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THE MUSEUM POLICY OF THE POLISH COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION

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Abstract: After World War II museums in Poland were expected to serve political purposes. The task of the new government was to mould and steer citizens' awareness according to Stalinist ideology. The Polish Committee of National Liberation was formed in Moscow on 21 July 1944 under the patronage of Joseph Stalin. From 1 August 1944 its seat was located in Lublin together with an Art and Culture Department. The presented article discusses the emergence of museums in so-called liberated territories from 21 July 1944 to the end of December 1944. This was a period of the inauguration of new institutions (e.g. the State Museum at Majdanek) and the reactivation of those existing prior to World War II, such as the Lublin Museum or the National Museum of the Przemysł Region. In 1944, museums faced many problems, i.a. war damages, plunder committed by the People's Army quartered in a given region,

financial difficulties, and personnel shortage. Complications connected with employing professional museum curators were predominantly the result of the policy of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, which offered posts in cultural institutions mainly to propaganda specialists. Just as important was the land reform initiated in 1944, which entailed the confiscation from parcelled landed estates of artworks subsequently entrusted to, i.a. museums. The justification of this campaign was exclusively ideological but from the historical point of view it is assessed as an unjust and morally dubious harassment of social groups regarded by the communists as "landowners".

The article is based on reports of the Polish Committee of National Liberation and Culture Departments of Voivodeship Offices (Lublin, Rzeszów, Białystok, and Warsaw) in the Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw.

Keywords: Polish Committee of National Liberation, Culture Department of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, Culture Departments of Voivodeship Offices, museum activity, liberated territories, land reform, confiscation of landed estates.

The Polish Committee of National Liberation (Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego; further as: PKWN or Committee) was established in Moscow under the patronage of Joseph Stalin on 21 July 1944. On the following day its programme was proclaimed on Moscow Radio. The head of the Committee, directed by communists and people totally subservient to the Kremlin, was Edward Osóbka-Morawski.¹ The future system of the country was to be based on the March Constitution of 1921 and the Committee recognized itself as the sole legal authority in Poland.² The Manifesto announced a restoration of democratic freedoms, a reconstruction of wartime devastation, a return of property plundered by the occupant, a land reform, and

protection of private property. It also proclaimed the possibility of all Poles returning to Poland with the exception of those who *betrayed Poland in 1939*, additionally stressing the necessity of war reparations from Germany. Moreover, the leaders of PKWN declared support for the development of theatres, literature, and art, while the state was to ensure full care and assistance to people connected with agriculture and those with a low living standard.³ At a session of the Plenum of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, held in Moscow on 22 July 1944, Wincenty Rzymowski, head of the Ministry of Culture and Art⁴, said: *People of science and art are the genuine authors of culture. Nevertheless, there exist next to them ranks of those who organise*

culture, participate in it, and co-operate with it, and as such deserve special attention and care. The PKWN manifesto was a propaganda-disinformation act and its democratic theses comprised a “smoke screen” for the simultaneously prepared captivity of the country.⁵ In a characteristic of the Polish state Jan Pruszyński wrote: *Speaking from the political point of view, from 1944 to 1956 Poland was a feudal vassal state since it was governed by people directly appointed by Stalin, fulfilling his will and, subsequently, to a lesser or greater extent pursuing objectives adopted by the rulers of the USSR.*⁶

From 1 August 1944 the seat of the Committee, including the Ministry of Culture and Art, was situated in 4 Spokojna Street in Lublin. The tasks of the Ministry were not formulated until 15 September 1944 in a PKWN Decree on the range of the activity and reorganisation of the Ministry of Culture and Art.⁷ Article 1 proclaimed that the Ministry’s activity encompasses: *b) promoting culture and art in the country, c) propaganda of Polish culture and art abroad, d) taking care of museums, creating them and protecting monuments (...).* Article 2 listed Ministry departments: 1) general, 2) art education, 3) theatre, 4) music, 5) visual arts, 6) museum and monument conservation, 7) literature, and 8) photography. Despite the fact that these tasks were formulated on 15 September the Ministry of Culture and Art had been active already earlier, as evidenced by a report on work performed from 1 August to 14 September 1944, which does not mention a department dedicated to museums and the protection of monuments. Such a department officially commenced its activity on 15 September, a day after the period discussed in the report. Initially, the head of the Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments was Joanna Guzówna [Guzówna],⁸ who held this post to November or December 1944. Subsequently, the Department of Museums was entrusted to Józef Grabowski⁹ and the Department of the Protection of Monuments – to Józef Kluss.¹⁰ The exact date of the appointment of J. Grabowski and J. Kluss is not known, and the same holds true for the date of the split within the Ministry.

