



**Article citation information:**

Rutkowski, M. Commencement of a new road network in the Kingdom of Poland in the period 1816-1817. *Scientific Journal of Silesian University of Technology. Series Transport*. 2017, **97**, 131-146. ISSN: 0209-3324. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20858/sjsutst.2017.97.12>.

**Marek RUTKOWSKI<sup>1</sup>**

## **COMMENCEMENT OF A NEW ROAD NETWORK IN THE KINGDOM OF POLAND IN THE PERIOD 1816-1817**

**Summary.** The main aim of this article is to introduce road repair and building programmes and procedures that took place in both the Kingdom of Poland, as a whole, and the Masovian Province, in particular. Starting with legal matters, this article describes the variety of combined activities on the part of the state government and local authorities undertaken between 1816 and 1817, which shaped the future development of Polish routes for many years to come.

**Keywords:** road network; Kingdom of Poland; 19th century

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The establishment of a new state entity, namely, the Kingdom of Poland, during the Vienna Congress of 1815 automatically implied the inauguration of a number of national and local economic projects of crucial structural importance. One of the main and most spectacular areas of government activity of the newly established state was the construction of a modern, state-of-the-art transport network. This process, which was extremely complex at the national level, involved: a) defining a general and specific legal framework, within which road construction would be effectively implemented; b) making overall arrangements with regard to the “dimensioning” (i.e., fixing the main directions of pathways), control and

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Social Sciences, University of Informatics and Economy, Society of Common Science in Olsztyn, Jagiellońska 59 Street, 10-283 Olsztyn. E-mail: [rutmarek@gmail.com](mailto:rutmarek@gmail.com)

technical aspects of construction of the transport network; and c) issuing government decisions concerning the repair and construction of specific roads and the supply of building materials, which were necessary for road construction purposes<sup>2</sup>. The local aspect of the constructing a transport network (which, in this article, is described in relation to the most representative of the whole of the country area of the Masovian Voivodeship) focused on issues such as: a) initial repairs to existing roads; b) assessing the initial repairs process; and c) proper “regulation” of the routes. The following paragraphs will attempt to describe these issues during the initial period of the repair and construction process of roads, i.e., from 1816 to 1817, both in the Kingdom of Poland as a whole and in the Masovian Voivodeship.

## 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A LEGAL BASIS FOR ROADWORKS IN THE KINGDOM OF POLAND

The first session of the then-government, i.e., the Administrative Council, which covered the initial technical conditions and rules for the construction of the Polish road network, was held on 12 March 1816<sup>3</sup>. The petition submitted on this matter by Tadeusz Mostowski, the head of the Government Committee for Internal Affairs and Police (Minister of the Interior), was passed by the tsarist state’s Governor General Józef Zająček, for consideration by the General Assembly of the Council of State, Warsaw’s main legislative body<sup>4</sup>. Very soon, namely, on 20 April 1816, a formal decision was made on the division of Polish roads into three types: large, secondary and minor/small roads<sup>5</sup>. On that same day, the tsar’s governor in the kingdom issued provisional regulations, defining the division of national roads (as stated above) into “big, secondary and minor/side” roads. The new law also defined the standardized dimensions of tracks to be used in the whole of the newly emerging road system. As precisely written in its legal preamble, this provision was issued “to facilitate communication” in the Kingdom of Poland. Another postulate clearly visible behind the issuing of new legislation was the profound need to meet the requirements expected for such a system of Polish transport communications, which would not only be wholly suitable for the economic conditions of the time, but also fulfil social expectations (in the original: “would be adequate to the task of improving public comfort”). Finally, it was stated that new law was introduced in consideration of the need for “making the country more beautiful”<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> i) Christiani F.K. *Extract from the Report on the Progress of Works Concerning Paved Roads in the Kingdom of Poland in 1819, 1820, 1821 and 1822*. No date and place of printing. ii) “State Council report of government activities since the time of last parliamentary session”. In: *Variety*. 23 September 1825, No. 38: 300-302. Lviv: Józef Bensa. “Reports of the State Council”. In: *Lithuanian Courier*. 13 June 1830, No. 71: 3-4. Wilno: Andrzej Bucharski. iii) Majewski J. “Paved and ordinary roads in the Kingdom of Poland”. In: *Technical Review* 26 (2): 32-33. Warsaw: Feliks Kucharzewski. iv) Nestorowicz M. “Conditions of roads for vehicles in the Kingdom of Poland”. In: *Technical Review* 50 (31): 409-414. Warsaw: Feliks Kucharzewski. v) Kowalczyk R. “Development of roads for vehicles in the Kingdom of Poland during the years 1815-1918”. In: *Review of Historic Sciences* 1 (5): 63-85. Łódź: Institute of History of Łódź University.

<sup>3</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 1: 486.

<sup>4</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 2: 50.

<sup>5</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 2: 38.

<sup>6</sup> *Dziennik Urzędowy Województwa Mazowieckiego*, 29 April 1817, No. 25: 281-282.

