

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS PROTECTION IN POLISH GUIDEBOOKS OF THE 19TH CENTURY

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Abstract

The nineteenth century saw an unprecedented development of tourism, which entailed a boom in travel literature, especially guidebooks. This phenomenon was also noticeable in the Polish lands despite the unfavorable political and economic situation (partitions of Poland). In the numerous Polish guidebooks, much attention was paid to historic cities, monuments and works of art in churches and palaces. This paper presents the results of an analysis of the contents of guidebooks related to cultural heritage and its protection. Although the publications studied were utilitarian in nature, the information they included was closely related to the development of monument research (the authors of many guidebooks were art history researchers). Particularly interesting are the sections of the guidebooks related to restoration work on selected monuments. They reflect the high awareness of the authors of the need to protect cultural heritage, also for the purposes of making it accessible to tourists.

Keywords: Cultural heritage; Preservation and conservation of monuments; Guidebooks; 19th century

Introduction

In 1903, the well-known Austrian art historian Alois Riegl already evoked, with full approval, the view that the 19th century was referred to as the age of history [1]. Indeed, historicism permeated the era and manifested itself in architecture and art (starting with the return to antiquity initiated as early as the second half of the 18th century), as well as in the approach to the legacy of the past. With the Enlightenment ideas, a pan-European trend emerged as early as the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries seeking to identify and protect cultural heritage. In France, historic buildings were recognized as monuments of national history and the term *monument historique* was coined to describe them [2]. Inventory of monuments was undertaken in various countries and offices were created to preserve monuments. Numerous studies were conducted in the field of conservation of monuments, viewed as the preservation of the original condition of an object and its protection. The second “child” of nineteenth-century historicism was monument restoration, i.e., the re-establishment of the historical state by removing later transformations and reconstructing unpreserved original parts [3].

The unprecedented interest in cultural heritage coincided with the development of tourism made possible by socioeconomic changes and the emergence of new modes of transport, such as railways and steamships [4]. Cultural tourism, focused on exploring historic cities, monuments, museums and intangible heritage, had its golden age in the 19th century [5]. The development of tourism created a demand for guidebooks, which made organization and trips much easier. There were even publishing houses that specialized in producing this type of publication, with two of the

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most well-known being John Murray's (English) and Karl Baedeker's (German) guidebooks [6]. Other publishers often modeled their guidebooks on Murray's and Baedeker's books, which led to a considerable unification of guidebooks in terms of their layout, narrative (descriptions according to suggested tours), provision of practical information etc. It is worth emphasizing that nineteenth-century guidebooks devoted a lot of space to discussing heritage issues. Research by Rudy Koshar found that in one of Baedeker's guidebooks to Germany, almost 30% of the content concerned history and monuments and 12% was devoted to descriptions of art galleries and museums [7].

In the 19th century, Poland was not an independent country, as at the end of the previous century, its territory was divided by the three invaders: Austria, Prussia and Russia. This caused considerable difficulties in the regular care of monuments. For example, in the Kingdom of Poland, which was administered by Russia, no monument conservation services were in operation until the Society for the Preservation of Historical Monuments (Polish: Towarzystwo Opieki nad Zabytkami Przeszłości) was established in 1906. Although in the Prussian state, the office of conservator was established already in 1843, the provincial conservators for the Polish territories were not appointed until the last decade of the century. The situation was relatively best in the Austrian partition, known as Galicia. Scientific institutions such as the Cracow Scientific Society, later transformed into the Academy of Arts and Sciences, dealt with preservation issues here. Earlier than in other partitions, a state conservation service was also arranged, linked to the Austrian administration [8]. In 1853, it appointed Paweł Popiel the first conservator of buildings and art of Cracow and its district [9].

