied passages from various literary works. Sometimes the text differs slightly from the original in editions from which the author may have copied it. This mainly concerns punctuation. During the preparation of the text and the footnotes for the present edition, it was possible to reconstruct new facts about the au-

17 M. J. Strumff, *Spostrzeżenia nad ludźmi – Szczere wyznania Massażystki*, Warszawa 2021.

thor's biography or some of the details she described in the diary. For example, the names of two female murderers mentioned by her at the time, whose fates aroused her interest, were read correctly. Thus, the present edition differs from the first book edition.

In accordance with the principles of documentary editing adopted by the Women's Archive series, the source text of Strumff's diary is given in its original form, without any editorial or proof-reading interventions, without modernising the spelling, with the original orthography, punctuation, syntax, archaic forms, and numerous omissions of diacritical marks. The principles adopted are connected with our understanding of the tasks of philology and history. In our editorial series, we want to get closer to the original; we pay attention to errors, stumbles, blots, hesitations of the pen, the placement of additional notes, and thus to the material side of the document; we believe that the ductus of handwriting reflects personality traits and mental states of the author, while print as an inhuman form distances us from the writer. We abandon traditional modernisation, which facilitates the reading of the text, but obscures or even distorts the individual features of the language and habits of the writer. We do not correct the manuscripts we work on. This approach, dictated by respect for the writers, also allows us to get closer to their era and the place where the person wrote down their life.

SUMMARY

The Women's Archive, headed by Monika Rudaś-Grodzka, engaged at least 70 people over 11 years. The permanent team that decided on the direction of the work in the Database and supervised it includes Dominik Purchała from the CKC UW and Katarzyna Nadana-Sokołowska, a member of the interdisciplinary research team of the Women's Archive at the IBL PAN since its foundation in 2013. It was a kind of project in process: both the project itself evolved, verifying initial assumptions, enriching itself with new ideas, searching for ways of development and expanding its fields

of activity, as did the team that implemented it – members of archival queries and authors of entries in the Database, scientific and language editors, other editors – and the team of partner institutions. The most important – and permanent – of these is the University of Warsaw Digital Competence Centre.

We assume that in the future the Women's Archive Database will be enriched with new titles – new author collections, articles, and books will be added to the Repository, new volumes of the editorial series will be published. Other scientific projects that disseminate and popularise science are constantly being developed around the Women's Archive Database, as well as cultural projects – exhibitions and films. We are open to institutional and individual cooperation, you can contact us at the following addresses: archiwumkobiet@ibl.waw.pl, monikarudasgrodzka@gmail.com, katarzyna.nadana-sokolowska@ibl.waw.pl, d.purchala@uw.edu.pl.

Links and addresses important to the project:

<http://archiwumkobiet.pl>

<http://repozytorium.archiwumkobiet.pl>

<http://edycje.archiwumkobiet.pl>

<http://facebook.com/archiwumkobiet>

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Translated by Joanna Modzelewska-Jankowiak