### 3. TRANSPORTATION NETWORK DECISIONS MADE BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FORUM BETWEEN 1816 AND 1817

#### 3.1. First legal solutions concerning transportation structure planning, construction and control of the road system by the state

One did not have to wait too long for any further government activity related to the construction and further expansion of the transport network in Kingdom of Poland. The first provisions describing detailed rules of works carried out in the construction of, and repairs to, routes were introduced by the Administrative Council at its meeting held on 15 May 1816<sup>7</sup>. Subsequently, after the Government Committee for Internal Affairs and Police prepared a thorough report on “dimensioning” of the main roads of the kingdom, the Ministry of Interior proposed that its key aspects be finally approval by the decisive authorities. Upon preliminary acceptance by the Administrative Council on 22 June 1816, General Zajączek decided to hand over the relevant documents to the Government Committee for Internal Affairs and the Police once more. On this occasion, it was envisaged that the ministry would issue some relevant instructions regarding “regulation” of the main transportation lines in the Kingdom, which would be done with the participation of local civil authorities<sup>8</sup>. In addition, the Administrative Council issued, on 8 April 1817, another four important provisions concerning the road repair process in the kingdom, with particular reference to upgrading the quality of street pavements in the capital, Warsaw<sup>9</sup>. On the basis of the above, it can be said that, between spring 1816 and spring 1817, the Kingdom of Poland adopted preliminary, yet binding across the whole country, solutions for the repair and construction of roads of all kinds.

One of the most pressing problems that occupied the minds of senior Polish authorities in the kingdom at that time was the alleged lack of skilled road construction and maintenance supervisors, as well as available working. With the foreseen and somehow expected lack of top-class specialists in the field, the Administrative Council decided, on 6 July 1816, to bring at least one person with the rank of conductor of roads from Austrian Galicia, as well as several people who would be proficient in the art of constructing transport routes<sup>10</sup>. From here, it can be said that, at the very beginning of the construction of the new road network in the kingdom, some “alien” examples were emulated, even if taken from controlled Polish territories following the partitions by Austria.

Due to the initial lack of candidates for the positions of road builders and inspectors, many of these posts were still unoccupied by 1817. Thus, budgetary savings in the state-owned road sector were reported. On that basis, on 7 October 1817, the Administrative Council made a surprising decision, under which - unforeseeable initially in the state budget - any wage increases for already employed inspectors and builders were to be covered by eventual savings made because of the lack of sufficient newcomers to take up jobs as builders of the transportation network<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>7</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 2: 91.

<sup>8</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 2: 152.

<sup>9</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 4: 222.

<sup>10</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 3: 2.

<sup>11</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 5: 164.

### 3.2. Decisions of the Administrative Council on repairing and constructing specific roads

In the Kingdom of Poland, the very start of the actual implementation of new road solutions was in May 1816. As early as 3 May of that year, the Administrative Council issued five resolutions on commencing Warsaw's street outreach programme, which paid particular attention to those streets that led to the city limits<sup>12</sup>. In order to strengthen the effect of its previous decision, on 20 May 1816, the government ordered that all the "economic roads" circumferencing Warsaw should be addressed<sup>13</sup>. On the same day, the Minister of the Government Committee for Interior Affairs and Police, Tadeusz Mostowski, presented to the Administrative Council an extensive report on the genuine progress made in repairing and rebuilding roads located in the neighbourhood of the Polish capital. At the same time, the minister explained why the transport authorities refused to agree to change the course of one of the roads in the vicinity of Warsaw, which presumably was intended to lead through the village of Rożniszew<sup>14</sup>. After resolving some of the disagreements related to the capital's transport network, on 13 July 1816, the Administrative Council issued an extremely significant, first order to change the course of the communication tracks, other than just in the neighbourhood of Warsaw. Such a decision concerned the expected changes to the course of the route leading from Prague to Serock, located on the banks of the Narew River<sup>15</sup>.

Initially, in some cases and specific regions of the country, there were some divergences in determining the scope of local roadworks. A similar situation was, for instance, analysed by the government on 10 June 1817, this time in relation to the Cracow Province<sup>16</sup>. As a result, in less than two weeks, the Administrative Council proclaimed "a guiding order", addressed solely to officers from the Polish Army Headquarters. It was decided on June 21, 1817, that they had to effectively cooperate with the civilian officials of Government Committee of Internal Affairs and Police, who personally run the road works program in the area of Cracow Region<sup>17</sup>. The changes to route tracks, which can be easily detected in the first phase of implementing the national programme for the construction of roads, confirms the obvious lack of a rigid and, in principle, steady and firm attitude of the authorities in relation to their basic plan for constructing the Polish transport network.

### 3.3. The decision of 11 December 1817 to deliver raw materials used in building the main roads leading from Warsaw into the Kingdom of Poland

It could be considered as an event of particular importance when, in the autumn of 1817, the government of the kingdom decided that it would commence overall construction works on Polish transportation network in spring 1818, focusing in the beginning on tracks leading from Warsaw as far as the first postal stations situated on selected routes. This decision was

<sup>12</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 4: 264-265.

<sup>13</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 4: 301.

<sup>14</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 4: 310.

<sup>15</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 3: 31.

<sup>16</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 4: 353.

<sup>17</sup> Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signature 4: 381.

made “with the intention of hastening the facilitation of land communication by the thorough arrangement of the main roads”. The following road sections were firstly to be built, starting from Warsaw: a) on the St. Petersburg main route: as far as the Jabłonna locality, via Praga, Karczma, Świdry and next to the village of Dąbrówka; b) on the Brest route: reaching the Miłosna locality, via the Grochów Turnpike and Wawer; c) on the Lublin route: as far as the Jeziorna locality, via Mokotów, Królikarnia, Wilanów and Powsin; d) on the Cracow route: reaching the Raszyn locality, via Raków; e) on the Poznan route: as far as the Ołtarzew locality, via Wola, Odelany, Jelonek, Chrzanówka, Karczma, Mory, Bronisze and Ożarów<sup>18</sup>.