During the period studied, an interest in cultural heritage emerged in the Polish lands as it did in other countries. It was expressed through inventory of monuments, the creation of collections and museums and scientific research. Despite the obstacles in the form of the partition borders, tourism was also developing, for which numerous guidebooks were produced. These publications, often prepared based on foreign models, contain a lot of information on cultural heritage, especially historic cities, architectural monuments and museums [10]. Information on the conservation and restoration of monuments was included much less frequently in the guidebooks, but it is all the more worth citing and discussing.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the information about cultural heritage and its preservation contained in Polish guidebooks published in the 19th century. These issues are very interesting and also important for the culture of that period but have so far rarely been the subject of academic research. Among the more important studies are a historical monograph of Polish guidebooks from the Partition period by *Dariusz Opaliński* [11] and a book by *Dominik Ziarkowski* [12] on the role of guidebooks in the popularization of the findings of Polish art historiography in the 19th century. There have also been several in-depth studies [13-21], which sometimes include information on the presentation of cultural heritage in guidebooks but omit contents on the conservation and restoration of monuments. It is, therefore, worth filling this gap, all the more so because nineteenth-century Polish guidebooks undoubtedly served as an important tool for the popularization of cultural heritage and the then-emerging scientific knowledge of historic preservation.

Materials and Methods

The primary research material is, of course, Polish guidebooks from the 19th century. According to Dariusz Opaliński's definition, a guidebook created in the period studied should be considered as *a book of small format (16" or 8"), usually offered (...) at an affordable price, covering general information on history, geography etc. about an area or locality, containing practical tips to help organize a stay in a new place and proposals of tourist routes with their description* [11]. In total, 174 books were recognized as belonging to this group, mostly concerning large cities such as Cracow, Warsaw, Lviv, Vilnius or Poznań. Furthermore,

guidebooks to individual monuments, spa destinations and foreign countries and cities (e.g., Paris, Rome and Vienna) were also published [21].

The present paper also draws on publications from the era on art history and historic preservation and contemporary academic studies on guidebooks, art historiography and historic preservation in the 19th century.

The basic research method adopted in the present study is the analysis of the contents of the guidebooks studied. Particular attention was paid to the presentation of architectural monuments and the characterization of the conservation work. Issues relating to description methods, terminology used and valuation were considered to be of particular importance. The interpretation of the text of the guidebooks refers to some extent to the so-called linguistic turn in the humanities [22]. Undoubtedly, the focus on linguistic research can yield good results, not only in philosophy and the social sciences but also in historical research [23].

A natural consequence of the assumed research procedure is the application of the comparative method since the comparison is the second (after analysis) stage in the cognitive process [24]. Comparative methods were used to compare the guidebooks with each other, especially in terms of their content on cultural heritage and its preservation. Another very important field of comparative analysis is the comparison of the contents provided in the guidebooks with information on the development of scientific interest in art history and the theory and practice of historical preservation. In specific cases, this allowed for the determination of the effect of the opinions of the time regarding heritage protection on the contents of the guidebooks.

Results and discussion

An analysis of Polish guidebooks published in the 19th century shows that these publications were dominated by information on cultural heritage, especially on architectural monuments. Old buildings, both sacral and secular, were presented as the most important attractions in the largest group of the studies surveyed, i.e., in city guidebooks. The monographic guidebooks, devoted to specific monuments, museums and exhibitions, were obviously focused on historical and artistic issues. Even spa guidebooks contained references to historical monuments, as they often described castles and churches in the vicinity of a particular resort, which could be a destination for visitors [10].

The oldest nineteenth-century guidebooks contained first and foremost historical information about the monuments, often supplemented by admiration for the past and the importance of national heritage. In a pioneering Polish guidebook from that century, authored by *Józef Wawrzyniec Krasinski* [25], for example, one can find mention of the Wawel Hill in Cracow: *Like the Capitoline Hill for Romans or the Pantheon for the French, this sacred sanctuary was important to the hearts of Poles, with the composition of the most expensive and glorious relics of happiness, greatness and glory of the Nation*. One of the most important authors of guidebooks to Cracow was *Ambroży Grabowski* [26], who wrote about the Cloth Hall building (Fig. 1): *This antique and noteworthy building, with a Gothic structure*. Similar tendencies can be found in other early guidebooks, such as the description of Warsaw by *Łukasz Gołębiowski* [27] or the oldest guidebook to Lublin by *Seweryn Zenon Sierpiński* [28].

