

Fate of the Andrassy Archive from Betliar and Krásna Hôrka
in the 1940s and 1950s
Pavol Tišliar

prof. PhDr. Pavol Tišliar, PhD.
Comenius University in Bratislava
Faculty of Arts
Department of Ethnology and Museology
Gondova 2
814 99 Bratislava
Slovakia
e-mail: pavol.tisliar@uniba.sk

Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo, 2018, 6:2:83-93

Fate of the Andrassy Archive from Betliar and Krásna Hôrka in the 1940s and 1950s

This paper examines the fate of the family and economic archives of the Andrassy family after the confiscation of the property complex in Betliar and Krásna Hôrka after the World War II was over. Complicated property rights and changes in ownership resulted in the fact that the archives were put into keeping of the Agricultural Archives (Pôdohospodársky archív) in Bratislava. Local government and the administration of the State Cultural Estate in Betliar, who managed the remains of Betliar and Krásna Hôrka Castle as museums, sought to keep this family archive in its original place. However, this resulted in a forced transport of parts of this archive into the branch of the Agricultural Archives in Levoča.

Key words: archive of the Andrassy family, manor-house Betliar, castle Krásna Hôrka, Slovakia, 20th century

Complicated ownership relations of assets confiscated from the Andrassy family

The assets of the Andrassy family in Upper Gemer included, besides extensive land property, two important mansions, the Krásna Hôrka Castle and the manor house in Betliar. In Krásnohorské Podhradie, there was also the Family Mausoleum and the Art Gallery of the Count Dionýz Andrassy. The last owner, Emanuel Andrassy, left Betliar already in 1944 and the mentioned buildings, together with the land ownership, were confiscated after the end of World War II by Slovak National Council Regulation No. 104/45 and Czechoslovak President's Decree No. 108/45.

After the crossing of the front, management of the assets was taken on by various institutions, and it can be stated that this complex of assets has not been completely consolidated into its pre-war form since then. At the beginning of the 1950s, the State Cultural Property (SCP) in Betliar was formed, which took on the management of the core of the former Andrassy family's assets, the manor house in Betliar and the Krásna Hôrka Castle. Later, the Mausoleum in Krásnohorské Podhradie was also added to the SCP in Betliar.¹ These buildings began to serve for museum presentation purposes, giving the visitor an insight into the way of life of the Hungarian nobility. The basis of the collections is the original, preserved and almost intact inventory of the manor house and the family collection (the former museum) of the Andrassy family, which Juraj Andrassy presented to the public at the Krásna Hôrka Castle since 1867.

¹ TAKÁCSOVÁ BANYÁSOVÁ, Katarína – TIŠLIAR, Pavol. Vznik a formovanie Štátneho kultúrneho majetku v Betliari. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo*, vol. 5 (2017), no. 1, pp. 69-81.

Today, together with the Mausoleum, these objects form the Betliar Museum, which belongs to the Slovak National Museum.²

The complicated post-war development of the asset of assets began as soon as the front crossed, when the management of the manor house in Betliar was taken on by the local evangelical priest Štefan Havlík.³ He was appointed as a temporary manager and caretaker by the Commission for Education and at the same time as the supervisor (representative) of the artistic and historical monuments in the Rožňava region,⁴ initially taking over the management of the Krásna Hôrka castle and the Mausoleum. The Betliar estate was taken on by the Administration of State Forests in Betliar, which meant the division of the complex of assets between two departments. The Commission for Education took on the management of the manor house with its direct surroundings (manor park) and the Krásna Hôrka Castle, while the Commission for Agriculture became in charge of the forest and arable land management.⁵ Management of the Mausoleum in Krásnohorské Podhradie was taken on in November 1945 by the State East Slovak Museum (SESM) in Košice.⁶ It was practically a reinstatement of the pre-war state, as this object was under the management of the Košice Museum already in the inter-war period. The competence over the Krásna Hôrka Castle was resolved similarly, when on 19 August 1946, the castle was transferred under the management of SESM Košice.⁷

It did not take long, and efforts had begun to at least partially restore Andrassy's property. These efforts came mostly from Š. Havlík, the manager of the Betliar manor house, aiming mainly at using the castle for cultural and presentation purposes. In principle, these efforts succeeded at the beginning of the 1950s, when the Krásna Hôrka Castle and the Betliar manor house were taken on as state cultural property by the official, newly established National Cultural Committee for Slovakia (NCC), under the authority of the Commission for Education, Science and Art in Bratislava.⁸