On the basis of Provision No. 313/1 462 of the Government Committee for Internal Affairs and Police of 29 October 1817, it was decided to prepare in advance some of the necessary quantities of stones and gravel for roadworks to be undertaken in an area up to two miles from Warsaw’s city limits. In order to obtain possession of these supplies, the authorities decided to prepare a public tender for that cause. The best solution seemed to be to firstly organize an oral auction, where verbal declarations for the delivery of the necessary building raw materials would be heard. The Masovian Voivodeship Commission’s office buildings, located at 500 Podwale Street in Warsaw, were chosen as the place of this initial meeting, which was scheduled for 10 o’clock on the morning of 29 December 1817. Only after the initial oral declarations were officially made, alongside a presentation on the preliminary decision-making by the Government Committee for Internal Affairs and Police, was it possible to set a final deadline for a proper tender for the road building raw materials. The Masovian Voivodeship Commission even proposed to those individuals who wanted to undertake this task that “having come to participate in first stage oral declarations, [they] should rest for a few days in the capital in order to wait for the terms of the final auction”<sup>19</sup>.

The delivery conditions for the raw materials (namely, the aggregate crushed stones as well as some gravel) were as follows:

- a) The delivery for works undertaken on the St. Petersburg route was to be carried out at a distance of about a quarter of a mile from the road itself, directly from the banks of the Vistula River; the stones could be also brought from the terrain situated about two miles from the working site, namely, from the Wiązowna and Okuniew localities. At the same time, the authorities suggested the possibility of an easier delivery of the required stones by using the watercourse, mostly from other locations along the banks of the Vistula, or even from the vicinity of where the Pilica River flowed into the main Polish watercourse.
- b) Some gravel needed for the construction of the Brest route was supposed to be delivered from a range of different distances, varying from one quarter of a mile to two miles from the road. The stones could be delivered in this case by land from the vicinity of Wiązowna and Okuniew, and from the neighbourhood of the Miłosna locality, or possibly taken from the Vistula River coastal area.
- c) It was suggested that supplies of raw material needed for works on the Lublin route could be taken from a distance of about one mile from the built road itself, situated on the shores of the Vistula River. Some of the gravel and stones were to be delivered there by land, from the vicinity of Drwalew and Piaseczno localities.
- d) On the Cracow route, gravel delivery was expected to be accomplished from the neighbourhood of the Raków locality, while the stones themselves were to be taken from the area situated as far as two miles from the road.

---

<sup>18</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 15 December 1817, No. 74: 935.

<sup>19</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 15 December 1817, No. 74: 935-937.

e) The most difficult situation involved construction of the Poznań route, mostly because, in the vicinity of Warsaw, there were no nearby stone deposits suitable for a relatively easy supply for this main track. Furthermore, due to the considerable distance from the Vistula River, the delivery of stone raw materials via a watercourse was not practically available, taking into account the extremely high cost of such a combined logistical operation. Hence, the necessity to provide some gravel for the construction of this part of the Poznań tramway from the area of the Broniszewo and Ożarów localities emerged. Given the insufficient amount of raw materials, which were soon exhausted there, another place was identified, close to the Piotrówek locality and located two miles from the main road<sup>20</sup>.

The administrative rescripts presented here precisely described, in fine detail, the technical principles of the transport and storage of gravel and stones required for the construction of roads, extending beyond Warsaw. Gravel was to be brought in special boxes, with a cubic capacity of 8 ft<sup>3</sup>, manufactured by default by government craftsmen. Entrepreneurs received them from state administration representatives as reimbursement of costs spent on road construction.

In view of accepting the general principle that any public road with an official overall width of 21 cubits or less was to have in reality only 13 cubits of proper width, the Masovian Voivodeship Commission reiterated on 11 December 1817 that gravel should fill the middle of the road to a thickness of 12 in, before spreading it so that it “fell” on the edges of the road, where its thickness should not be less than 4 in. It soon became obvious that it was necessary to supply 45 standard wooden crates filled with gravel in order to properly cover the surface of the road with a length of one perch, equal to 15 ft, and with a width of 13 ells.

In the same rescript, it was pointed out that, in places where tracts were properly levelled and thus adequately prepared for gravel delivery, entrepreneurs should supply and dispose of gravel according to Article 4 of the same provision. In turn, where a new road was not properly prepared for it to be covered with raw or aggregated gravel material, entrepreneurs should be careful to count the exact amount of one ore, which was expected to fill the area of every perch, and to put the desired amount of gravel on the side of the road.

On the other hand, the stones had to be laid on the sides of the road in piles equal to the size of six cubits in length, three cubits in width, and one and a half cubits in height. It appeared that such a typical dimension of piles of stones was enough to pave the surface of a road measuring 1.5 ft in length and 13 cubits in width. Entrepreneurs were therefore called upon to deliver stones to these side road piles, bearing in mind such an approximate enumeration.

The authorities also claimed, in December 1817, that full economic freedom for all individuals (not only for the winning auctions’ entrepreneurs) willing to dig stones and gravel from all known and indicated local mines would be preserved. Even more importantly, the state administration took over the privilege of calculating the dues collected from usage of privately owned gravel or stone deposits<sup>21</sup>. It should be noted that, by securing, in late autumn 1817, the general conditions of the proper supply of raw materials, the Government Committee for Internal Affairs and Police laid a firm foundation for the widespread continuation of the recently commenced road network construction programme in the Kingdom of Poland.

---

<sup>20</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 15 December 1817, No. 74: 935-936.

<sup>21</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 15 December 1817, No. 74: 936-937.