After the middle of the century, guidebooks began to contain somewhat longer descriptions of the architecture of churches, palaces and other buildings. These include Adam Honory Kirkor's guidebooks to Vilnius. Already in the oldest of them, one can find, among other things, an extensive description of the cathedral, which was very clearly structured, including first the general plan of the building, then its dimensions given in ells, a detailed presentation of the façade and finally a discussion of the interior divisions, vaults and furnishings [29]. It is significant that the elements of furnishing, such as altars, tombstones, sculptures and paintings, were not described by Kirkor in more detail but only enumerated. This was typical of the vast

majority of nineteenth-century guidebooks; whose authors often strove to list the monuments found in churches or palaces but very rarely attempted to characterize them in more detail.



Fig. 1. The Cloth Hall building in Cracow, woodcut.

Source: A. Grabowski, **Kraków i jego okolice** [Cracow and its surroundings],
Wydanie piąte, Nakładem Księgarni D.E. Friedleina, Kraków, 1866

However, further development of the volume of descriptions of monuments did not take place and even on the contrary, in later publications, descriptions were often very brief. The authors of the guidebooks realized that readers did not expect a detailed characterization of ancient buildings but only to be given the most important information. This was expressed by *Władysław Łuszczkiewicz* [30] in the preface to his guidebook to Cracow from 1875, who found that the *form of a guidebook does not allow for the elaboration on the information about Cracow because it hates quotations and polemics inherent in critical work*. It is also worth noting that in the second half of the nineteenth century, a type of less comprehensive city guidebook of no more than a few dozen pages became popular [see e.g., 31-35]. In the case of such studies, necessarily, descriptions of monuments had to be limited in volume.

An important factor that probably influenced the shortening of many descriptions of architectural monuments was the gradual enrichment of the content of guidebooks with stylistic terms. Calling a given object Gothic, Renaissance or Baroque, for example, relieved the author from the need for more detailed characterization. The earliest guidebooks, which made extensive use of stylistic terms, appeared as early as the beginning of the second half of the 19th century. These include a guidebook to Cracow by *Józef Mączyński* [36] and a guidebook to Warsaw by *Franciszek Maksymilian Sobieszczański* [37]. Guidebooks written at the end of the nineteenth century were already characterized by an elaborate conceptual apparatus, undoubtedly drawn from scholarly works on art history of the time [10].

Authors of the publications studied often decided to evaluate the described monuments and works of art. The analysis of the content of Polish guidebooks published until the end of the 19th century shows that heritage was perceived primarily as historical, aesthetic, national and religious values.

The value of the monuments lying in their antiquity was stressed by *Ambroży Grabowski* [38], who wrote of Cracow's Wawel Cathedral that *in historical terms, it is the most important of all the churches in all of Poland*. Similar statements can be found in abundance in the

guidebooks studied. For example, one of the guidebooks to Warsaw mentions that the Church of the Holy Spirit *has a few ancient and artful paintings of the Italian school* [39]. Antoni Schneider pointed out that the Church of Our Lady of the Snows is *the most ancient building monument in Lviv* [32]. Władysław Zieliński, who admired the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Lublin Castle, also appreciated the value of its antiquity and wrote, *The building is beautiful and very ancient, almost completely preserved in its original structure* [33]. Guidebooks to Poznań from the last decade of the 19th century emphasized the historical significance of the cathedral (Fig. 2), which was considered to be *the cradle, so to speak, of Christianity for the Polish lands, as it is the oldest episcopal church in our country* [40].



Fig. 2. Poznań Cathedral, woodcut.

Source: K. Kozłowski, **Przewodnik po Poznaniu i okolicy z ilustracyami i planem miasta** [Guidebook to Poznań and its surroundings with illustrations and city plan], Czcionkami Drukarni Dziennika Poznańskiego, Poznań, 1898