A report on the course of work conducted by the Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments at the Ministry of Culture and Art of the PKWN¹¹ – presented by the above-mentioned Joanna Guzówna and dealing with a period from 15 September to 25 October 1944 – mentions the collections of Professor Lech Niemojewski secured at Lublin Museum.¹² The collections – including furniture from the reign of Stanisław Augustus, porcelain, and archival material concerning the Niemojewski family – were brought over to the Saska Kępa district in Warsaw and temporarily stored at the Museum. Professor Niemojewski donated precious furniture to the Museum in Łazienki *as his valuable contribution to the reconstruction of monuments of culture.*¹³ Successive information in the report concerned an inspection of landed estates. The legal foundation of the campaign was an entry in the Decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation of 6 September 1944 on agrarian reform.¹⁴ The campaign was conducted in the landed estates of Tarnogóra,¹⁵ Miłocin,¹⁶ Stryków, and Broszków,¹⁷ and involved protection of historical objects in the manor houses in Radzyń against damage.¹⁸ Moreover, an authorisation issued to Dr Eugeniusz Łazowski concerned securing works of art in several counties of the voivodeship of Rzeszów. Information published on 15 September 1944 in

“Rzeczpospolita” – the PKWN press organ – contained a brief note on dispatching employees of the Ministry of Culture and Art to the voivodeship of Rzeszów for the purpose of defining the state of the local museums and art objects as well as issuing suitable directives and regulations. The report went on to mention steps initiated on 17 October 1944 so that Department employees could secure two canvases by Jan Matejko: *The Battle of Grunwald and The Sermon of Piotr Skarga*, which during inter-war years were part of the collections of the Warsaw Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts. On 7 September 1939 the paintings – hidden during the entire wartime period¹⁹ – were evacuated to Lublin and entrusted to Professor Władysław Woyda. On 13 November 1944 they were ceremoniously handed over to the Ministry of Culture and Art at the Tobacco Monopoly building in 10 Wrotłowska Street in Lublin in the presence of, i.a. Chairman of the Committee Edward Osóbka-Morawski and head of the Ministry of Culture and Art Wincenty Rzymowski.²⁰ The successive question recorded in the report was the adaptation of Lublin Castle for the needs of a museum and an archive. Representatives of the Department of Museums took part in the work of a commission, which resulted in the Voivodeship National Council passing a resolution on conferring the Castle *as a national sanctuary for the Lublin museum and archive.* The Museum did not move into Lublin Castle until 1954, upon the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the People’s Republic of Poland.²¹ A further fragment of the report deals with the question of Kozłówka, where it was decided to establish *the nucleus of a future National Museum.* On 4 November 1944 the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reforms presented *the palace together with outbuildings and a park* to the Ministry of Culture and Art. Soon afterwards, a State National Museum was set up in Kozłówka. The director of the newly created institution was Kazimierz Biernacki, head of an eight-person team. On 15 and 29 November and 15 December 1944 the Ministry of Culture and Art granted financial subsidies – a total of 72 500 zlotys – to the newly established unit.²² The next problem involves the participation of an employee of the Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments in work performed by a commission dealing with the former Majdanek concentration camp and Nazi crimes. This issue was debated at a session held by PKWN on 17 October 1944 in the presence of heads of particular ministries, i.a. Jan Stefan Haneman (head of the Ministry of National Economy and Finances), Bolesław Drobner (head of the Ministry of Labour, Social Care and Health), Edward Berthold (deputy head of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reforms), Stanisław Kotek-Agroszewski (head of the Ministry of Public Administration), Dr Emil Sommerstein (head of the Ministry of War Reparations), Jan Czechowski (head of the Ministry of Justice), Jan Michał Grubecki (head of the Ministry of Communication, Post and Telegraph), Jakub Berman (member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Polish Workers’ Party), Mieczysław Popiel (deputy head of the Ministry of National Economy and Finances), Michał Schuldenfrei, and Jan Karol Wende (deputy head of the Ministry of Culture and Art). A report from the PKWN session mentions a resolution to establish a special commission for the organisation of museums. It was decided to create a bureau, headed by a director, to relegate the Army

from terrains intended for museums and to embark upon reconstructing buildings in which exhibits were to be placed. On 6 November 1944 the Presidium Department of PKWN received a motion about entrusting the Ministry of Culture and Art with custody over the organisation and direction of the Museum at Majdanek. On 14 November 1944 a report of the Director of the State Museum at Majdanek was sent to Bolesław Bierut, chairman the State National Council, defining the established objectives and tasks of the institution. The first Museum director was Antoni Ferski. On 15 December 1944 the authorities granted 150 000 zlotys for the organisation and work of the new institution.²³

One of the tasks of PKWN was the creation of a successive museum institution in so-called Lublin Poland. A representative of the Department of Culture and Art at the Voivodeship Office in Białystok was commissioned to set up a museum in one of the nearby manor houses. The first institution in the voivodeship of Białystok – the North-Mazovian Museum in Łomża – was not opened until 14 March 1948.