There is no doubt that the decision to use these objects for cultural purposes was the right decision. Although there were various proposals directed to several other areas of use, the idea to leave the manor house and the castle for cultural and presentation purposes eventually won over the others. The visit rate of these objects was already high at the end of the 1940s and gradually increased, especially since the 1950s.⁹ In addition to the opening of the museum collections, however, in the 1940s, proposals were made to use the objects for archival purposes. The basis of the archive funds was to contain, in particular, documents of the Andrassy family and economic archives.

² MARÁKY, Peter. *Múzeá s celoslovenskou pôsobnosťou*. In: *Kultúrne krásy Slovenska : Múzeá 1*. Bratislava : Dajama, 2012, p. 47.

³ Archive of Slovak National Museum, office Museum in Betliar, (henceforth: Archív SNM, p. MB), f. Múzeum Betliar, 1945 – 1996 (henceforth: f. MB), spisy 1945-1949.

⁴ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign. Letter from 19. marca 1945, dekrét č. 213/45 – B/IV.

⁵ TAKÁCSOVÁ BANYÁSOVÁ – TIŠLIAR, ref. 1, p. 70.

⁶ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, spisy 1945-1949, sign. č. 90/1945, sign. č. 1453/1945 – B/III.

⁷ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. 25/1954.

⁸ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 2/1950 a sign. č. 217/1953; State MVSР – Štátny archív v Košiciach, pobočka v Rožňave (henceforth: ŠA Košice, p. Rožňava), f. Okresný národný výbor v Rožňave II., 1961 – 1990 (f. ONV RV II.), bez sign.; TIŠLIAR, Pavol. *Inštalačný plán prvej expozície Okresného múzea v Rožňave*. In: *Gemer-Malobont 11*. Rimavská Sobota : Gemersko-malohontské múzeum, 2015, p. 195.

⁹ TAKÁCSOVÁ BANYÁSOVÁ – TIŠLIAR, ref. 1, p. 77.

Andrássy Archive

The Andrássy Archive consisted of two parts. The family archive was located at the Krásna Hôrka Castle, together with some of the economic documents generated during the administration of Andrássy's assets. Part of the economic documents were also located in Betliar and concerned mainly the management of the Betliar estate. The documents were deposited here in the castle park in the classicist rotunda, along with the records of the Betliar Forest Plant Registry, which was the successor of the estate's activities. Formally, this building was handed over under the administration of the Betliar manor house in 1950, together with an agreement that the forest plant would gradually sort out and take off its registry.¹⁰

The idea of linking the museum with the archive began to emerge almost shortly after the liberation. Š. Havlík showed great interest in regional history. It is evidenced by the preserved correspondence just after the transfer of Krásna Hôrka to SESM in Košice, in which he requested access to the Andrássy family archive. Even at the end of 1946, the manager of Krásna Hôrka, Eugen Saból, officially authorized the lending of archive documents from the castle. The authorization also contained information that the complete relocation of the archive from Krásna Hôrka to Betliar was considered during that period.¹¹ In 1946, however, the archive was not moved and it did not happen in the following years, even though some documents preserved from the year 1949 point to the efforts of the manor house manager Š. Havlík to obtain parts of the Andrássy archive from Krásna Hôrka. In January 1949, for example, he argued the inappropriate state of depositing documents in the castle and drew attention to the risks associated with a possible fire. "*Besides, I would like to process the archives, which will not be done at Krásna Hôrka: no water, lights, heating, difficult accessibility, etc. But you know the facts*";¹² wrote Š. Havlík to Vladimír Wagner, a well-known conservationist who worked at that time with the Commission for Education in Bratislava.

The manor house in Betliar was more suitable for the archive than the castle. It was not only more open to possible research, but also had better spatial possibilities. In the area of the manor house, there was also a valuable historical family library, founded by Leopold Andrássy in 1816, which included about 15 thousand volumes, and which began to be systematically catalogued in Betliar in the early 1950s. Originally, this library was located in the already mentioned rotunda. It served mainly for the needs of the family, but was also used by researchers from the Gemer-Malohon Scholastic Society.¹³

Even before the end of the 1940s, the newly established Agricultural Archives in Bratislava, falling under the Commission for Agriculture and Land Reform, began to claim archival documents from the Andrássy archive. This specialized archives, created in 1947, had competences mainly in relation to the economic and patrimonial archives which belonged to the agriculture sector.¹⁴ Since the confiscated complex of assets of the Andrássy family was split between the Commission for Education and the Commission for Agriculture, discussions began about the ownership of the property archive complex. Most of the documents concerned

¹⁰ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 3/1950.