Aesthetic assessments in relation to monuments occurred very frequently in the publications studied, although they were generally quite superficial. Jindřich Otakar Miltner, for example, admired the Cracow's parish church, which he described as *beautiful and splendid* [31]. Similar terms were often used by Władysław Zieliński [33] in his guidebook to Lublin. Examples include the *magnificent Church of St. Stanislaus* and, next to it, the chapel of St. Dominic *with a nice picture on the altar, splendid stucco work on the vault and a lovely double statue of the Firlej family*. Rev. Stanisław Gdeczyk [34], author of a guidebook to Gniezno, drew attention to the *beautiful and intricately executed arabesque* decorating the cathedral door (Fig. 3). Similarly, efforts were made to appreciate the most important heritage sites located abroad. Jan Flasiński [41], who described the Basilica of St. Peter in the Vatican, emphasized its enormous size, as well as the proportions of its parts. There were very many enthusiastic reviews in the guidebooks to Paris. There was admiration for individual buildings, but also for the numerous museums,

containing whole worlds of wonder, which can occupy every mind and satisfy the most fastidious and most sensitive imagination [42].

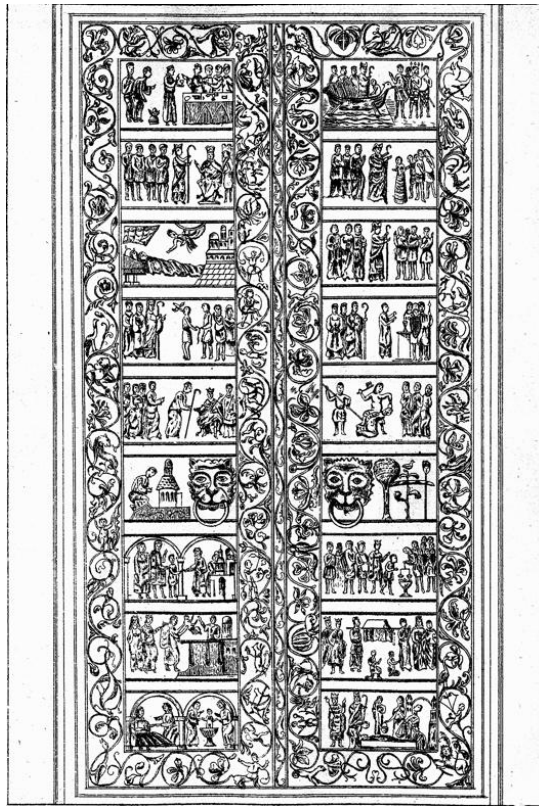


Fig. 3. Doors of Gniezno Cathedral, lithograph.

Source: S. Gdeczyk, **Przewodnik historyczny po Gnieźnie i jego kościołach**

[Historical guidebook to Gniezno and its churches], Wydanie drugie poprawione, rozszerzone i 5 rycinami ozdobione, Nakładem Autora, Czciońkami Drukarni Kuryera Poznańskiego, Poznań, 1891

Negative evaluations of individual monuments or works of art were extremely rare in the publications studied. Few authors of guidebooks (especially to Cracow), however, decided to criticize Baroque and Rococo arts. *Józef Mączyński* [36], for example, wrote about the *deteriorated style of the 18th century* with regard to some tombstones in Wawel Cathedral in Cracow and *Władysław Łuszczkiewicz* [30] deplored the interior of St. Mary's Church, where the 18th-century altars *disfigure the building considerably by their style and layout*.

In the manifestations of material cultural heritage, many guidebook authors saw national and religious values (often closely intertwined). Whole cities were sometimes seen from this viewpoint, especially Cracow, which was compared to Rome, Jerusalem and even Mecca and called *a treasure trove of national memorabilia* [43]. *Józef Mączyński* [36] wrote that *a Pole should want to get to know Cracow not like foreign cities, but like his family home, where every place, every piece of rubble, every scrap of ancestral legacy is dear to them*. Selected monuments, especially the cathedrals in Cracow and Poznań, were also presented in a national and religious context. Polish traces, such as places associated with famous people and tombstones, were further noted in guidebooks to foreign cities such as Vienna and Rome [21].

Some guidebooks from the second half of the 19th century contained notes on the conservation and restoration of architectural monuments. Relatively more space was devoted to

these issues by the authors of guidebooks on Cracow, while in the case of publications on other cities, conservation problems appeared sporadically. Information about the conservation work carried out on the former buildings was generally brief and not always accompanied by value judgments. For example, *Władysław Łuszczkiewicz* [30], in his guidebook to Cracow and its surroundings, noted the restoration of the Franciscan church, carried out by Karol Kremer after the fire in that church in 1850, but did not assess the effect of the activities. The guidebooks to Cracow from the 1880^s also mentioned the restoration of the Cloth Hall, carried out by Tomasz Pryliński a little earlier, but this activity was also not assessed [44, 45].