The PKWN ministries were obligated to present monthly reports on their activity. Nonetheless, from 25 October to the end of December 1944 the Ministry of Culture and Art did not prepare a single report although pertinent work was continued. On 9 October 1944, prior to the report deadline, the PKWN Ministry of Culture and Art in Lublin received a document concerning the establishment of the Polish Prehistory Institute, a central conservation office including voivodeship conservators, a central pre-history museum, and subordinate voivodeship county museums. The tasks of the pre-history museum involved *guiding the citizen into the land of past accomplishments and conducting systematic research, and in this manner casting light on our pre-historical past.*²⁴ The museum was envisaged as a national institution concentrating within the region of its activity voivodeship museums to be situated in academic centres. Further plans foresaw the establishment and reorganisation of the Museum of the Kielce Region, the Museum in Cieleśnica, the Museum in Sandomierz, and the National Museum of the Przemyśl Region. Information about those institutions appeared only in documents concerning subsidies of the Polish Committee of National Liberation or in the press controlled by the Committee.

The PKWN Ministry of Culture and Art closely co-operated with other ministries. Take the example of the Ministry of War Reparations, established on 27 September 1944.²⁵ It follows from documents in the Central Archives of Modern Records that the Ministry in question had been active already earlier, as evidenced by Regulation of 21 September 1944, issued by the head of the Ministry, Dr Emil Sommerstein, addressed to Voivodeship National Councils and concerning the examination and determination of wartime losses. One of the points pertained to works of art, museums, statues and other monuments. A given object was to be suitably described together with the *dimension of the material loss*, to be dealt with by the Minister of Culture and Art assisted by conservators and specialists. The lists were to be completed by 1 May 1945.²⁶

The next ministry to collaborate with the Ministry of Culture and Art was that of Agriculture and Land Reforms. As has been mentioned, this co-operation was the outcome of the Decree on the Agrarian Reform and the inspection of landed

estates. In the wake of reports presented by the Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments the campaign was intensely conducted. An account of a journey taken on 20 November 1944 by an employee of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reforms contains information about two landed estates: Kłodnica and Żurawiniec. The first report mentions the discovery of a piano, and the second – of a library containing valuable items and state documents belonging to Ambassador Rommel.²⁷ The domain of culture engaged also the Ministry of Information and Propaganda, which not only supervised work associated with the agrarian reform but also took an active part in securing collections. A document of 13 November 1944 sent from the County Starosta Office Department of Information and Propaganda in Chełm to the Ministry of Information and Propaganda mentions acquiring a piano, a violin, sheet music, a stamp collection, and a "Continental" typewriter. The confiscated items belonged to Włodzimierz Sokołowski, a resident of Chełm arrested as an ethnic German (*Volksdeutsch*). The second case concerned the Kanie landed estate in the county of Chełm, the site of a museum collection of stuffed birds and a valuable book collection in glassed-in oak showcases. Stanisław Dziewiątkowski, head of the Department, complained about Lieutenant Kłos, commander of a military unit stationing on the estate and accused of obstructing the appropriation of the property. The artefacts were intended for a culture centre and the Regional Museum of the Land of Chełm. A copy of the document was presented to the Ministry of Culture and Art.²⁸

The next legal undertaking, whose purpose was assisting PKWN, was the creation of organs of culture and art within voivodeship offices and county starosta offices. This step was taken on 5 October 1944 by the head of the Ministry of Culture and Art and coordinated with the head of the Ministry of Public Administration.²⁹ The regulation announced the establishment of departments of art and culture at voivodeship offices, and of divisions of culture and art at county (town) starosta offices. Voivodeship departments of culture and art were entrusted with custody over the development of those regions within the given voivodeship and were set up for the purpose of fulfilling assorted tasks within its range, in particular the establishment of, and supervision over theatres, orchestras, choirs, art galleries, museums, etc.