¹¹ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. 219/1946, sign. č. 221/1946.

¹² Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. 22/1949.

¹³ The Library prepare O. Wagnerová from NCC. Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 217/1953; TAKÁCSOVÁ, Katarína. Osudy historickej knižnice v kaštieli Betliar : odborné spracovanie a stav vedeckého bádania. In: *Z dejín šľachtických knižníc na Slovensku I*. Marcela Domenová (ed.). Prešov : PU, 2013, p. 54.

¹⁴ TIŠLIAR, Pavol. Aktivity Štátneho inšpektorátu archívov a knižníc na Slovensku pri budovaní archívnej organizácie (1919 – 1951). In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo*, vol. 1 (2013), no. 2, p. 53.

the management of the estate and were of an economic character. Therefore, at the end of 1949, the relocation of the archive unit from Betliar to a branch of the Agricultural Archives in Rimavská Sobota was announced.¹⁵ In this context, the manager Š. Havlík contacted the Commission for Education, namely V. Wagner, asking for instructions on how to respond to the announced relocation. No relocation was yet mentioned in connection with the Krásna Hôrka Castle, which at that time was still under the administration of SESM in Košice. Š. Havlík did not consider the relocation of the archives from Betliar as appropriate. He argued with its character and territorial provenance and its connection with the archive at Krásna Hôrka. In the reply, Š. Havlík was asked by the Commission for Education not to give over any documents from Betliar, until an official agreement is reached with the Commission for Agriculture. Interesting was mainly the final paragraph of the instruction, literally stating: “*The Commission for Education, at the strict order of the Commissioner L. Novomeský, is to set up the Gemer Archive in Betliar and therefore cannot dispose of the Betliar Archive other than mentioned above. The Commission has the same opinion in the case of the archives, which are currently located at the Krásna Hôrka Castle.*”¹⁶ The idea of creating an archive in the manor house was not only aimed at the merger of the Andrassy family and economic archives. The creation of some kind of regional archive of Gemer or Gemer area was also considered.

The Agricultural Archives repeatedly attempted to obtain the archives from Betliar even during the following year 1950. At that time negotiations between education and agriculture commissioners began, which eventually led to mutual agreement. Š. Havlík, as the manager of the manor house, was asked to give over the documents from Betliar to the Agricultural Archives on 14 July 1950, but it did not concern documents of a family character, only economic documents.¹⁷ Although Š. Havlík protested and argued, pointing to the disadvantage of the relocation, and especially stating that the Commission for Education specifically asked him in October 1949 not to give over any archival material to anyone, his letter came to Bratislava too late.¹⁸ The reply to his letter literally said: “*In reference to your respective letter, we would like to inform you that your letter was received too late, since at the request of the Commission for Agriculture and after consultation with prof. Dr. Varsík,¹⁹ the chairman of the National Cultural Committee on 14 June 1950 ordered its administrative office to issue a permission for the Agricultural Archives to take over the respective archive and to deliver the permission immediately. However, we ask that you do not allow the Agricultural Archives representatives to view other archive materials that are located in the manor house or elsewhere outside the rotunda building, as they have only received a permission from the chairman of the NCC to take over the archival records in this building.*”²⁰ After receipt of this letter, Š. Havlík still tried to avert the relocation in some way, and therefore turned to the local and regional self-government.²¹ The Local National Committee (LNC) in Betliar practically tried to engage in the administration of the Betliar manor since the crossing of the front. In its resolution made at the end of April 1950, it required not only to take part in any negotiations concerning the removal of “anything” from

¹⁵ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 40/1949.

¹⁶ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 45/1949.

¹⁷ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 95/1950.

¹⁸ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 101/1950.

¹⁹ prof. Branislav Varsík was Inspectorate-General of archives and libraries in Slovakia. For details, see TIŠLIAR, ref. 14, s. 45 a n.

²⁰ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 101/1950.