It can be assumed that the authors of the guidebooks were more likely to include their opinions on the conservation work when they had a critical attitude towards it, while the absence of comments in this respect should be regarded as “tacit acceptance.” Indeed, examples of explicit praise of conservation efforts are very rare. However, one can mention the flattering opinion of *Władysław Łuszczkiewicz* [30] on the rebuilding of the Dominican church in Cracow: *Destroyed by fire in 1850, the church was almost entirely built from the ground up, with the exception of the presbytery and chapels. However, the building style of the 14th century was attempted to be preserved, insofar as the former parts remained in the architect’s memory. Still stripped of its altars, the building makes a wonderful impression with its beautiful proportions, slender arcades and Gothic vaults full of simplicity* [30].

Interestingly, in a later guidebook, a collective study edited by Józef Rostański, one can find a more nuanced opinion of the Dominican church, with clear accents of harsh criticism with regard to some architectural additions and, above all, on the furnishings, which were not yet in place at the time Łuszczkiewicz’s guidebook was written. Here is the relevant passage: *This church burned down in 1850 but was soon exemplarily restored in the spirit of the original. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the new stone porch, the exaggeratedly large main altar and the Gothic altars in the chapels, the new stalls and the confessionals. They are the failed and very expensive products of a dilettantism incapable of sensing the difference between the details or motifs of the interior and exterior of a Gothic edifice, between the building itself and its internal fittings, equipment and so on* [47].

The opinion cited was formulated by one of the authors of the guidebook, Włodzimierz Demetrykiewicz, an archaeologist and art historian who was also a conservator active in the Western Galicia Conservators’ Group [48]. The harsh assessment of the work carried out on the fire-damaged church is one of the very few comments on the restoration of monuments included in the guidebooks studied, which were supported by concrete justification. The opinions of a conservation nature expressed by other guidebook authors are usually devoid of any deeper argumentation. For example, Antoni Schneider, in his guidebook to Lviv, stated that the Wallachian Orthodox Church *had been renovated incompetently in recent times* [32]. An almost identical opinion of the building was given by *Stanisław Kunasiewicz* [49], who considered it to have been *incompetently restored*. *Adam Honory Kirkor* [50], in one of his later guidebooks to Vilnius, acknowledged that the Church of St. John’s, after the restoration, *has lost the characteristic of antiquity; it has been stripped of its beautiful frescoes, plaster casts and statues*.

At times, criticism of the restoration of monuments was expressed in less direct terms. This can be seen in *Władysław Zieliński’s* guidebook [33], which marveled at the medieval chapel of St. Trinity in the Lublin castle, while he gave a rather harsh assessment of the historicizing residence built in the 19th century, writing that *the style of the castle today is supposed to be Gothic*.

It is also worth recalling Wiktor Czajewski’s opinion on the redevelopment of Warsaw’s Church of St. Alexander by Józef Pius Dziekoński, which, in addition to general praise for this well-known architect, contains many critical elements: *Today, the church has changed its superficiality completely. It has been rebuilt according to the plans of Józef Dziekoński, whose design for the extension of the temple was awarded first prize in a competition. (...) The porticoes of this church are classical, while the whole reminds one of the French Renaissance, which makes a nice impression, although it is obvious that the alterations did not allow the artist of this level*

to keep it in one harmonious whole. Hence the disagreement of certain individual parts—in the relationship of one to the other [51].

The inclusion of information on cultural heritage and the conservation and restoration of monuments in Polish nineteenth-century guidebooks should be seen in a broader socio-cultural context. This context consists primarily of aspects such as the development of historical research and art historiography and the growing awareness of the need to protect cultural heritage, which has involved not only theoretical work on the subject but also specific restoration treatments of many monuments.