Voivodeship departments were to be split according to the central configuration within the Ministry. From October 1944 offices functioned in the regions of Lublin, Rzeszów, Białystok, and Mazovia with a seat in Mińsk Mazowiecki.

The newly appointed head of the Department of Culture and Art at the Office of the Voivodeship of Lublin was Edward Wrocki. According to a staff register from December 1944 the Department employed six persons. Zygmunt Knothe, responsible for the Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments,³⁰ accepted his post on 28 October 1944.

The Voivodeship of Office in Rzeszów was set up at the beginning of October 1944, with Edward Kluk as the first voivode. The Department of Culture and Art was created on 15 October 1944 and initially its head was Julian Przyboś, who combined this office with that of head of the Department of Information and Propaganda.³¹ On 23 October 1944 this function was entrusted to Roman Pilarz, who fulfilled it to

December 1944 and was followed by M. Wiigt. The first report dealing with the period from 15 October to 15 November 1944 presents the preservation of artworks and libraries. The protection of future exhibits was connected with the realisation of the agrarian reform. Collections composed of works of art and books were entrusted to the Municipal Museum in Rzeszów and were to be inventoried. According to a report presented to the PKWN Ministry of Culture and Art not all artworks and manorial libraries were suitably secured. County branches received instructions about salvaging museum exhibits and the essence of cultural output.³²

Yet another report originating from this period was sent on 23 October by Roman Pilasz to the head of the Ministry of Culture and Art; the document dealt with a planned museum in Łańcut and dispatching a custodian for the purpose of taking inventory of artworks at the Potocki Palace.³³ In September it was proposed to arrange a National Museum at Łańcut Castle. Ultimately, the Museum was opened on 3 November 1944; Stanisław Cichomski arrived in Łańcut on 28 November to accept the post of director although his appointment took place earlier – he received a subsidy of 10 000 zlotys already on 23 November; an identical sum was presented on 16 December 1944. All told, the Museum had at its disposal 20 000 zlotys for further activity.³⁴

The Department of Culture and Art in the Białystok Voivodeship Office was created at the beginning of October 1944 under Bronisława Skibel, who on 26 October 1944 was succeeded by Stanisław Brzostowski. A report prepared by the Clerk of Museums and the Protection of Monuments concerning a period starting in November dealt exclusively with the conservation of salvaged unmovable monuments. In 1939–1944 the majority of artworks were damaged or looted – now, officials attempted to determine their fate.³⁵

The Department of Culture and Art was set up at the Warsaw Voivodeship Office on 20 October 1944 but started functioning a day later. This situation was caused by the fact that the voivode did not appoint the head of the Department – Walery Jastrzębiec-Rudnicki – until 21 October. According to a list of the staff there were seven employees in December 1944. The person responsible for the Division of Museums and the Protection of Monuments was Stanisław Kowalczyk.³⁶ A report about a period spanning from 20 October to 20 November 1944 mentioned work from the domain of museology – the inventorisation and segregation of the M. Stalińska museum book collections and a book collection in the Otwock Wielki landed estate. Storage facilities created within the Office were intended for objects of artistic and cultural value. Successive tasks were delineated: salvaging monuments of art and culture damaged as a result of the war, the agrarian reform, and keeping a register of historical monuments.³⁷ According to the financial reports of the Voivodeship Office 4 700 zlotys were spent for museum undertakings.³⁸

First and foremost, organs responsible for the reconstruction of museology now faced a multitude of problems and new challenges. The damages suffered by Polish culture (...) *were not solely devastated laboratories, burnt down libraries, dispersed schools of higher learning, plundered museums, and human losses – hundreds of murdered specialists, but also the absence of scientific work during all the years of the occupation.*³⁹ The inauguration

in 1944 of land reform was, at the time, one of the most fundamental undertakings of the authorities but also – from the historical vantage point – a morally dubious issue brimming with dilemmas and problems. Works of art, which had legal owners, were confiscated, although the PKWN Decree of 6 September 1944 did not contain an entry mentioning this.⁴⁰ A regulation about the appropriation by the state of such movables as artworks, book collections, and family archives did not appear until 1 March 1945.⁴¹ The realisation of the agrarian reform possessed the features of repression and was aimed predominantly at landowners contemptuously described as “squires”.⁴² Depriving them of family mementos bore all the marks of revenge for the patriotic stand of members of this group at odds with the premises of a new order whose guidelines came from the Kremlin. Artworks, book collections, and other precious objects confiscated as part of the agrarian reform found themselves in various museums, libraries or archives and enlarged their collections, often looted or destroyed during the Second World War. J. Pruszyński wrote: *Depriving owners of their property according to an administrative procedure consisted of confiscation justified by the premises of ideology and not of justice or, even more so, economy.*⁴³ On 2 January 1945 Edward Osóbka-Morawski, chairman of the Council of Ministers, said at the sixth session of the Council: *We shall secure many cultural goods (paintings, sculptures, libraries), which up to now have been in the egoistic possession of landowner manors, and we shall render them available for universal use, especially since cultural institutions were plundered and destroyed by the occupant.*⁴⁴ The new authorities envisaged historical residences: castles, palaces, and manor houses as testimony of oppression.⁴⁵

