

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN THE PROVINCE OF RZESZÓW AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR CULTURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR, FROM 1944 UNTIL 1950

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Abstract:

Most valuable historic buildings in the Province of Rzeszów were destroyed during the Second World War. Most of them were important for cultural tourism in the region. In some cases the damage was so serious that they required quick reconstruction, or at least protection against further devastation. The article presents examples of both the Province and local authorities engagement in the reconstruction process. It also describes the initiatives of local communities who often showed deep concern about the national heritage in their districts. They undertook tasks concerning the buildings which were important for the whole region and cultural tourism in places like, for example, Łańcut, Krasiczyn, Baranów, Krosno, Przemyśl and Szymbark, but also smaller places like Brzozów, Jeżowe, Biecz and others. Regardless of the size and the position of a place, people made efforts to obtain financial assets for the reconstruction of buildings which were the part of the national heritage in the Province of Rzeszów and the ones important for the cultural tourism development in the post war-period.

The destruction of monuments and historic buildings is usually the result of historical processes which may be generated by: improper care, the negligence of regular redecoration works, unsuitable building protection works or even lack of it or natural and other kinds of disaster. War understood as a disaster, for which human beings are responsible, always brings damage and destruction. During the Second World War the destruction of national heritage was an action carefully planned by the Nazi occupiers. Buildings were ruined because they were constantly under air and ground fires and they completely burnt down in the blaze afterwards¹. Furthermore, some of them were lost forever because of frequent pillage. Alterations of historic structure also resulted from using structural elements as building material. All the activities mentioned above constituted the causes for destruction of valuable historical buildings across the Province of Rzeszów and their condition after the war.

Post-war reconstruction was hard for various reasons. The extent of damage forced people to reconstruct housing estates and infrastructure in the first place. The labour force was low because the death toll during the war was enormous in the whole country. Building material was also scarce or it was difficult to obtain. Similarly to other regions in Poland, valuable historical buildings in the Province of Rzeszów needed prompt reconstruction to

¹ Gawlicki M., Ruiny zabytków sakralnych w powojennych i obecnych koncepcjach konserwatorskich [in] Materials after the International Scientific Conference „Ruiny zabytków sakralnych – ochrona i adaptacja do nowych funkcji”, 6/11-8/11.2008, Gubin

avoid further destruction and preserve them for future generations. Historical records dating the period between 1944-1950 show that the Provincial Office in Rzeszów, and its Culture and the Arts Department in particular, was aware of the necessity to renovate historic buildings which were the part of national heritage. Most of them were often heavily devastated after the war. For that reason the authorities attempted to protect the buildings against further destruction or even to rebuild some of them. Furthermore, they started to collect information about the extant significant buildings in the area and searched for funding opportunities as they planned some renovation works.

The district of Krosno and its authorities proved to be the first centre which acted dynamically. As early as before the end of the Second World War, in the late 1944, they ran an inspection which was recorded in the report on 3rd of November 1944 made by the Local Council in Krosno following the order of the Governor of Rzeszów. Not only did the Local Council in Krosno listed all the places in the area, but also the Culture and the Arts Department and the Propaganda Department created a register of musicians, artists and painters. Moreover, they took steps to protect works of art in landed estates. They engaged in a more detailed way in works concerning the records and protection of historic buildings representing stylish architecture until the half XIX century. In order to have cultural heritage monuments under full protection in the district, the following registers were established: folk arts, monuments and natural specimens or natural areas deserving protection. Furthermore, they started working on creating a reference list concerning monuments, libraries and archives². Less than a year after the war finished, as a result of an inspection between 7-15 of March 1946, "The Guidebook of monuments in Krosno and in the area" was created on the instructions of the Culture and the Arts Department. In that time the department was responsible for 16 churches and 24 other buildings which were included in the new register³.

It seems that after some time the Local Council in Krosno stopped being interested in saving cultural heritage in the area and went to deal with other important matters. It can be concluded after analysing the reports made after other inspections (on 23/4-30/4, 1947, 15/4-22/4, 11/5-14/5, 19/5-25/5, 25/10-29/10, 2/11-6/11, 1948) which did not include any accounts from the Culture and the Arts Department⁴.