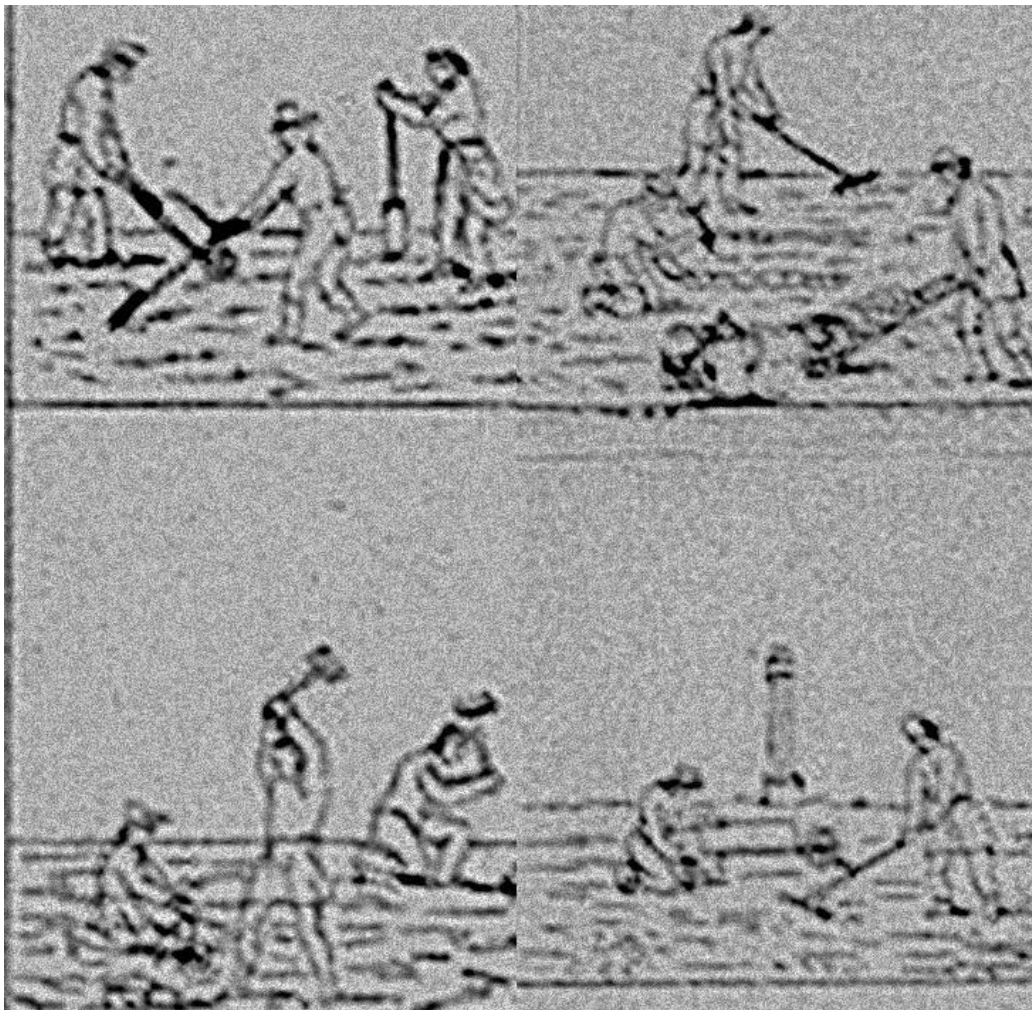


Fig. 1. Variety of road construction activities as drawn by Franciszek Ksawery Christiani in 1825<sup>22</sup>

#### **4. UNDERTAKING ROADWORKS IN THE AREA CRUCIAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORIAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK (MASOVIAN VOIVODESHIP)**

##### **4.1 General command of 20 May 1817 to commence rapid road repairs**

The available documentation confirms that the most important roadworks undertaken in the Kingdom of Poland, i.e., in the Masovian Province (not only because the capital of the state was located in its territory) started on a larger scale in the spring of 1817. According to the rescript of the Administrative Department of the Mazovian Voivodeship Commission of 20 May 1817 (No. 1343), at the explicit command of the tsarist state's Governor General Józef Zajączek, the province authorities ordered their district commissioners to carry out road repairs. These actions had to be continued in strict accordance with a detailed publication

---

<sup>22</sup> Christiani F.K. "The iron monument to commemorate the construction of the road from Warsaw to Brest Litewski. Drawing of a project for a monument, fragments of plates of the monument itself". Available at: <https://polona.pl/item/obelisk-zelazny-na-pamiatke-zbudowania-drogi-bitey-od-warszawy-do-brzescia-litewskiego,MzM3OTM4/0/#item>.

issued by Rajmund Rembieniński, head of the Masovian Province. This document, called the *Device (Manual) on Regulating and Improving the State of roads and public tracks*, was signed on 29 April 1817. Moreover, district commissioners were expected to improve the status of local transportation systems by carrying out “diligent work”. The aim was to meet a well-understood goal of increasing the economic capacity of the Kingdom of Poland, and the Masovian Province in particular, where a “decent and desirable order” would prevail. At the same time, the administrative authorities demanded that “every work would bear a sign of quality and permanent integrity, because every temporality in a similar undertaking becomes a burden to the country”. The Voivodeship Commission, at least formally having no doubts as to the real nature of the positive and creative commitment of local commune officials (as well as that of the so-called “general public”) to the issue of transportation network improvements, simultaneously ordered the chiefs of specific districts to use the strictest forms of execution against those “resisting” their new duties. Similarly, mayors were threatened with “exemplary” punishment when failing to properly fulfil their formal duties in terms of taking part in diverse procedures of rapid road repairs.

On 20 May 1817, the Mazovian Voivodeship Commission also called on those residents who, “having fallen in love with proper order, embraced the responsibility of road surveillance”, such that, especially in the very beginnings of their activity, they showed extraordinary zeal in meeting their entrusted duties. The promise was given that the most effective of these citizens were to be presented with an award by Governor General Zajączek himself.