The same authorities were forced to tackle a successive essential challenge, namely, financial problems, which greatly affected the reconstruction and creation of new museum institutions. Financial subsidies did not make it possible to protect buildings, as evidenced by thefts committed at Lublin Museum. On 29 November 1944 the Museum received a state subvention of 7000 zlotys and was additionally financed by the Lublin Voivodeship Office. At this point note must be made of the fact that the Office supported not only Lublin Museum but also other institutions being organised at the time. The creation of a large centre – the Museum at Majdanek – posed a great challenge: this initiative was extremely important from the viewpoint of propaganda and ideology, whose objective was to settle accounts with Nazi crimes and, first and foremost, to turn attention away from those committed by the Soviet authorities (the Polish Operation conducted by the NKVD in 1937–1938, the murder of Polish officers, deportations of the Polish population to Siberia). Furthermore, other museum centres arranged exhibitions and catalogues portraying the human tragedy of German concentration camps.

Another essential problem confronted by museum institutions was that of insufficient staff. In numerous museums the majority of employees were involved in administration or propaganda and were neither trained nor experienced museum curators. The reasons for this state of affairs – apart from obvious ones connected with the effects of wartime hostilities, which proved destructive for the Polish nation – should be perceived in the fact that many

representatives of the intelligentsia were sceptical towards new authorities and supported the government-in-exile.

This was a time of conflicts with the Army, which illegally quartered in museum interiors treated as its “private estate” or interfered in the agrarian reform by plundering artworks belonging to landed estates.

From 21 July to 31 December 1944 the new museum policy assumed shape in conditions of chaos, disinformation, and the absence of written premises. The prime tasks faced by museology were not formulated until 1945: 1) custody over museums, the examination of their post-war state, and the reorganisation of national museology, 2) accumulation of museum collections dispersed by the occupant, 3) protection of former manorial monuments.⁴⁶ The directions of activity, defined in a later period, consisted of, i.a. the reorganisation of numerous museum institutions both as regards a radical transformation of the collections and a total modernisation of the exposition by expanding didactic elements and combining them with an economic

and social context. It was regarded indispensable for multi-departmental museums to depict the themes of human labour, man’s striving towards progress, the development of class awareness, and the history of social and revolutionary movements. Mention was made also of broadening the network of museums and training new cadres.⁴⁷ From the very onset museology was to be subjected to state policy, which it served. The new authorities were entrusted with the task of moulding and creating civic awareness in accordance with the ideology of Stalinism. The customs, traditions, and monuments of the past, in the widest meaning of the term, were treated as an obstacle for the construction of a new society. In his book: *Dziedzictwo Kultury Polski. Jego straty i ochrona prawna* Jan Pruszyński cited the words of Kazimierz Żygulski, one of the last ministers of culture and art in People’s Poland: *Today, it is often forgotten that Stalinist policy consisted of creating false art and science elites, the promotion of artificial moral authorities, their generous endowment and use for propaganda purposes.*⁴⁸

Przypisy

¹ At the time of its establishment the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN; 21 July–31 December 1944) governed the voivodeships of Lublin, Rzeszów, and Białystok, as well as part of the Warsaw and Kielce voivodeships. Sources for this period include PKWN reports and those of the Departments of Culture of Voivodeship Offices (in the voivodeships of Lublin, Rzeszów, Białystok, and Warsaw), kept at the Central Archives of Modern Records (further as: AAN) in Warsaw.

² The Government of the Republic of Poland “in exile” was described as a “self-proclaimed” authority based on the “fascist” April Constitution of 1935.

³ AAN, *Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego*, fond no. 185, inv. no. I/3, *Program prac PKWN*, p. 34.