Like in Krosno, the city Council in Łańcut made the first specific attempts to protect and renovate cultural heritage monuments even before the war ended. After the Governor of Rzeszów had given an instruction to examine the district of Łańcut between 14-15 of December 1944, it turned out that the Culture and Art Department had already taken steps and started some works to save the buildings ruined in the time of the war⁵. During another control the inspectors noted down that the former Potocki Family Castle had been turned into a museum. The inspectors stated that the museum had professional management and there was a cataloguing action being held alongside the control. They aimed at listing monuments

² Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki, Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Subwencje dla muzeów i ochrony zabytków – przydział i rozliczenia 1944-1945, zespół 36, sygn. 2192. State Archives in Rzeszów

³ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 220 (nr mikrofilmu P2834), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Powiatowego Krośnieńskiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 7-15.03.1946. State Archives in Rzeszów

⁴ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 220 (nr mikrofilmu P2834), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Powiatowego Krośnieńskiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego 22-30.04.1947, 15-22.04.1948, 25-29.10. 1948 i 2-6. 11.1948, 11-14.05.1948 i 19-25.05.1948. State Archives in Rzeszów

⁵ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 223 (№ of microfilm P2837), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Łańcuckiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 14-15.12.1944. State Archives in Rzeszów

and pieces of art and culture left in the castle by the Potocki family. They also made a statement that every month the museum was donated 10, 000 PLZ (Polish currency) for reconstruction works, but as the museum custodian said it was not enough to satisfy the needs. The museum needed more money as they were expecting more new exhibits – they were going to be brought to Łańcut from the Lubomirski Family Palace in Przeworsk⁶. The next post-inspection report after the control between 22 -24 of April 1947 showed that in the period reviewed the village church in Krzemienica was secured and slightly redecorated. The church was valuable for cultural heritage reasons because it represented a folk style of construction. In addition, the Potocki Family Castle was converted into the State Museum Centre. Another important piece of information included in the report was about revindication of some priceless objects for the museum. Moreover, with the help of the State Museum Centre, a new Folk Art Department was established in the museum in Łańcut⁷

Despite the fact that the inspectors sent by the Governor of Rzeszów showed only positive actions in the report, Jan Micał, who was one of the members of the Culture and the Arts Section in the Local Council in Łańcut, critically assessed the activities of the State Museum Centre in Łańcut. In his opinion, the castle was not being renovated in an appropriate manner and the people in charge did not allow proper development of that institution. On the contrary, Jan Micał accused Zdzisław Ganowski, the administrator of the castle, of poor management. As a result, there were fewer and fewer exhibits in the castle and it was going to decline. According to Jan Micał, Zdzisław Ganowski did not regard the museum as “something that should be loved, preserved and developed, but as a profitable business”⁸. He also alleged that Z. Ganowski charged 4% of the total income in the castle. More allegations related to leasing out precious castle furniture to random people and ploughing one of the most beautiful parts of the historic park. He meant the part of the park between so called Little Castle and the ponds. Additionally, J. Micał blamed Z. Ganowski for bad management of trips in the castle. In his statement J. Micał wrote that the rooms in the building were so small that only maximum thirty visitors could come at a time. Despite such room capacity, the administrator allowed groups of 40, 60 or even 100 guests at the same time. Consequently, big groups of tourists were the reason for frequent theft and irreparable damage. That could be proven by the case of so called Turkish Room. The furniture in the room, which was owned in the past by Izabela Lubomirska from the Czartoryski Family, was destroyed because the groups visiting the room were too numerous. Another fact which was much open to doubt was connected with the failure to catalogue the museum collections after the war. In addition, everybody could enter the castle and take some things away because there was nobody working as a security guard on the castle premises. J. Micał decided that the most harmful move was the decision to turn the second floor in the castle into a kind of a guesthouse. Subsequently, the antique furniture was removed from the stylish rooms which were turned into regular hotel rooms. Concluding his statement, the writer suggested dismissing the administrator and he also suggested that the place, including the surrounding park, should be

⁶ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 223 ((№ of microfilm P2837), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Łańcuckiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 10-19.05.1946. State Archives in Rzeszów

⁷ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 223 ((№ of microfilm P2837), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Łańcuckiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 22-30.04.1947. State Archives in Rzeszów