Lastly, the authorities ordered that all detected “road deformities” would be adequately described (which, of course, was linked to the imposition of a suitable penalty on these responsible). Furthermore, the Masovian Voivodeship Commission announced a tour of all repaired and construction works to be undertaken in the second half of July 1817 by the voivodeship main engineer, as well as by the president or vice president of the voivodeship’s administrative structures<sup>23</sup>. In this way, in the spring of 1817, not only did the general idea occur to review and repair the existing roads in the Masovian Voivodeship, but also adequate and reliable control protocols of the ordered actions were assured.

#### **4.2. Moderate success of the initial repairs process of Masovian Voivodeship tracks during the spring of 1817 and the assessment of basic causes of this poor state of affairs**

Generally speaking, the newly commenced construction and “regulation” of roads in the Masovian Province were to be carried out in such a solid way that it would be possible to provide “a constant order, public comfort and a certain embellishment of the country”. While working on road construction, the local government hoped to bring about this important task to an effective ending, in the properly understood interest of local citizens and the Kingdom of Poland as a whole.

Despite these highfalutin announcements, the reality seemed to be somehow different, especially when, in the so-called “terrain”, a large amount of errors and inaccuracies in “designing” occurred, as well as changes in courses and even in the “restoration” of public roads. Consequently, on 30 May 1817, the Masovian Voivodeship authorities publicly issued a special notice (of an extraordinary nature) and ordered its widespread dissemination. In this

---

<sup>23</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 26 May 1817, No. 30: 365.



formal letter, the errors identified in the repair and construction of the transport network were strongly highlighted, mostly referring to existing legal regulations.

It was described, in this warning note, that, shortly after completion of the first stage of endeavours concerning improvements to the general condition of local roads, the President of the Masovian Voivodeship Commission, Rajmund Rembieliński, went on a tour that was supposed to allow him to see the eventual progress of transportation works in his province. This visit was carried out according to the previous announcement, which stated that such a tour was to be made after 15 July 1817. Unfortunately, the result was somewhat negative and highlighted significant irregularities in all of the repair and building processes. The main conclusion reached by Rembieliński was that, in spite of a) previously repeated “reminders” about how to conduct proper roadworks and b) the provisions of the Act of 29 April 1817, on the regulation and improvement of the transport network, these guidelines were not generally observed in the spring and early summer of 1817. According to the head of the Masovian administration, any constant and common will to follow government regulations concerning the “transportation matter” was not evident among many of the local inhabitants. It even transpired that, in the majority of visited places, the same errors were almost always repeated, which the authorities referred to in their previous explanatory note of 30 May 1817<sup>24</sup>.

From the carefully constructed analysis, a picture of two basic causes, gravely influencing this negative situation, emerged. The former cause referred strictly to the behaviour of officials of the state and local administration, who most probably did not pay enough attention when carrying out their tasks. Instead of being active, they restricted themselves to the exercise of their duties by simply distributing formal correspondence, including so-called “circulars”. In addition, these officials usually only dealt with their indoor office activities, rather than participate in the effort to monitor the progress of road investments in situ. The second group of difficulties prevailing at the time of the primary implementation of the transport programme in the Masovian Province was generally related to a rather selfish attitude among the local landowners of those areas through which new or refurbished roads were to pass. These landowners, while commonly holding positions as commune administrators of individual villages, or heads of whole economic and agricultural complexes, were strongly accused by the President of the Masovian Voivodeship Commission of deliberate sabotage (in the original: “weakening”) of state administration activities, aimed at upgrading Polish roads.

The negative attitude of the accused landowners was most often caused by a) a misunderstanding of their own interests, as they usually tried to protect themselves from a small piece of their private land being taken over by the state, or b) their willingness to avoid cutting down a few trees in their own forests (both of these examples often proved to be necessary to straighten the course of modernized or re-established roads). As a consequence, these accused individuals not only neglected any attempts by the local administration to improve the Polish road system, but also acted openly against the interests of the public good of the country as a whole, and especially of their own province.

According to Rajmund Rembieliński, any other reasons than those previously mentioned for such detrimental behaviour among noble owners of land estates and dominions may have been rooted in the Polish gentry’s well-known unwillingness to fulfil any command issued by the government administration (in the original: “harmful habit of opposing the government”). Another possible reason was the selfish need to act according to one’s own imagination and self-determined purposes and priorities (in the original: “willingness to act according to his

---

<sup>24</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 557.

own fantastic will”). For administrators of the time, both of the above-described reasons for negative behavioural attitudes among local landowners even seemed to have surprisingly been much more likely than any purely economic considerations.

The conclusion was obvious: the inadequate work of lower-level officials of the provincial administration, and the somewhat destructive attitude among landlords towards the very idea of road improvements, would not have left the government with any another alternative: as long as the authorities’ goals were met, it would act with a greater stubbornness and determination than before. Underlining the adequate amount of resources remaining at the disposal of the state, in order to carry on the transport enhancement programme (let us add: a programme aimed mostly at the proper development of the so-called “public wealth”), at the end of July 1817, Rembieliński openly announced the widespread use of economic and administrative coercion, directed against “reluctant” landowners. The head of the Masovian Voivodeship authorities also announced the recommencement of those works, which, at that point, had not been properly accomplished. The latter was motivated by the simple fact that, especially given the obvious appearance of considerable errors and omissions made so far in the road repair procedures, “the deeds wrongly taken and made must have gone to lay waste in a form of vain work”.