⁴ Wincenty Rzymowski (1883–1950) – publicist, pre-war man of letters, democratic activist, one of the co-founders of the Parliamentary Democratic Clubs and the Democratic Party, head of the PKWN Ministry of Culture and Art, Minister of Culture and Art in the Provisional Government of National Unity (1 January–1 May 1945), Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government (2 May–27 June 1945) and in the Provisional Government of National Unity (28 June 1945–5 February 1947), minister without portfolio (1947–1950) in the Józef Cyrankiewicz cabinet; L. Chmielewska, *Kulturalny Lublin, czyli o działalności Resortu Kultury i Sztuki PKWN pod kierownictwem Wincentego Rzymowskiego*, “Dzieje Najnowsze” 2003, XXXV, p. 1.

⁵ W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2000*, Warszawa 2001, p. 133.

⁶ J. Pruszyński, *Dziedzictwo kultury Polski. Jego straty i ochrona prawna*, vol. 2, Kantor Wydawniczy Zakamycze, Kraków 2001, p. 23.

⁷ Decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation of 15 September 1944 on the range and organisation of the Ministry of Culture and Art, Dz.U. of 1944, no. 5, item 25.

⁸ Joanna Guzówna (1917–2009) – graduate in philosophy and history of art in Lwów, in 1944 accompanied the Polish Army to Lublin and then to Cracow. In 1951, after a two-year scholarship in France, moved to Warsaw. Translated French publications on the history of art; A. Kowalczykova, *Wobec współczesności. Tematy poważne i mniej serio*, Białystok 2016, p. 233.

⁹ Józef Grabowski (1901–1977) – historian of art, museum curator, founder of the Polish State Institute for Folk Art Research, custodian at the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw. In 1944–1945 head of the Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments, subsequently director of the Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments at the Ministry of Culture and Art, <http://kurierygalycki.com/historia/postacie/97-g/6683-jozef-grabowski> [accessed on: 8 April 2018].

¹⁰ Józef Kluss (1890–1967) – painter, historian of art, philosopher and conservator of historical monuments. In 1944 appointed head of the Department of Culture and the Protection of Monuments in the PKWN Ministry of Culture and Art. From April 1945 held post of the voivodeship conservator of monuments in Rzeszów, and from January 1946 – of conservator of monuments in the voivodeships of Katowice and Opole. In June 1945 dispatched to organise and run the Museum in Pszczyna, where he fulfilled the function of director until retirement in 1962, http://www.zamek-pszczyna.pl/o_muzeum/kluss [accessed on: 1 March 2018].

¹¹ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/10, *Sprawozdanie z działalności Resortu Kultury i Sztuki PKWN za okres od dn. 15.09 do 25.10.1944 r.*, p. 3.

¹² Lech Józef Niemojewski (1894–1952) – architect, professor at the Faculty of Architecture of the Polytechnic of Warsaw. In 1928–1939 head of the Chair of the History of Art at the Faculty of Architecture of the Polytechnic of Warsaw. In addition, worked as a designer – the first to design the villa in Wejherowo, built in 1926. In the same year won first prize at an exhibition held in Lwów for a project of inexpensive residential houses. Other recognized designs included the train station in Szarlej-Piekary, the Soldier’s House in Brześć, and the villa of T. Pruszkowski in Kazimierz Dolny. Redesigned the Chopin manor in Żelazowa Wola and the seat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw. Civic Guard commander in the district of Mokotów during battles waged for the Polish capital in September 1939. At the time of the German occupation lectured at the clandestine Faculty of Architecture of Warsaw Polytechnic. After the fall of the Warsaw Uprising co-organised the Faculty of Architecture with a temporary seat in Lublin; A. Chodkowska, A. Kulecka, C. Sikorska, *Materiały Lecha Niemojewskiego*, “Biuletyn Archiwum Polskiej Akademii Nauk” 2014, 55, pp. 39–41.

¹³ A. Tylińska, *Sylwetki profesorów Politechniki Warszawskiej*, http://bcpw.bg.pw.edu.pl/Content/859/sylw_prof_043.pdf [accessed on: 1 March 2018].