The development of research on ancient art was hampered in the Polish lands by the political situation (the partition of the country). Nevertheless, already in the first half of the 19th century, the so-called antiquity research movement began to develop, with monuments treated primarily in terms of documents of history [52]. Such research was carried out, for example, in Cracow, with historians such as Jerzy Samuel Bandtkie and Józef Muczkowski, as well as Karol Kremer, an architect with an interest in art theory and conservation of monuments and brother of the well-known scholar Józef Kremer, who taught aesthetics and art history at the School of Fine Arts [53]. Among the most active researchers of historical monuments was the self-taught historian Ambroży Grabowski. It is worth noting that Grabowski was also one of the most important authors of guidebooks to Cracow.

The antiquity research also developed in the other partitions. The Society of Collectors of National Antiquities was founded in Wielkopolska and operated from 1840 to 1846 in Szamotuły. In Poznań, there was the Poznań Society of Friends of Science and the bookshop of Konstanty Żupański, which published many historical studies [54]. Warsaw, located in the Russian partition, was a particularly thriving location. In the capital of the Kingdom of Poland, the active authors included Aleksander Przezdziecki, Edward Rastawiecki, Bolesław Podczaszyński, Karol Stronczyński and Franciszek Maksymilian Sobieszczański [55]. The latter is known as the author of the first monograph on the history of Polish art, published in two volumes in 1847 and 1849 [56-57], as well as of guidebooks to Warsaw.

Researchers concentrated in the Warsaw milieu (especially Przezdziecki, Rastawiecki and Sobieszczański) attempted to make monuments and works of art a more autonomous subject of study, making a significant step towards the development of a scientific history of art. However, after the defeat of the January Uprising (1863-1864), followed by tsarist repression, the role of this milieu diminished significantly [58]. Further development of the discipline took place in Cracow, where a Commission of Art History was established within the Academy of Arts and Sciences (1873) and a Chair of Art History was created at Jagiellonian University (1882), which was taken over by Marian Sokołowski, the first Polish researcher to obtain a habilitation in art history. It is Sokołowski who, together with Władysław Łuszczkiewicz, who was older than him, is considered to be the creator of the Cracow school of art history and the precursor of this new discipline at that time [59].

In general, the development of the research on art in the Polish lands in the 19th century consisted of an evolution in the approach to monuments and works of art – from treating them solely as historical sources to an increasing interest in form, artistic genesis, relationships with other works of art created in a given period etc. More and more professional terminology was introduced into the scholarly literature, including, among other things, stylistic terms. Analysis of the contents concerning cultural heritage in guidebooks reveals that certain phenomena occurred here in parallel with the progress of historical and art research.

It is worth noting that the oldest guidebooks, written in the first half and the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, are of a remarkable antique character. They are dominated by historical information about the monuments and limitations on their description or stylistic characteristics. These connections are hardly surprising if one considers that the authors of the most important guidebooks were antiquity researchers, such as Ambroży Grabowski, Łukasz Gołębiowski, Franciszek Maksymilian Sobieszczański or Adam Honory Kirkor.

However, later guidebooks began to draw on the scientific findings of art history, giving readers knowledge in a more accessible way than was the case in academic treatises. This popularizing role of the guidebooks was realized by their authors, including art historians such as Władysław Łuszczkiewicz and Włodzimierz Demetrykiewicz [10].

The relatively small number of mentions of the conservation and restoration of monuments in the pages of nineteenth-century guidebooks was probably because their authors were most often not properly qualified to assess the activities of conservators. It can also be assumed that most readers were not looking for this type of specialized information in the guidebooks. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that at least some of the publications surveyed include evaluations of conservation efforts, as this is a very important issue in the history of Polish art historiography.