²¹ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 98/1950.

the manor house, but to make it conditional on its consent.²² The LNC in Betliar, of course, did not have any claim or jurisdiction over the confiscated property complex. It was more about the position or gesture. In October 1950, the Council of the District National Committee (DNC) in Rožňava also refused to approve the relocation of the archive, but same as the LNC, it had virtually no competence in this matter.²³

Formally, the handover of the archive was temporarily extended until 1951. The NCC Chairman Ján Čaplovič authorized the Agricultural Archives in Bratislava in early 1951 to take over the archive units, not only from Betliar, but also from the Krásna Hôrka Castle,²⁴ which was at the end of 1950 taken on by the NCC administration, and the castle management was assigned again to Š. Havlík. The castle and the manor house were united again under single administration of the State Cultural Property. After reviewing the state of the archives in the manor and the castle in March 1951, the administrator Š. Havlík proposed to only keep the archives at the castle in three rooms above the main gate, which were sufficiently dry and satisfied at least the basic safety conditions.²⁵

Representatives of the Agricultural Archives in Bratislava announced the takeover of both parts of the archive at the beginning of August 1951.²⁶ Formally, on 3 August 1951, the whole set of Andrásy archives was handed over, but these archives were physically left in their place, namely at the Krásna Hôrka Castle and in the rotunda in Betliar. Maybe that is why there was an idea alive in the Rožňava district to build a museum-archive facility with an abundant library in Betliar, not only for the Rožňava region but also for the entire Gemer area.²⁷ At the end of August 1951, Jozef Novák, an undergraduate of archival sciences, who lived with his parents in Rožňava,²⁸ was made responsible for the classification and relocation of the castle archives. In the instructions he received, Július Barták, Director of the Agricultural Archives, stated the principles that Novák had to follow when concentrating the archives: *... "place the Andrásy family archives into the third room fitted with iron door and designated for the Agricultural Archives, and keep the already existing organized part of the economic archive there. In the first and second rooms to be emptied and partially furnished with furniture (especially the first), place the archives of economic character from the former bakery (or the room below the bakery). In the second room, keep the archival records that are already there, and if you do not get all the archival records from the bakery in the first room, place them in the second. Proceed in a similar way with the unprocessed archival records of economic character that are now in the third room on the ground. Proceed with the relocation so that the second (middle) room can be used as a study room. If there is any space left in the third room (equipped with iron door) after the placement of a cabinet with the Andrásy family archives is placed there, place some of the archival records of economic character in there, or in the new built cabinet."* The student J. Novák also received 3,000 crowns to cover any expenses related to the relocation of the archives.²⁹ Of course, the relocation within the castle took place following an agreement and with cooperation of the manager Š. Havlík.

²² Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 80/1950, Act MNV v Betliari č. 6/1950, for details, see TAKÁCSOVÁ BANYÁSOVÁ – TIŠLIAR, ref. 1, s. 73.

²³ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 184/1952.

²⁴ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign., Letter self mark povereníctvo školstva PA-46/655/51.

²⁵ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. 191/1951.

²⁶ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. PA-46/651/51.

²⁷ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 331/1953.

²⁸ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, PA-KH/6-1951, from 1.9.1951.

²⁹ Ibidem.

The concentration and sorting of the archives at the Krásna Hôrka Castle in 1951 was only temporary. At least that is how the administration of the Agricultural Archives in Bratislava understood it. Already in February 1952, the disagreements of manager Š. Havlík with the idea to relocate the Andrassy archives from Krásna Hôrka and Betliar reappeared. He addressed his disapproving opinion again to the Agricultural Archives and asked them to reconsider the transfer, since the conditions at the castle were satisfactory and the selected areas in Betliar could after minor modifications also serve for archival purposes. He also pointed to disapproval of the local and regional authorities, which did not agree with the transfer of the materials outside the Rožňava region. During this period, the transfer of archival material to Rimavská Sobota was no longer mentioned, but the transfer to Levoča in the Spiš region, where another branch of the Agricultural Archives was operating.³⁰ Š. Havlík stated that while he respected the opinion and the will of the Commission for Education, which agreed with the transfers, he did not agree with them.³¹ However, the Agricultural Archives insisted on their position, especially for reasons of making archives available for research purposes. Although one of the possibilities was to create a special archive in Betliar, “... in which we wanted to collect the archives from Krásna Hôrka, Betliar and possibly Jason. ... not even today nor in the next few years, we will be able to dispose of the necessary number of rooms in Betliar.”³² In connection with the decision of the Council of the District National Committee in Rožňava of 13 October 1950, where the regional administration expressed their disagreement with the removal of the archives outside the region, the Agricultural Archives pointed out that this decision is within the competence of the Slovak Archival Committee. “The regional objections cannot be considered because the archives at Krásna Hôrka are related to several Andrassy estates, many of which are not even in the territory of our country. Besides, Krásna Hôrka itself spreads on the south-eastern edge of the former dominion and the place where we want to move the archives from Krásna Hôrka lies somewhat more northerly, not too far from the northern boundaries of the former dominion.” This correspondence was one of the last served by Š. Havlík as a state asset manager in Betliar and Krásna Hôrka. Soon after, he was accused of concealing part of the discovery found in Krásna Hôrka and arrested.³³