- ¹⁴ Decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation concerning the Implementation of the Agrarian Reform of 6 September 1944. The reform was conducted in 1944-1948. Four types of real estate were to be divided: 1) state-owned estates, 2) properties of non-Polish citizens of the German Reich and of Polish citizens of German nationality, 3) properties of people rightfully sentenced for high treason, and 4) other properties owned by natural or artificial persons, exceeding 50 hectares of cultivated land or (in the Poznań, Pomorze and Silesia voivodships) with a total area exceeding 100 hectares, irrespective of the size of cultivated land. Characteristically, landed estates of Polish citizens, earlier appropriated by the Germans, were also classified as "former German property". The Decree was a political act legally and actually discriminating a part of society. The appropriation by the state of private landed estates was reduced to "vanquishing" landowners and "kulaks"; J. Pruszyński, *Dziedzictwo kultury...*, vol. 2, pp. 46-47.
- ¹⁵ Tarnogóra, Stryjów – landed estates belonging to the Smorzewski family.
- ¹⁶ In 1930 Miłocin – landed estate in the voivodeship of Lublin, the property of Rozalia Świerzańska – totalled 449 hectares.
- ¹⁷ Broszków – landed estate belonging to the Drecki family.
- ¹⁸ This was probably the landed estate of Radzyń Podlaski, which in 1834–1939 was the property of the Szlubowski family. A report on an inspection carried out in the voivodeships of Lublin and Warsaw on 23–29 October 1944 by delegations of the Ministry of Information and Propaganda contains information concerning the division of landed estates in the county of Radzyń; no mention is made of securing valuable historical objects although such a note accompanies information about the county of Mińsk Mazowiecki, where libraries, paintings, and works of art were secured.
- ¹⁹ T. A. Pruszek, *Zabezpieczenie i ratowanie dzieł sztuki w Warszawie wobec zagrożeń w okresie II wojny światowej*, "Almanach Muzealny" 2014, no. 8, p. 208.
- ²⁰ Persons taking part in the event: Bolesław Drobner – head of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Care, Jan Stefan Haneman – head of the Ministry of National Economy and Finances, Jan Czechowski – head of the Ministry of Justice, Stanisław Skrzyszewski – head of the Ministry of Education, Stefan Matuszewski – deputy head of the Ministry of Information and Propaganda, Jan Karol Wende – deputy head of the Ministry of Culture and Art, Lieutenant Andrzej Petrykowski "Tarnawa" – representative of the Polish Army. Note the absence upon such an important occasion of Bolesław Bierut, chairman of the Committee of the State National Council, although he was invited. Apart from representatives of the political class the ceremony was attended by members of the world of science and culture as well as artistic and literary associations.
- ²¹ The seat of Lublin Museum was located in 4 Narutowicza Street. The first director nominated by PKWN was Wiktor Ziółkowski. Despite an insufficient number of employees the Museum took part in cultural life. On 8 October 1944 the Commission of Current Exhibitions of the Union of Visual Artists organised an exhibition of paintings and drawings by 24 artists from Warsaw, Lublin, Lwów, Anin near Warsaw, Kazimierz Dolny, Piotrowice Małe, and Działdowo. The paintings on display were sold to assorted PKWN ministries for a sum of 73 600 zlotys. In this way all the featured artists supported the new authorities. A successive exhibition was organised jointly with the newly emergent Museum at Majdanek. The opening took place on 28 November 1944 and the presented works included Majdanek by Zinovy Tolstachev. Despite its cultural activity the Museum tackled the problem of thefts. One such incident was reported by the director of Lublin Museum in an official letter addressed to the Ministry of Culture and Art and its Department of Museums and the Protection of Monuments. The letter listed the stolen objects, and the robbery could have been the work of Captain Bette, a Polish Army officer. The case was dealt with by Józef Grabowski, head of the Department of Museums, who on 13 December 1944 sent a letter to W. Rzymowski. This was a priority case since Grabowski declared: *I do not see the possibility of securing museum collections if an officer breaks fundamental state laws. If this case were to remain without consequences, then in such circumstances I cannot take responsibility for the state of museums (...)*. It is difficult to ascertain whether the officer actually committed acts of theft and damage. There are no documents indicating how the case ended. One thing is certain – Lublin Museum was insufficiently protected and the conflict with the Army was unfavourable for the organisation of work at this institution.
- ²² AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/8, *Subwencje 1944/1945*, p. 3, 5.92
- ²³ *Ibidem*, p. 5.
- ²⁴ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/5, *Pismo do Resortu Kultury i Sztuki przy PKWN w Lublinie dotyczące powstania Polskiego Instytutu Prehistorii, Lublin 9.10.1944 r.*, p. 42.
- ²⁵ Decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation of 27 September 1944 on the Scope of the Activities and Organisation of the Department of War Compensation, Dz.U. of 1944, no. 7, item 30.
- ²⁶ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XIII/3, *Zarządzenie Kierownika Resortu Odszkodowań Wojennych z dnia 21 września 1944 r. w sprawie zbadania i ustalenia szkód wojennych do Wojewódzkich Rad Narodowych*, pp. 1-2.
- ²⁷ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. V/14, *Sprawozdanie z podróży odbytej w dniu 20 listopada 1944 r.*, p. 50.
- ²⁸ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XVI/12, *Pismo Starostwa Powiatowego Wydz. Informacji i Propagandy do Resortu Informacji i Propagandy przy PKWN w Lublinie dotyczący zabezpieczenia egzemplarzy kultury i sztuki na terenie miasta i powiatu Chełm, 13 listopada 1944 r.*, p. 24.
- ²⁹ Ordinance of the Head of the Ministry of Culture and Art issued in coordination with the head of the Ministry of Public Administration on 5 October 1944 on the establishment of organs of culture and art at voivodeship and country starosta offices, Dz.U. of 1944, no. 7, item 37.
- ³⁰ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/1, *Lista pracowników Wojewódzkiego Urzędu Lubelskiego Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki za grudzień 1944 r.*, p. 6.
- ³¹ Z. Mańkowski, *Z problemów przeobrażeń kulturalnych w okresie PKWN: kultura – oświata – prasa*, "Rocznik Lubelski" 1964, no. 7, pp. 78-79.
- ³² AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/2, *Sprawozdanie Urzędu Wojewódzkiego Rzeszowskiego Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki za czas od 15 października 1944, 21.11.1944 r.*, p. 2.
- ³³ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/2, *Pismo Kierownika Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki Urzędu Wojewódzkiego Rzeszowskiego Romana Pilasza do Kierownika Resortu Kultury i Sztuki w Lublinie, Rzeszów, dnia 23.10.1944 r.*, p. 1.
- ³⁴ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/8, *Subwencje 1944/1945*, p. 3, 5.
- ³⁵ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/2, *Sprawozdanie za miesiąc listopad Urzędu Wojewódzkiego Białostockiego Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki*, p. 12.
- ³⁶ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/1, *Lista pracowników Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki Warszawskiego Urzędu Wojewódzkiego za miesiąc grudzień 1944 r.*, p. 7.
- ³⁷ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/2, *Sprawozdanie nr 1 z działalności Wydziału Kultury i Sztuki Urzędu Wojewódzkiego*