⁸ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 223 ((№ of microfilm P2837), Oświadczenie Jana Micała Referenta Kultury i Sztuki w Starostwie Powiatowym w Łańcucie w sprawie Państwowego Ośrodka Muzealnego w Łańcucie, z dnia 8.12.1947. State Archives in Rzeszów

given proper respect and care⁹. There was no reference to J. Mical's statement in the report made after the inspection a year later. They dealt with the issue of monuments in a very laconic way. The only thing the authors did was to mention the most important places in the district: the State Museum Centre in Łańcut, the Storehouse in Brzóza Stadnicka dating XIV or XV century, the Bernadine Monastery in Leżajsk and a Stone Age cemetery in Kraczkowa dating the period around 3.500 years BC¹⁰. The post-inspection report in 1949 did not mention any historic buildings and monuments in Łańcut District¹¹.

Other local districts did not get involved in that field as much as the Council from Krosno. There was a little remark about an attempt to protect cultural heritage in the report made by the Local Council in Lesko – the report was also made after the Governor of Rzeszów ordered so. The control which took place between 14-21 of June 1946 showed that the Culture and the Arts Department made some effort and repaired the roof of a historic Krasicki Palace in Lesko¹². Apart from that single case, they did not give more information concerning the protection and redecoration of other valuable buildings. The Governor of Rzeszów issued a post-inspection instruction and ordered the Culture and the Arts Department in Lesko to be more active and get engaged more in the all the matters which constituted the regular responsibilities of the department such as the renovation of the cultural heritage places in the district¹³. Despite the instruction, the situation did not improve and the Local District in Lesko did not take any steps to follow the order. Other inspections ordered by the Governor of Rzeszów carried out on the following dates 7/8-14/8, 1947, 21/4-28/4, 1948 and 15/8-24/8, 1949 revealed that the Council still did not do anything to protect the cultural heritage and they did not promote culture either¹⁴. As for the City Council in Lubaczów, the reports made after the inspections on 20/9-21/9, 1944, 2/4-10/4, 1946, 29/5-3/06, 1947, 15/8-22/8, 1948 depicted no activity in the field of cultural heritage protection¹⁵.

The collection documents about educational and cultural branches included also reports created after the conferences attended by council department heads. Among the reports there were some papers related to different monuments in the Province of Rzeszów and their condition after the Second World War. A letter sent to the Supreme Audit Office by the Culture and the Arts Department, a section of the Provincial Office in Rzeszów, contained a list of units subordinated to the department. The most important were: the castle in

⁹ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 223 ((№ of microfilm P2837), Oświadczenie Jana Micała Referenta Kultury i Sztuki w Starostwie Powiatowym w Łańcucie w sprawie Państwowego Ośrodka Muzealnego w Łańcucie, z dnia 8.12.1947. State Archives in Rzeszów

¹⁰ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 223 ((№ of microfilm P2837), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Łańcuckiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 16-24.04.1948. State Archives in Rzeszów

¹¹ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 223 ((№ of microfilm P2837), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Łańcuckiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 20-30.04.1949. State Archive in Rzeszów

¹² Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 221 ((№ of microfilm P2835), Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Powiatowego w Lesku na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 14-21.06.1946. State Archives in Rzeszów

¹³ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 221 ((№ of microfilm P2835), Zarządzenia pionspekcyjne Starostwa Powiatowego w Lesku przez Wojewodę Rzeszowskiego z dnia 20.09.1946. State Archives in Rzeszów

¹⁴ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 221 ((№ of microfilm P2835). State Archive in Rzeszów

¹⁵ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie 1944-1949, zespół 36, sygn. 222 ((№ of microfilm P2836), Sprawozdania z inspekcji Starostwa Powiatowego w Lubaczowie przeprowadzona przez pracowników Urzędu Wojewódzkiego w Rzeszowie w dniach 20-21.09.1944, 2-10.04.1946, 29.05 – 3.06.1947, 15-22.07.1948. State Archives in Rzeszów