After Š. Havlík, there were a few temporary managers in a quick succession, Ján Janko and Eugen Sabol, who were later replaced by Alžbeta Güntherova-Mayerová, appointed to the management post on 18 November 1952.³⁴ With regards to the archive relocation, the new manager took almost the same opinion as Š. Havlík. At that time, however, the development of proper district archive had already been dealt with in the region of Rožňava and the question of the possible use of the manor house for this purpose was brought to the fore.

District archives in Betliar

Július Klincko became the district archivist, officially appointed to the office on 1 April 1952. The newly created district archive, which initially lacked any seat, also included archive

³⁰ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 86/1952.

³¹ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 58/1952.

³² Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 184/1952.

³³ TAKÁCSOVÁ, Katarína – MATEOVÁ, Tímea. Kaštieľ Betliar a hrad Krásna Hôrka po odchode Andrassyovcov. Konfiškácia majetkov a formovanie múzea. In: *Múzeá vo vojne. Druhá svetová vojna a jej dôsledky na činnosť múzeí a ich zbierky*. G. Podušelová – V. Majchrovičová (eds.). Banská Bystrica : Múzeum SNP, 2015 , p. 141 a n.

³⁴ TAKÁCSOVÁ BANYÁSOVÁ – TIŠLIAR, ref. 1, p. 75-76.

funds of the districts of Rožňava, Revúca and Moldava nad Bodvou.³⁵ Klincko was in charge of pre-archival care, and the preparation of an inventory of existing archives and archive funds in the aforementioned districts. In accordance with the new cultural policy, he had to prepare an inventory of archive documents for a labour movement, arrange the collection of the church registers and their handing over to the Regional Archives in Košice. Initially, the district archivist was forced to look for suitable premises to locate the district archives.³⁶ He was not very successful and the plan to place the district archives in the building of the former Mining and Metallurgical Museum in Rožňava, which was counted with as another restored cultural institution in the district,³⁷ proved to be unfeasible.³⁸ In fact, it was not possible to “institutionalize” the district archives even at the beginning of 1953 so the cooperation with the State Cultural Property in Betliar seem to be a good solution.

Already in 1952, the temporary state asset manager in Betliar E. Saból proposed to the Agricultural Archives the relocation of the entire archive from Krásna Hôrka to the manor house and to hand over its processing and access to the district archivist. On that occasion, he said that the management of the manor would provide suitable space for storing and making archive material available for research, thus removing all the reasons given for removing the archive to Levoča. *“This solution would serve the very matter, while respecting the wishes of the Regional National Committee in Košice and the District National Committee in Rožňava.”*³⁹ In this case, E. Saból pointed to the other disagreements of the Council of the District National Committee in Rožňava, which in its resolution of July 1952 repeatedly refused to relocate any monuments outside the district.⁴⁰ In the same spirit, the DNC Council continued in the following year, when also supported by the statement of the Regional National Committee in Košice, as well as by the new state asset manager A. Güntherová-Mayerová.⁴¹ However, the Agricultural Archive did not give up. At the end of 1953, it advised an early relocation of the archive units and asked the manager in Betliar not to hand over the keys to the archive room to anyone.⁴²

