

Chronology of Zamość Synagogue

1588: Jan Zamojski gave various privileges to Sephardic Jews, including permission to build a synagogue made of stone.

The first synagogue was probably a wooden one.

According to historians of architecture and art the synagogue preserved to this day was built in about 1610-20

Then it comprised only the main hall and an attic (see drawing: “próba rekonstrukcji pierwotnego stanu 27.1.06“).

In the second half of the 17th century, the northern women gallery (Ezrat Nashim) was added to the main hall (see Miłobędzki, I, p. 306, draw. 125 and Piechotkowie p. 157, draw. 180). In the northern women gallery, it is still possible to see on the south wall the pilasters and socles, which were once outside along the north wall of the main hall and also in the anteroom. At the same time the main hall was connected to the women's gallery by openings, which looked like windows. Perhaps the Ark of the synagogue as we know it also goes back to that time. We do not know whether the southern room for women was added at that time, or later; according to the measurements of Ajzenberg and Hubel in 1933 it was added later, we do not have older pictorial sources about this. The anteroom was probably built later than the northern room for women.

In the 18th century or at the beginning of the 19th century, owing to the growing number of members of the community, an additional room for women was added to the northern room, together with an additional room. These upper additional rooms were connected to the main hall by its windows, which meant that the main hall became considerably darker. In connection with this, the ridge/saddle roof, preserved on drawings, was also built. At this time additional rooms were built onto the anteroom. (See Piechotkowie, p. 157, pict. 178; p. 159, draw. 181, but there the ridge/saddle roof is missing).

1788: The 'bimah', preserved on drawings, was built.

The 19th century: In the main hall near the western wall there was a wooden gallery for a choir.

The Nazis totally destroyed the whole interior of the synagogue.

After Second World War, the following work was carried out:

- Demolition of the room added to the northern room for women.
- Demolition of the whole southern annex to the main hall and building of a southern room for women according to the model of the old northern one.
- Demolition of the ridge/saddle roof, reconstruction of the attic and building of the new roof.
- Prolonging to the floor the openings to the main hall that looked like windows. Installation of a modern heating system.
- Various types of preservation and repair work.

Today's attic:

Today's attic is a reconstruction based on the remains, found during the demolition of the ridge/saddle roof under it. This means – if the reconstruction is correct - that the cube of the synagogue had such an attic before the ridge/saddle roof was built. But the partitioning and the low ceiling of today's attic is neither adequate for the partitioning of the walls of the main hall nor for the method of partitioning at the beginning of the 17th century. Consequently, the original attic must have been higher and partitioned differently.

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