Particularly noteworthy are the more elaborate comments by some guidebook authors on the rebuilding of the Dominican Church in Cracow. This Gothic monument was severely damaged in a fire in the city in 1850. The west gable of the building collapsed at that time along with the vault of the nave. Only the presbytery, east gable and the later chapels attached to the side elevations survived [60]. Immediately after the fire, reconstruction began, which was groundbreaking for the community of Cracow's conservators and restorers, helping them understand the principles of medieval construction. This event is sometimes compared to the rebuilding of Cologne Cathedral in the 19th century [61]. The work was initially led by Karol Kremer, a Cracow-based architect and conservationist. However, five years after the fire, there was a building disaster—the vaults of all three naves collapsed, as the pillars could not bear their weight [62]. The appearance of the church's damaged west façade is documented in a woodcut from 1860 (Fig. 4) and the oldest photograph of the building taken at a similar time [63]. Further work was carried out by engineer Teofil Żebrawski under the guidance of city conservator Paweł Popiel. The aim was to rebuild the church in its original form. Although some of the solutions introduced by Żebrawski were controversial (for example, the western gable, which was not rebuilt very faithfully, with the rhythm of the blind windows changed and the pinnacles placed differently), his actions were assessed rather positively [8]. This is reflected in the passage from Władysław Łuszczkiewicz's guidebook quoted earlier.

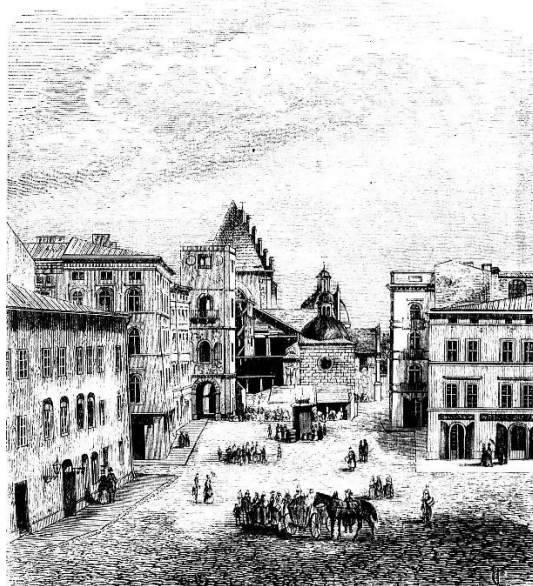


Fig. 4. Façade of the Dominican church in Cracow after a fire in the mid-19th century, woodcut.
Source: *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* [Illustrated Weekly], 2 (54), 1860



Fig. 5. Façade of the Dominican Church in Cracow, photo by Ignacy Krieger, ca. 1880.
Source: Digital National Library Polona, Public Domain

There was more resistance from the scientific community to the later work on the monument, carried out on the initiative of the Italian prior of the monastery, Marian Pavoni, who was an amateur architect. He made several changes, mainly to the interior of the church, while on the exterior he added a new porch with neo-Gothic shapes to the west, added in 1876 (Fig. 5). It should be noted that Pavoni's work was initially viewed in different ways, with favorable opinions being expressed by, among others, the painter Jan Matejko, who enjoyed great authority in Cracow. It was not until the late 1880^s that conservationist Stanisław Tomkiewicz began to accuse Pavoni and the Dominicans of destroying the historic character of the church [64]. These views are reflected in the quoted passage from the 1891 guidebook, in which another conservationist, Włodzimierz Demetrykiewicz, criticized not only the aforementioned porch but also the church furnishings designed by Pavoni (including the main altar), describing them as *failed and very expensive products of dilettantism*. This is the only example of such a harsh assessment of actions taken at monuments presented in the guidebooks studied.

It is noteworthy that most of the conservation activities recorded by the authors of the nineteenth-century guidebooks referred to Gothic buildings. Undoubtedly, this fact can be explained by the great interest in the Gothic style among Polish architects, conservators and art researchers of the time. In Cracow, there was a large group of architects designing neo-Gothic buildings and carrying out work on medieval monuments. These included the aforementioned Karol Kremer and Feliks Księżarski, Karol Knaus, Władysław Ekielski, Zygmunt Hendel and Franciszek Mączyński [65].

The use of forms reminiscent of the Gothic style in the reconstruction of monuments was generally received positively. It should be noted that the criticism of the rebuilding of the Dominican church in Cracow discussed above did not concern the entire work but focused on the ahistorical element of the new porch and the furnishings of the church.