Szymbark, the tenement house № 8 in the Market Square in Krosno, the tenement houses № 12, 13 14 and 15 in the Market Square in Jarosław, the castle in Baranów, the castle in Łańcut, the churches in Libusza, Biecz and Sękowa. Those buildings needed urgent redecoration works. In some locations, where the works had started earlier, the supervising authorities asked for the reports concerning the reconstruction. It concerned the Culture and the Arts Department in the Provincial Office in Rzeszów. On 15th of February 1949 they sent a letter to the Reconstruction Department requesting certain reports, for instance, the reports on redecoration of middle-class houses in Jarosław and the castle in Lesko. The Culture and the Arts Department got involved widely in actions which objectives consisted in restoring historic buildings in different parts of the province. A good example to prove the engagement was the letter in June of 1949 to the Control Department in the Ministry of Culture and the Royal Castle at Wawel by the Province Conservationist, Franciszek Kruk. The author of the letter asked for financial assets to protect the castle in Łańcut, the manor house in Szymbark, the tenement houses in Jarosław and Krosno. The letter also gave information about attempts to receive money for the restoration of the castles in Krasiczyn and Baranów. In case of the historic houses in the Market Square in Jarosław (№ 12, 13, 14 and 15) the official correspondence between the authorities of Jarosław, the Provincial Office in Rzeszów and Ministry of Culture and the Arts in Warsaw was very intensive. More than 30 letters were sent saying that the buildings required urgent redecoration. Their condition was deteriorating and the houses numbered 12 and 13 even collapsed. A letter informing about the fact was sent on 22nd of May 1949¹⁶.

Another monument which was heavily destroyed during the Second World War was the castle in Szymbark, in the district of Gorlice. Local authorities could not afford to include the building in the restoration schedule. As the Culture and the Arts Department in the Provincial Office in Rzeszów appreciated the historic value of that place, they sent on 15th of February 1949 a letter to the Chief Executive of Museums and Monuments Conservation in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts in Warsaw. The letter concerned the castle in Szymbark, especially the castle's base which needed strengthening. The spring was in sight so possible floods could pose a threat to the castle and the western wing in particular was in danger of falling down. After some time the Governor of Rzeszów sent another letter about the castle to the Chief Director of the Conservation Office in the General Conservationist Office in Warsaw. The Governor emphasised that the condition of the building had worsened and he asked the Ministerial Committee to work out the methods of strengthening the hill where the castle was. He indicated that "the defensive castle in Szymbark is one of our most valuable monuments both in my Province and in the whole country. I am personally interested in securing its condition". As a part of further correspondence on 12th of March 1949 the Management of the Wawel Royal Castle Reconstruction sent a request to the Province Conservationist in Rzeszów asking the official to come to Cracow between 15-22 of March 1949 "to discuss the matters connected with the historic castle in Szymbark". The conservationist replied on 16th of March 1949 and informed the Management of the Wawel Royal Castle Reconstruction that he would arrive in Cracow on 22nd of March 1949 "to take part in the conference on the castle in Szymbark". Then the Chief Executive of Museums and Monuments Conservation decided in a letter sent on 1st of April 1949 that there would be a meeting in Szymbark between 7- 9 of April 1949. The meeting was going to be attended by experts from research institutions and different departments from Cracow and Warsaw. The subject of the talks was how to secure the precious castle. Next month, on 7th of May 1949 the Governor of Rzeszów made an application to the Financial and Commercial Division of the

¹⁶ Urząd Wojewódzki, Wydział Kultury i Sztuki, Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków, zespół. 36, sygn. 2279. State Archives in Rzeszów

Local Council in Gorlice for entrusting some money with the protection of the historic building in Szymbark. The following months brought even more official letters in the case. It showed how long the formal procedures were before the reconstruction works became possible. In May 1949 two applications for Szymbark were sent to the Ministry of Culture and the Arts. Two months later, on 15th of July, a protocol on how to protect the castle was signed in Cracow, but unfortunately it did not amend the situation and the people responsible for the castle went on sending requests for credits to the Construction Department. Finally, another application was filed in that department – it demanded including the restoration of the castle in Szymbark in the State Investment Plan for 1949. Building new retaining walls which would protect Szymbark against flood was considered the most important issue. As no binding decision was made, the Province Conservationist in Rzeszów appealed to the Management of the Wawel Royal Castle Reconstruction on 1st of August 1949 for assistance in the Szymbark case. He validated his claim saying that the condition of the castle had deteriorated significantly and protection works were urgent. Then an engineer, Alfred Majewski, was requested to prepare a project of necessary protection of the castle. Finally, on 29th of August 1949 the Construction Department in the Provincial Office in Rzeszów issued a permission for building the retaining walls. The case of Szymbark was continued next year in the matter of credits, buying materials and settling accounts.