Parallel to this problem, at the turn of 1953/1954, the Slovak Archival Committee began to investigate the possibilities of using the state cultural property for archival purposes. In addition to other confiscations, the manor house in Betliar was also mentioned, where there should be space for *“... establishing the Gemer archival centre (study room, warehouses) in 11 ground-floor rooms.”*⁴³ A. Güntherová-Mayerová responded positively to this question: *“The prerequisite of this placement, however, is the start of an adaptation in the economic building of the manor house, which accommodates the placement of intervention rooms from the manor house into this adapted building. After emptying and transferring the intervention rooms from the manor house to the management building, the collections can be installed in these empty manor rooms and the archive can be moved in the empty ground-floor rooms (where*

³⁵ TIŠLIAR, Pavol. Inštitucionalizácia pamäťových a fondových zariadení v 50. a 60. rokoch 20. storočia v okrese Rožňava: Príspevok k výskumu regionálnej kultúrnej politiky a kultúrnej stratégie 2. pol. 20. storočia na Slovensku. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo*, vol. 4 (2016), no. 2, p. 82 ff.

³⁶ ŠA Košice, p. Rožňava, f. Okresný národný výbor v Rožňave I., 1945 – 1960 (f. ONV RV I.), rada ONV RV, škat. 9, kniha 19, záp. z 22. júla 1952.

³⁷ For details, see TIŠLIAR, ref. 8, pp. 184-196.

³⁸ ŠA Košice, p. Rožňava, f. ONV RV I., rada ONV RV, škat. 9, kniha 21, záp. 24. januára 1953.

³⁹ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 212/1952.

⁴⁰ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 213/1952. Act DNC, Rada ONV v Rožňave z 22. 7. 1952 č. 377/52-R.

⁴¹ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 533/1953.

⁴² Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 624/1953.

⁴³ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 634/1953.

a part of collections is installed temporarily, later to be transferred to the empty intervention rooms)."⁴⁴ At the same time, she mentioned that the gatehouse building should be available from 1956, which includes a spacious apartment that could serve the archivist and his family.

The spatial problem of the manor house in this period was further worsened by the temporarily deposited collections of the former Mining Museum, which had formally ceased to function in 1950.⁴⁵ Nobody took care of these collections, although they were stored in a dry and suitable space but as repeatedly mentioned by the manager of the manor house, they were simply in the way. She repeatedly requested that the Mining Museum removed these collections.⁴⁶ It only happened when the museum began its renovation in 1955.⁴⁷

Despite the above-mentioned problem, space was created in 1954 for the location of the district archives. The archives received 8 rooms in the manor house, where archive material was gradually concentrated from the entire district.⁴⁸

Transfer of the Andrassy archives to Levoča

After the departure of A. Günther-Mayerová, the management of the State Cultural Property in Betliar was taken over by the district archivist J. Klincko in 1955.⁴⁹ His efforts were also aimed at keeping the Andrassy archives at Gemer, and especially at its incorporation into the funds of the District Archives in Betliar. But he was not successful. Since 11 October 1955, the final negotiations began in accordance with the Regulation of the Slovak Archival Administration of the Interior Commission to move the archive units from the castle and the manor house to Levoča. A registry from 13 October 13, 1955 proves that the local officials did not agree with the transfer. J. Klincko announced the DNC Council Resolution of 23 September 1955, which only agreed with the transfer of the agricultural archives and the economic register from Krásna Hôrka and Betliar to Levoča, but ordered the family archive to stay put.⁵⁰ Archival documents were to be sorted out by "the DNC experts in Rožňava". These experts included Ladislav Arany, who at that time tried to revive the former Mining and Metallurgical Museum in Rožňava⁵¹ and Jozef Špilda, who later became an employee of the District Archives in Betliar⁵² and finally J. Klincko as the district archivist.⁵³ Of course, the representatives of the Agricultural Archives did not approve this proposal.⁵⁴ However, the archive was eventually divided at the intervention of the DNC Chairman Miloš Filipovič, who stated that: "*The DNC is absolutely in favour of keeping the family archive and documents related to iron and mining industries in the Rožňava district.*" With regard to the archival documents of agricultural character, he stated that the DNC in Rožňava is not interested in them and they can be transferred.⁵⁵ Therefore, the family archive was kept in the castle in a sealed box, together with the Group A documents

⁴⁴ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 634/1953. Letter A. Güntherová-Mayerová, 28. 12. 1953

⁴⁵ TIŠLIAR, ref. 35, p. 80. ŠA Košice, p. Rožňava, f. Okresné múzeum v Rožňave (f. OMR), 1896 – 1960, sign. č. 702/1953, sign. č. 702/1953, 588/1953, 424/1953.