While including some thoughts of a rather philosophical nature to his arguments, on 20 July 1817, Rembieliński finally and wisely declared: “so the disregard of superior orders, instead of intended advantage, must bring about the damage itself”. Bearing in mind the sort of collective responsibility involved, he added that, “contrary to some citizens’ conviction, these innocent inhabitants must also suffer, even though they are overwhelmed by the desire of increasing of public good”. Thus, in a rescript issued on 20 July 1827, it was declared that, under any circumstances, the Masovian Voivodeship Commission would not give up, even for one step, in its pursuit of full implementation of the rules promulgated in “the law regulating roads” of 29 April 1817. The aim was clear: all those inhabitants who were suitable for that purpose must be engaged again, but this time in proper and adequate works concerning the development of the province’s road tracks. This, in turn, finally led to the simple liberation of all the inhabitants of the province from the unwelcome necessity regarding frequent participation in the future repair of poorly constructed roads. These possible, constantly repeated remedial works were not only considered as casual and urgent, but above all as being run without any profit. In addition, they deprived rural people of their time, which could otherwise have been used for suitable agricultural work<sup>25</sup>. As can be seen, the first-time regulatory works in road construction undertaken on a large scale in the Masovian Province during the Spring of 1817 ended up as a relative failure, which in turn provoked an angry reaction among the local authorities.

#### **4.3. Assumptions and orders to regulate routes in the Mazovian Province in the autumn of 1817**

This extensive deliberation on the state of roadworks in the Masovian Province at the end of July 1817 seemed to become a firm basis for drawing up, on 20 July of the same year, a series of official provisions relating to the continued pursuit of these endeavours. The new demands were developed and made public, not only to strengthen the already clear general position of the Masovian administrative authorities regarding the procedures and progress of works in the field of improving and enhancing the transportation network, but also to

---

<sup>25</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 557-558.

“enable” landowners to fully comply with all the combined formal requirements, and thus to “protect” them from possible legal and economic consequences of failure when following the existing rules.

Firstly, it was ordered that, in the period immediately following the harvest of 1817, the limits, regulation and literal erection of all public roads in the voivodeship should be defined. These roadworks, carried out in accordance with Article 2 of the Law of 29 April 1817, had to be carried out: a) on major and secondary national roads; b) on minor roads leading from one town to another; and c) on all roads leading from one village to another<sup>26</sup>. Secondly, the same width of both road tracks themselves and their side ditches had to be maintained during all the works undertaken in autumn 1817, again in full compliance with the provisions of the Act of April 1817. Thirdly, it was categorically forbidden, under threat of the complete loss of crops to be harvested in the disputed area, to continue with any further cultivation of agricultural land, which was purposely intended for inclusion in parts of the transport system (both main and ground roads). All categories of land were equally subjected to this disclaimer, which was published “without distinction on which sort of soil and in whose possession such an arable field would be found”. Fourthly, according to Article 4 of the 29 April 1817 rescript, the obligation burdening sectional guards, as selected by district commissioners, to mark the course of public roads of all three selected categories (i.e., main, secondary and minor ones) was restated. Fifthly, the lowest-ranking representatives of commune authorities were ordered (again according to Article 4 of the general instructions concerning the building of roads, dated as of April 1817) to proceed with the final settlement of roads leading from one village to another. It was also the responsibility of the governing representatives in specific villages, i.e., local commune administrators, to ensure that the typical regulatory and road signs on those roads were installed. Sixthly, district commissioners were forced: a) to verify in situ the state of road markings; b) to assess the quantity of gravel and other raw materials; c) to perform an assessment of the required storage location of these materials; d) to assess the required number of working days (corvée), as of autumn 1817; e) to show the specific locations of the works to be undertaken for pedestrians and driving carts to unpaid employees; e) to designate further necessary works in road construction, doing so in full accordance with the main principle of the commencement of works, starting with the most difficult and most demanding tasks, performed in the “worst” places. Seventhly, the district commissioners were ordered to distribute, by 15 September 1817, among particular municipal associations, all of the complete work schedules. These schedules were to contain very precise details of corvée duties, performed by inhabitants of each commune, municipality, manor or farmer’s quarters in the whole of October 1817. The lists of duties, distributed in such a manner to all interested corvée, formally included: a) a precise indication of the place of work; b) determination of labour time; c) indication of the name of the local supervisor, responsible for completing of the job<sup>27</sup>.

The Mazovian Voivodeship Commission added to its rescript, of 20 July 1817, a detailed list of the main, secondary and minor roads located in each administrative district of this province. The purpose was to precisely indicate the extent of the work envisaged in the autumn of 1817, as all the tracks mentioned in these lists had to be “straightened up and regulated”<sup>28</sup>. According to territorial affiliation to individual districts, the main and secondary roads provided for settling in the autumn of 1817 were as follows.

---

<sup>26</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 558.

<sup>27</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 559.

<sup>28</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 559-564.

Tab. 1

Main tracks provided for settling in the autumn of 1817 in the Masovian  
Voivodeship<sup>29</sup>