Warszawskiego za czas od 20 października do dnia 20 listopada 1944 r., pp. 22-23.

- ³⁸ AAN, Polish Committee of National Liberation, fond no. 185, inv. no. XV/2, *Sprawozdanie finansowe z kwot asygnowanych przez Resort Kultury i Sztuki z budżetu listopadowego, Urząd Wojewódzki Warszawski Wydział Kultury i Sztuki, Otwock, 29.12.1944 r.*, p. 53.
- ³⁹ AAN, Presidium of State National Council, fond no. 579, inv. no. 3, *Protokół pierwszego plenarnego posiedzenia Krajowej Rady Narodowej, Warszawa 31.12.1943 r./1.01.1944 r.*, pp. 85-86.
- ⁴⁰ The PKWN programme of 22 July 1944 stressed the protection of private property.
- ⁴¹ Ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reforms of 1 March 1945 on the subject of the implementation of the decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation of 6 September 1944 in the introduction of agrarian reform, Dz.U. of 1945, no. 10, item 51; more information on the land reform, former manorial property, and the manner of conducting the reform in: L. M. Karecka: *Mienie zwane podworskim w Muzeum Narodowym w Warszawie*, "Muzealnictwo" 2012, no. 53, pp. 44-57.
- ⁴² J. Pruszyński, *Dziedzictwo kultury Polski...*, vol. 2, p. 49.
- ⁴³ *Ibidem*.
- ⁴⁴ AAN, Presidium of State National Council, fond no. 579, inv. no. 8, *Protokół stenograficzny plenarnego posiedzenia Krajowej Rady Narodowej, Warszawa 2.01.1943 r./3.01.1944 r.*, p. 79.
- ⁴⁵ J. Pruszyński, *Dziedzictwo kultury Polski...*, vol. 2, p. 36.
- ⁴⁶ AAN, Ministry of Culture and Art, fond no. 366/3, inv. no. 73, *Sprawozdanie z działalności Ministerstwa za 1945 r.*, p. 14.
- ⁴⁷ AAN, Ministry of Culture and Art, fond no. 366/3, inv. no. 114, *Notatka służbowa w sprawie bieżących zagadnień kultury i sztuki*, pp. 21-22.
- ⁴⁸ J. Pruszyński, *Dziedzictwo kultury Polski...*, vol. 2, p. 103.

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