⁴⁶ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 634/1953.

⁴⁷ ŠA Košice, p. Rožňava, f. OMR, sign. č. 1143/1955.

⁴⁸ ŠA Košice, p. Rožňava, f. ONV RV I., rada ONV RV, škat. 12, kniha 25, záp. 5. 2. 1954.

⁴⁹ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, sign. č. 438/1955.

⁵⁰ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign. Act, 13. 10. 1955, Rada ONV č. č. 417-23/IX-1955 RA.

⁵¹ TIŠLIAR, ref. 8, p. 188.

⁵² *Významní ľudia narodení alebo pôsobiaci v Betliari*. J. Schlosár (ed.). Betliar 2011, pp. 17-19.

⁵³ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign. Act, 13. 10. 1955.

⁵⁴ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign. Act, 27.10.1955.

⁵⁵ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign. Act, 13. 10. 1955.

of the economic archives, and materials related to mining and iron industries. The Agricultural Archives took away the economic archives except for the A group, as well as the remaining patrimonial archive, designated to be mostly of agricultural character. Part of the archive that remained in Krásna Hôrka was moved to Betliar on 17 October.⁵⁶

But a few days later, something happened that no one expected. After the relocation and placement of the family and part of the Andrassy economic archives to Betliar, a truck has stopped at the castle on 26 October 1955. Several people got out of the truck, including the chief of the Slovak Archival Administration. He urged J. Klincko to show them how the archive is stored and how it is looked after. After the opening of the room in which the boxes from Krásna Hôrka were stored, the key was taken from J. Klincko by force and the chief of the Slovak Archival Administration arrested the district archivist with a pistol in his hand. He took the archivist to the office of the manor management, where he held him for more than a few hours, during which he blamed him for the situation while Klincko tried to explain that he acted solely according to the multiple decisions of the DNC Council in Rožňava and the instructions of the Chairman of the DNC Council. In the meantime, the remainder of the Andrassy archive, which was in the manor house, was loaded onto the truck. The commotion in the manor house and the truck loading was noticed by the castellan Karol Kišš, who went to the manager's office to ask what was going on. There, the chief of the Slovak Archival Administration also arrested him. Both Klincko and Kišš were only released after the announcement that all the material had already been loaded on the truck. The men then got in the truck and left the manor house.⁵⁷ Although it sounds unbelievable, the violent takeover of the rest of the Andrassy archive from Betliar to Levoča really happened. A detailed statement from the district archivist, as well as the negative and condemning reactions of the DNC in Rožňava, were preserved. In November 1955, the DNC in Rožňava also turned to the Ministry of Interior of the Czechoslovak Republic in Prague, asking for the remedy of the situation and return of the archival material taken.⁵⁸ The DNC Council did not give up in the years to come. A letter of the new Chief of the Slovak Archival Administration was even preserved from 1963, which tried to explain the relocation of the archive to Levoča as a legitimate way, since the archive as a confiscated unit belonged under the administration of the Agricultural Archives.⁵⁹ *“Considering the above-mentioned standards, the archive ... was taken from Betliar ... rightfully. This should have been done by the former Agricultural Archives, which was being constantly obstructed. We do not want to claim, and we do not claim that the way the takeover was done was right. The former chief of SAA ... was to use other forms and also assistance of political authorities and public administration in removing the obstacles that prevented him from complying with statutory measures and standards. ... The archive was to be located in Košice, but for the lack of premises it was temporarily located in Levoča where it was processed.”* Negative reactions to the forceful relocation were not only expressed by the public administration in the region but also by cultural institutions. For example, a report of the Mining Museum in Rožňava was preserved, stating that considering the nature of the documents, the Andrassy archive represents an important source for the history of mining and iron industries, and also expressing disapproval with the way that the archival documents were taken.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign. Act, 27.10.1955.

⁵⁷ Ibidem.

⁵⁸ Archív SNM, p. MB, f. MB, bez sign.

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

⁶⁰ Ibidem.