Another valuable building which was ruined during the war was the castle in Krasiczyn. In the late 1940s a great deal of letters were sent about the renovation of the castle, likewise other important places in the region. On 1st and 13th of April 1949 the Provincial Office in Rzeszów sent letters to the Chief Executive of Museums and Monuments Conservation in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts which replied on 24th and 25th of May 1949. The letters discussed documents about Szymbark, plans for the castle reconstruction and photographs which would help the renovation. The letters on 4th of April, 29th of August, 1st of September, 22nd of October and 29th of October 1949 described the planned actions, exhumation of corps in the park and installing a board at the entrance telling that the building had been recognized a historic place after the resolution of the Provincial Office in Rzeszów. They continued to deal with the matter next year which can be justified by the documents issued on 7/7, 28/8, 28/9, 3/10, 23/10 and 7/12, 1950¹⁷. The records which were retained in the archives of Provincial Office in Rzeszów constitute evidence that some actions were also taken to protect the castle in Narol. Frequent letters sent in support of the building (5/5, 8/8, 31/10, 8/11 and 24/11 1949) included the description of tasks that were recommended to reconstruct the castle in Narol in a proper way¹⁸.

Residents of smaller dwellings understood how urgent it was to protect valuable monuments. They often made requests which showed their concern about cultural heritage damaged during the war. The efforts were directed at different levels of authority and they were made by both local councils and local organizations. The management of the Agricultural and Economic Secondary School in Rzemień set a good example. On 16th of January 1949 they asked the Culture and the Arts Department in the Provincial Office in Rzeszów to establish a Conservationist Commission that would deal with the progressing damage of the historic castle tower in Rzemień. The building, which had 14 rooms, was donated to that school in 1947. It required a specialist redecorating because of its historic character. The main segment of the tower dated the year of 1672, it was renovated in the end of the XIX century and redecorated in 1937. During the war the front walls were destroyed by

¹⁷ Urząd Wojewódzki, Wydział Kultury i Sztuki, Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków, zespół 36, sygn. 2279. State Archives in Rzeszów

¹⁸ Urząd Wojewódzki, Wydział Kultury i Sztuki, Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków, zespół 36, sygn. 2279. State Archives in Rzeszów

numerous bullets, and the interior devices were broken down by people¹⁹. In August of 1949 the Provincial Office in Rzeszów made some capital available for protecting the castle tower in Rzemień²⁰. In the same year the Communal Cooperative in Ropa asked for materials which were necessary to redecorate the Podworski Palace in the village. The palace was a subject to the Ministry of Culture and the Arts²¹. The residents of Sanok also proposed an idea for a similar initiative. They sent letters to their Local Council on 11th and 17th of February, 31st of March and 29th of April 1949 demanding any protection of the historic house on 2 Zamkowa Street. The house was going to become the premises for a library and the archives of the Sanok Region Museum²². Church authorities took care of their historic buildings as well. Some declared that they would cover renovation costs using their own resources. The Capuchin Monastery in Rozwadów on the San River gave a good lesson. In October of 1949 the Monastery sent a letter to the Reconstruction Department in the Provincial Office of Rzeszów stating they would cover the expenses themselves²³. Furthermore, in 1949 the Parish Office in Czudec requested the Local Council for the renovation of their historic church. The council did not have appropriate knowledge about the building so on 12th of December 1949 they asked the Department of Culture and the Arts in the Provincial Office in Rzeszów for opinion about the church. They needed to know if it really dated 1713 and if it should be regarded a historic monument²⁴. In October 1949 parish people in Gawłuszowice (the district of Mielec) wanted the same department to pay for the material to cover the roof of the local church. The parishioners justified their request with the statement that the larch church in Czudec was one of the best examples representing the beauty of Old Polish style of wooden churches²⁵. The Department of Culture and the Arts admitted that the church in Gawłuszowice was the only one made of larch wood in the northern part of the province²⁶. As

¹⁹ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomych 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Pismo Liceum Rolniczo Gospodarcze w Rzemieniu do Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki Urzędu Woj. w Rzeszowie z dnia 16.01.1949. State Archives in Rzeszów

²⁰ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomych 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Pismo Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki Urzędu Woj. w Rzeszowie do Spółdzielni Budownictwa Wiejskiego Oddział w Rzemieniu z dnia 29.08.1949. State Archives in Rzeszów