| District             | Main routes   |
|----------------------|---|
| Stanisławów District | From Praga to Wyszaków, via Kraszew, Niegów<br>From Praga to Liw, via Okuniew, Stanisławów<br>From Praga to Siedlce, via Mińsk, Kałuszyn  |
| Warsaw District      | From Praga to Zegrze, via Jabłonna<br>From Praga to Ząbki, via Kobyłki<br>From Praga to Okuniew, via Grochów<br>From Praga to Mińsk, via Grochów<br>From Warsaw to Sochaczew, via Błonie<br>From Warsaw to Bolimów via Błonie<br>From Warsaw to Rawa, via Raszyn, Nadarzyn, Mszczonów<br>From Nadarzyn to Nowe Miasto, via Tarczyn, Grójec, Mogilnica<br>From Warsaw to Mniszew, via Jeziorna, Góra |
| Rawa District        | From Mszczonów to Wolborz, via Rawę<br>From Mszczonów do Inowłodz<br>From Inowłodz to Łowicz, via Rawa, Skierniewice<br>From Łowicza do Piątku, via Bielawy<br>From Mogielnica to Nowe Miasto   |
| Sochaczew District   | From Błonie to Łowicz, via Sochaczew<br>From Błonie to Bielawy, via Bolimów, Łowicz<br>From Sochaczew do Złaków, via Rybno<br>From Sochaczew to Gąbin, via Kocierzew<br>From Łowicz to Główno<br>From Łowicz to Skierniewice  |
| Gostynin District    | From Sochaczew to Płock, via Gąbin<br>From Gąbin to Kowal, via Gostynin<br>From Sochaczew to Kutno, via Złaków<br>From Łowicz to Kłodawa, via Kutno, Krośniewice<br>From Płock to Gostynin and Krośniewice<br>From Krośniewice to Chodecz, via Dąbrowice  |
| Łęczyca District     | From Bielawy to Łęczyca<br>From Łęczyca to Zgów, via Zgierz<br>From Stryków to Kłodawa, via Łęczyca<br>From Kłodawa to Koło   |
| Kujawy District      | From Gostynin to Thorn (Toruń), via Kowal, Brześć, Służew<br>From Brześć to Kruszwica, via Radziejów<br>From Dąbrowice to Brześć, via Chodecz<br>From Kłodawa to Śleszyn, via Babiak, Sompolno  |

<sup>29</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 559-564.

Tab. 2

Secondary tracks provided for settling in the autumn of 1817 in the Masovian Voivodeship<sup>30</sup>

| District           | Secondary routes  |
|--------------------|---|
| Stanisławów        | From Praga to Garwolin, via Karczew<br>From Praga to Stoczek, via Wiązowna, Siennica, Latowicze<br>From Praga to Kosów, via Klębów, Jadów   |
| Warsaw District    | From Warsaw to Zakroczym, via Łomna<br>From Warsaw to Wyszogród, via Brochów<br>From Grójec to Białobrzegi  |
| Rawa District      | From Piątek to Piotrków, via Stryków, Łódź<br>From Inowłódz to Stryków, via Lubochnię, Brzeziny<br>From Stryków to Łowicz, via Głowno<br>From Rawa to Stryków, via Jeżów<br>From Rawa to Nowe Miasto<br>From Mszczonów to Skierniewice<br>From Łowicz to Piotrków, via Głowno, Brzeziny, Bąków<br>From Stryków to Łęczyca |
| Sochaczew District | From Sochaczew to Kiernozia<br>From Łowicz to Jeżów<br>From Łowicz to Gąbin   |
| Gostynin District  | From Sochaczew to Kutno, via Kiernozie, Żychlin<br>From Gostynin to Łęczyca, via Kutno<br>From Krośniewice to Łęczyca   |
| Łęczyca District   | From Łęczyca to Uniejów<br>From Łęczyca to Szadek, via Parzęczew<br>From Łęczyca to Kutno   |
| Kujawy District    | From Chodez to Włocławek<br>From Włocławek to Płock<br>From Włocławek to Nieszawa<br>From Włocławek to Sompolno, via Brześć, Lubraniec<br>From Włocławek to Kowal   |

According to the order issued on 20 July 1817, while going through the process of allocating workers to discrete road projects, local commissioners had to abide by the rules by firstly calling for those unpaid employees who lived in the immediate vicinity of the place of investment.

There was also a predicament whereby the whole process of regulation and straightening of all public roads might not have been wholly finalized before the end of autumn 1817. Nevertheless, under such circumstances, it would have been necessary to continually work on the main and secondary routes, irrespective of “how much force would be given to the corvée

<sup>30</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 559-564.

workers during the proper and intended time". It was simultaneously emphasized by the authorities that there was an absolute necessity to lay out all the roads (in the first, second or third categories) in the autumn of 1817. This had to be done, even if it was not possible to work on regulating and remodelling all these communication lines at the same time. Such a reservation did not, in any case, refer to the roads connecting the individual villages. These local road tracks had to be "immediately" brought to a proper state of usage, as these land roads did not require much of a workforce to be engaged, nor too many days involving corvée duties. In any case, everyone's basic responsibility was to ensure rigour, reliability and accuracy of the tasks performed, which, needless to say had to be implemented only in accordance with existing regulations. Works accomplished inaccurately and contrary to legal regulations were to be considered by the voivodeship authorities as being "non-existent". That said, the Masovian Voivodeship Commission restated, in July 1817, the key principle of the exclusion, from ongoing cart and pedestrian traffic, of those parts of recently regulated highways that provided completely new track routes. This rule was to be in force until the entire task of modernizing the transport network was finished<sup>31</sup>.

Finally, in order to ensure the effective application by district commissioners, departmental guards, workers, etc. of the main articles of the Act of 29 April 1817, the Masovian Voivodeship Commission reminded, in its rescript of 20 July 1817, of selected basic principles already in force in this province. Thus, some attention was drawn to the following issues. Firstly, it was required to straighten all roads (major, secondary or minor roads, leading from city-to-city roads), putting aside inns or villages, which were too far from the hypothetical straight line of old or completely new roads. Secondly, the standard width of all roads in the province was recalled: 21 cubits for the main roads, 18 ells for the secondary roads and 15 ells for the minor tracks. Thirdly, the ditches were ordered to be dug along the entire length of the main and secondary roads, while the minor roads were to have "trenches", albeit only in the muddy areas. It was pointed out that, when the two first categories of tracks were regulated, in the areas where they passed through sandy terrain, the sand taken from excavated ditches had to be removed from the road, so as not to make it "harder to drive".