The non-standard acquisition of the remaining part of the archives and their transfer to Levoča was long resonating in the Rožňava region. Personal observers recalled it until recently, and this issue is still alive in the regional memorial institutes of the district. The Andrassy's archive was of great interest in the region, becoming an icon of time, a symbol representing the history of the region, something that is "our", our permanent collective property.⁶¹ It was necessary to take care of this icon. We cannot speculate on what it would be like if ... such judgement is not to be made by a historian, but the approach of the Slovak Archival Administration and the Archives of Agriculture was certainly incorrect, insensitive and, of course, it could never be understood in the Rožňava region. At present, the Andrassy archive is located at the Spiš Archives in Levoča, a specialized site, where it consists of two separate archive units, Andrassy from Betliar, 1569 - 1948 (81 meters of archival documents) and Andrassy (Krásna Hôrka), 1290 - 1948 (101.30 meters of archival documents).⁶²

References

Archival sources

Archive of Slovak National Museum, office Museum in Betliar

- f. Múzeum Betliar, 1945 – 1996

MVSR – Štátny archív v Košiciach, pobočka v Rožňave

- f. Okresný národný výbor v Rožňave I., 1945 – 1960

- f. Okresný národný výbor v Rožňave II., 1961 – 1990

- f. Okresné múzeum v Rožňave, 1896 – 1960

Bibliography

Informatívny sprievodca štátnych archívov Slovenskej republiky I. J. Ragačová (ed.). Bratislava : MVSR, 2000. ISBN 978-80-967553-7-4

KRIŠKOVÁ, Zdena (2015). Pamäťová inštitúcia múzea ako prostriedok formovania vzťahu ku kultúrnemu dedičstvu. In: *Studia Historica Nitriensia*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 483-490.

MARÁKY, Peter (2012). Múzeá s celoslovenskou pôsobnosťou. In: *Kultúrne krásy Slovenska : Múzeá 1*. Bratislava : Dajama. ISBN 978-8081-3600-46

TAKÁCSOVÁ BANYÁSOVÁ, Katarína – TIŠLIAR, Pavol (2017). Vznik a formovanie Štátneho kultúrneho majetku v Betliari. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo*, vol. 5, no 1, pp. 69-81.

TAKÁCSOVÁ, Katarína – MÁTÉOVÁ, Tímea (2015). Kaštieľ Betliar a hrad Krásna Hôrka po odchode Andrassyovcov. Konfiškácia majetkov a formovanie múzea. In: *Múzeá vo vojne. Druhá svetová vojna a jej dôsledky na činnosť múzeí a ich zbierky*. G. Podušelová – V. Majchrovičová (eds.). Banská Bystrica : Múzeum SNP, pp. 137-155. ISBN 978-80-8060-400-4

TAKÁCSOVÁ, Katarína (2013). Osudy historickej knižnice v kaštieli Betliar : odborné spracovanie a stav vedeckého bádania. In: *Z dejín šľachtických knižníc na Slovensku I.* Marcela Domenová (ed.). Prešov : PU, pp. 52-67. ISBN 978-80-555-0933-4

⁶¹ See for example KRIŠKOVÁ, Zdena. Pamäťová inštitúcia múzea ako prostriedok formovania vzťahu ku kultúrnemu dedičstvu. In: *Studia Historica Nitriensia*, vol. 20 (2015), no. 2, pp. 483-490.

⁶² *Informatívny sprievodca štátnych archívov Slovenskej republiky I.* J. Ragačová (ed.). Bratislava : MVSR, 2000, s. 177.

- TIŠLIAR, Pavol (2013). Aktivity Štátneho inšpektorátu archívov a knižníc na Slovensku pri budovaní archívnej organizácie (1919 – 1951). In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 37-56.
- TIŠLIAR, Pavol (2015). Inštalačný plán prvej expozície Okresného múzea v Rožňave. In: *Gemer-Malohont 11*. Rimavská Sobota : Gemersko-malohontské múzeum, pp. 184-196. ISBN 978-80-85134-43-8
- TIŠLIAR, Pavol (2016). Inštitucionalizácia pamäťových a fondových zariadení v 50. a 60. rokoch 20. storočia v okrese Rožňava: Príspevok k výskumu regionálnej kultúrnej politiky a kultúrnej stratégie 2. pol. 20. storočia na Slovensku. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 75-85.
- Významní ľudia narodení alebo pôsobiaci v Betliari*. J. Schlosár (ed.). Betliar 2011.