²¹ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków, Pismo Samopomoc Chłopska w Ropie do Urzędu Woj. Referat Kultury i Sztuki w Rzeszowie z dnia 2.08.1949. State Archives in Rzeszów

²² Urząd Wojewódzki, Wydział Kultury i Sztuki, Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków, zespół 36, sygn. 2279. State Archives in Rzeszów

²³ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomych 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Pismo z dnia 25.10. 1949 od Klasztoru OO Kapucynów w Rozwadowie nad Sanem do Urzędu Wojewódzkiego w Rzeszowie, Dział odbudowy. State Archives in Rzeszów

²⁴ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomych 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Pismo Starosty Powiatowego Rzeszowskiego do Urzędu wojewódzkiego w Rzeszowie Wydział Kultury i Sztuki z dnia 22.12.1949. State Archives in Rzeszów

²⁵ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomych 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Pismo Komitet Parafialny w Gawłuszowicach do Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki Województwa Rzeszowskiego z dnia 12.10.1949. State Archives in Rzeszów

²⁶ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomych 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Pismo Wydziału Kultury Urzędu Woj. do Wydziału Społeczno-Politycznego Urzędu Woj. z dnia 14.10.1949. State Archives in Rzeszów

a result they agreed to give some financial assets to repair the roof²⁷. Another important initiative was taken in March 1949 by the District Architect from Brzozów on the recommendation of some residents. He called upon the Department of Culture and the Arts to renovate the wooden church in Jabłonka village in the district of Brzozów. To justify, he said that the church was valuable even though it was built in 1936. Nevertheless, it was constructed strictly following the pattern of the churches in Sękowa and Haczów.

Polish Artists Association had a completely different idea. On 24th of January and 11th of February 1949 they put forward a proposal to the Provincial Office in Rzeszów suggesting that artists should be given so called a “small” synagogue which could be turned into an exhibition place. In the meantime, plans for protection of the “great” synagogue were included in the Six-Year Programme. Such information reached the Provincial office in Rzeszów on 17th of October 1949²⁸.

Irrespective of the local initiatives, the Provincial Office took effective actions to restore sacral buildings. On 15th of February 1949 the Department of Culture and the Arts asked some local units for reports concerning the renovation of historic sacral buildings. They needed more details about, for example, the Benedictine Abbey in Jarosław, the parish church in Jasło, the collegiate church in Biecz and the Bernardine church in Przeworsk. The same department sent a letter to the Local Council in Krosno on 5th of April 1949. The department called for a quick cost estimate for the protection of Lemko Orthodox churches. Moreover, the department frequently sent letters to the Chief Executive of Museums and Monuments Conservation in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts in Warsaw. The concerned, for instance, the restoration of the parish church in Jasło and they were sent on 18th of July and 10th of September 1949. The redecoration of the collegiate church in Biecz was also a target of some institutions. The Governor of Rzeszów wrote about it to the Construction Department on 7th of May 1949 and the Culture and the Arts Minister acted in that matter two months later on 15th of July 1949.

Meanwhile, there was a very interesting discovery in the Cathedral of Przemyśl. The Ministry of Culture and the Arts decided to deal with it and on 5th of March 1949 they ordered the Province Conservationist in Rzeszów to investigate the discovery. During the war medieval frescos were unveiled in the cathedral accidentally. Unfortunately, after the war only some frescos were left, those on the top part of one of the attic walls. The rest of them had been covered up during the reconstruction of the cathedral's walls. When requested by the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, the Rzeszów Provincial office sent a report about the frescos on 1st of April 1949²⁹. The historic house which used to belong to Maria Konopnicka was also taken care of. The Chief Executive of Museums and Monuments Conservation initiated the case when they asked the Province Conservationist about the condition of the house and estimate cost of the protection. The place was important because it was going to bring people closer to Maria Konopnicka, a famous Polish poet and writer. The correspondence was held between 29th of May and 23rd of June 1949. Afterwards, the Local Council in Krosno was told to start the conservation works³⁰.