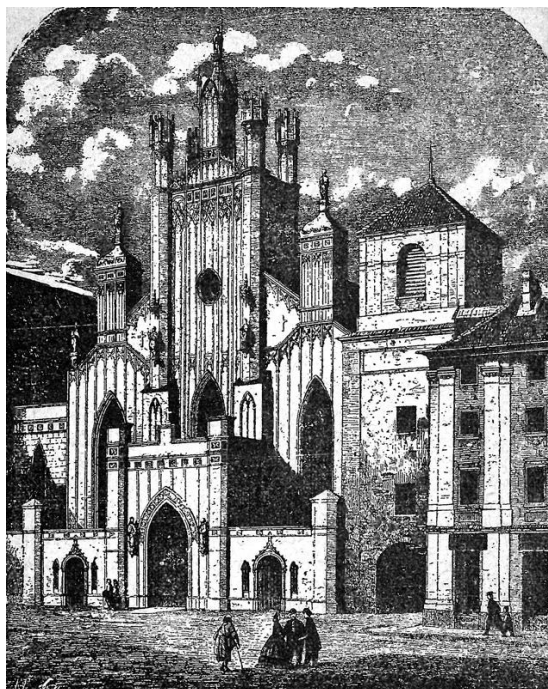


Fig. 6. View of the Warsaw Cathedral, woodcut.

Source: W. Gomulicki, I. Szmidberg, **Illustrowany przewodnik po Warszawie** [Illustrated guide to Warsaw], W Drukarni Jana Noskowskiego, Warszawa, 1880

In other cases, the fact that buildings were restored to their Gothic forms was reported by guidebook authors without criticism (the Cloth Hall and the Franciscan Church in Cracow) or was even praised, even if the work resulted in a significant transformation of the monument. This was the case with the cathedral in Warsaw, rebuilt between 1836 and 1840 by Adam Idźkowski. The architect did not understand the term “restoration” as the restoration of old forms but the transformation and embellishment of the building and ensuring its permanence [66]. Idźkowski redesigned the façade of the cathedral (Fig. 6) and made many changes to its interior. Nevertheless, in his guidebook to Warsaw, *Fransiszek Maksymilian Sobieszczański* [37] gave a positive assessment of the work, which, in his opinion, gave the cathedral church a “Gothic-English style”. A similar opinion can be found in a much later guidebook by *Wiktor Czajewski* [51]. This stylistic designation has proved to be very enduring, as the contemporary reconstruction of Warsaw Cathedral is also sometimes described as having been carried out in the English Neo-Gothic style [67].

Conclusions

Polish guidebooks written in the 19th century constitute a very large yet diverse group of publications. Each book is characterized by a different territorial scope, subject matter and also volume. In general, however, it should be emphasized that the publications contained a lot of information about cultural heritage, especially historic cities, monuments, museums and works of art. The analysis of the content of the publications showed that they provided the audience with historical knowledge but at the same time presented the monuments in terms of national sanctity and mementos of the country’s great past. The authors of the Polish guidebooks also often chose to emphasize the beauty and harmony of the architectural works described (often characterized

together with the furnishings), which could undoubtedly have contributed to the formation of a sense of aesthetic taste in the readers.

The focus on cultural heritage was certainly not a peculiarity of only the Polish guidebooks published in the 19th century. Many foreign publications from this period also focused on cultural tourist attractions [68]. More surprising is the inclusion, in some of the publications, of information on historic preservation, including specific conservation and restoration work. This can be explained by the fact that among the authors of nineteenth-century Polish guidebooks were people with knowledge about the conservation of monuments. For example, Władysław Łuszczkiewicz viewed the work undertaken on monuments from the perspective of an art history researcher and Włodzimierz Demetrykiewicz, as mentioned earlier, served as a conservator of monuments at the Conservation Office in Cracow.

The comments cited in the paper on the conservation and restoration of monuments show that these issues were considered important not only for specialists but also for tourists visiting historic cities (especially Cracow and Warsaw). The characterization of the conservation work and its evaluation formed part of the interpretation of the monument, which carried certain values (historical, artistic, national or religious). Proper conservation could have highlighted these values and preserved them for future generations, whereas unjustified transformations (as in the case of the Dominican Church in Cracow) called into question the authenticity value of the building. Although not very numerous in the guidebook publications studied in this paper, examples of opinions on specific restoration work drew the attention of the wider public to these extremely important issues for the proper perception of cultural heritage.

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