Subsequently, seven other thematic groups were repeated in July 1817 by the Masovian authorities, referring to the Road Law of 29 April of the same year. This reminder had one essential purpose. As Rajmund Rembaliński openly threatened, persons responsible for the non-observance of road provisions had to pay administrative fines. The head of the Masovian Province administration "promised" even more serious consequences for poorly performed work: namely, any official who was directly responsible for an unacceptable public road section "depending on the gravity and scale of his offense of wrongly regulated road track would have to repair it on his own account"<sup>32</sup>.

Having detected, in July 1817, numerous irregularities made previously during the initial road repairing process, which took place in the Masovian Voivodeship earlier that spring, the local administrative authorities seriously addressed the problem of the further regulation of the transport network in this key province of the Kingdom of Poland. While announcing, on 20 July 1817, a wide range of roadworks for the autumn of the same year, the Masovian Voivodeship Commission did not forget anything that could improve, accelerate or control these endeavours, which were of such importance to the proper development of the Kingdom of Poland.

---

<sup>31</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, 30 July 1817, No. 45: 565.

<sup>32</sup> *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*, July 30, 1817, No. 45: 565-566.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

There is an astonishing divergence between the primary goals and actions undertaken in (Vienna) Congress Poland between 1816 and 1817 in the area of road repair and construction at the national and provincial level. While the national authorities articulated the basics of a new legal transportation framework and, with relative caution, decided to set out a schedule of roadworks for the majority of the Kingdom of Poland, the administration of most importance in the whole of the country, i.e., the Masovian Voivodeship, not only creatively developed far-reaching and detailed transport laws, but began repairing and then building its roads with a clearly passionate attitude. Regardless of the final results of these trials, it is obvious that the keen willingness to modernize the Polish transport network was not only a top-down idea, generated to some extent by: a) the tsar himself, acting at the same time as the “Polish king”, b) his governor, who presented himself as a representative of both the Polish elite and, above all, the Muscovite authorities; and c) the central government of this small part of Poland, which after partition and the “re-establishment” of its Vienna Congress origins, bore the name of the Kingdom of Poland. Hence, it only takes a small step to reach a surprising conclusion, confirming a full understanding of the necessity to build a fully modern and efficient transport network in Poland, as shared by Polish middle-level administrators at the turn of the second and third decades of the 19th century.

## References

1. Central Archives of Historical Record in Warsaw. *The Administrative Council of Kingdom of Poland (1816, 1817)*. Signatures 1-5.
2. Christiani F.K. *Wyciąg ze zdania sprawy o postępie robót około dróg bitych w Królestwie Polskiem: w latach 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822*. [In Polish: *Extract from the Report on the Progress of Works Concerning Paved Roads in the Kingdom of Poland in 1819, 1820, 1821 and 1822*.] No date and place of printing.
3. Christiani F.K. 1825. “The iron monument to commemorate the construction of the road from Warsaw to Brest Litewski. Drawing of a project for a monument, fragments of plates of the monument itself”. Available at: <https://polona.pl/item/obelisk-zelazny-na-pamiatke-zbudowania-drogi-bitey-od-warszawy-do-brzescia-litewskiego,MzM3OTM4/0/#item>.
4. *Dziennik Urzędowy Województwa Mazowieckiego*. 26 May 1817, No. 30. Warszawa: Komisja Województwa Mazowieckiego. [In Polish: *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*. Warsaw: Commission of the Masovian Voivodeship.]
5. *Dziennik Urzędowy Województwa Mazowieckiego*. 30 July 1817, No. 45. Warszawa: Komisja Województwa Mazowieckiego [In Polish: *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*. Warsaw: Commission of Masovian Voivodeship.]
6. *Dziennik Urzędowy Województwa Mazowieckiego*. 15 December 1817, No. 74. Warszawa: Komisja Województwa Mazowieckiego. [In Polish: *Official Journal of the Masovian Voivodeship*. Warsaw: Commission of the Masovian Voivodeship.]
7. Kowalczyk R. 2004. “Rozwój sieci dróg kołowych w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1815-1918”. In *Przegląd nauk historycznych* 1 (5). Łódź: Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego. [In Polish: “Development of roads for vehicles in the Kingdom of Poland during the years 1815-1918”. In *Review of Historic Sciences*. Łódź: Institute of History of Łódź University.]

8. Majewski Jn. 1889. “Drogi bite i zwyczajne w Królestwie Polskim. Ich budowa, utrzymanie i warunki dalszego rozwoju”. In *Przegląd Techniczny* 26 (2). Warszawa: Feliks Kucharzewski. [In Polish: “Paved and ordinary roads in the Kingdom of Poland. In *Technical Review*. Warsaw: Feliks Kucharzewski.]
9. Nestorowicz M. 1913. “Stan dróg kołowych Królestwa Polskiego”. In *Przegląd Techniczny* 50 (31). Warszawa: Feliks Kucharzewski. [In Polish: “Conditions of roads for vehicles in the Kingdom of Poland. In *Technical Review*. Warsaw: Feliks Kucharzewski.]
10. “Raport Rady Stanu”. In *Kurier Litewski*, 13 June 1830, No. 71. Wilno: Andrzej Bucharski. [In Polish: “Reports of the State Council”. In *Lithuanian Courier*. Wilno: Andrzej Bucharski.]
11. “Raport Rady Stanu z działań rządu od czasu ostatniego sejmku Królestwa Polskiego”. In *Rozmaitości*, 23 September 1825, No. 38. Lwów: Józef Bensa [In Polish: “The State Council report of government activities since the time of the last parliamentary session. In *Variety*. Lviv: Józef Bensa.]

Received 03.09.2017; accepted in revised form 29.10.2017



Scientific Journal of Silesian University of Technology. Series Transport is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License