In the first decade after the Second World War, the authorities of Rzeszów made attempts to obtain credits for the reconstruction of the buildings damaged. As early as in 1945 the first sums of money were granted for conservation works. In the document called “Subsidies for museums and monuments” there was information about the money given for

²⁷ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomych 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Zgoda Wydziału Społeczno-Politycznego z dnia 17.10.1949. State Archives in Rzeszów

²⁸ ibidem

²⁹ ibidem

³⁰ ibidem

particular buildings. The money was supposed to be used for renovation works. The information was included in the letter sent on 18th of May 1945 to the Department of Culture and the Arts by The Polish Ministry of Culture and the Arts. St. Anne's Church in Jarosław received the biggest sum of money – 75,000 PLN (Polish currency). Other examples: the Castle in Przemyśl – 25,000 PLN, the former Piarist church in Rzeszów, the castle in Krasiczyn and the Bernardine church in Dukla – 20,000 PLN each, the castle in Baranów, the canons houses and the synagogue in Przemyśl – 10,000 PLN each and the church in Haczów – 5,000 PLN. Taking advantage of the existing opportunities, on 19th of May 1945 the Provincial Office in Rzeszów made a request to the Chief Executive of Museums and Monuments Conservation in Warsaw for subsidies necessary to rebuild the castle in Sanok (it was meant to be turned into the Museum of the Sanok Land), also the churches in Rymanów and Haczów³¹. Records on credits dating the years between 1949-1950 were also held in the archives. The possibilities of obtaining a credit for restoration and renovation of historic buildings were much better in 1949 than before. On 14th of September 1949 the Department of Culture and the Arts in Rzeszów sent the Chief Executive of Museums and Monuments Conservation (in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts) their proposal on how the credits should be distributed the next year. The plan included the following places and goals: tenements in the Jarosław Market Square, the XVIII-century house in Gorlice (which was meant to be a museum and archives), the protection of the castles in Sanok and Lesko, the reconstruction of the castle in Łańcut, the wooden churches in Libusza and Sękowa, the wooden manor house in Jeżowe, the collegiate church in Biecz, the houses numbered 6 and 11 in the Market Square in Gorlice, the obelisks in Przemyśl and Rzemień, the manor house in Cieszanów, the castle in Baranów, the castle in Szymbark and the collegiate church in Bobowa. The Ministry accepted the project. In some cases, subsistence allowances were given, that concerned, for instance, the renovation of the church in Żmigród Stary³².

Unfortunately, some historic buildings were gone forever. A part of them had been so heavily ruined during the war that it was not possible to rebuild them. Some others were started to be used for some other purposes than their original use. The authorities of Biecz felt hopeless about progressing degradation of the Executioner's Tower. The commission appointed only confirmed serious damage which resulted from, among other things, turning the ground floor into a stable. Moreover, improper conservation works in the beginning of the XX century made some walls collapse. It happened because wrong materials had been used and new walls did not stick to the old ones. The town of Biecz did not possess any financial assets to at least try to protect the tower. The same fate could have been brought to the historic church in Tarnowiec (the district of Jasło) as the local authorities were going to pull down the building. Luckily, the church was saved thanks to the decision of the Provincial Office in Rzeszów which did not agree to the demolition of the church and ordered its renovation³³.

The reconstruction of historic buildings in the Province of Rzeszów, which had been destroyed during the Second World War, was a serious challenge for the Province authorities. Although it was really hard in the first years after the war, the authorities made a great deal of

³¹ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Subwencje dla muzeów i ochrony zabytków – przydział i rozliczenia 1944-45, zespół 36, sygn. 2191, Sprawozdanie z inspekcji Starostwa Łańcuckiego na zarządzenie Wojewody Rzeszowskiego w dniu 22-30.04.1947. State Archives in Rzeszów

³² Urząd Wojewódzki, Wydział Kultury i Sztuki, Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków, zespół 36, sygn. 2279. State Archives in Rzeszów

³³ Urząd Wojewódzki w Rzeszowie. Wydział Kultury i Sztuki. Oddział Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków. Rejestracja zabytków nieruchomości 1949-1950, zespół 36, sygn. 2279, Protokół spisany dnia 3.12.1949, w sprawie stwierdzenia stanu i potrzeb baszty katowskiej w Bieczu. State Archives in Rzeszów

efforts to either reconstruct or at least protect the ruined monuments. Renovation works were carried out in both big towns and smaller places. The province authorities and local ones were in charge of the works. Furthermore, the engagement of local people should also be appreciated as they often made it possible to save very valuable buildings which were the part of the cultural heritage in the Province of Rzeszów.