Timbered Architecture in the Regions of the Waldeutsche Settlements

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Abstract. The centuries-old Polish history, its complicated fortunes and borders changing over the centuries have caused the cultural heritage to be a reflection of the fate of the inhabitants, the intermingling of ethnic groups and the common formation of the culture of the region. The cultural area of southern Poland is particularly full of layers, where diverse historical and geographical influences blend together. That is why the presence of the common construction type for the wooden objects on the two ends of southern Poland, in two different geographical realms, is such an interesting testimony of the Polish cultural melting pot. The main area of the occurrence of the Timbered architecture is the borderland of Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland. This type of houses was built for the first time in the Middle Ages in the area of Upper Lusatia, then this type of housing has spread to northern Czech Republic and the western part of Lower Silesia. In Poland, there are two main clusters of the occurrence of timbered structures: in Lower Silesia and in the Subcarpathian province, where this type of buildings has been rooted with the German settlers, called the Waldeutsche in this area. The colonisation was also accompanied by the model of settlement village systems moved from the west, the development of the plot, and this specific type of construction. The architecture of the Jasielsko-Sanockie Valleys and the Dynowskie foothills is an interesting, though a very poor form in relation to the Sudeten houses, as the architecture non-recurring in other Polish regions has been formed as a result of the intermingling of the cultures. In this area, the houses and farm buildings with the timbered structures were used most often by farmers and they were not too impressive, so that the residents did not notice their uniqueness. Today, in the natural landscape, they disappear one by one, as a result of lack of maintenance and the replacement of the old materials with objects of a newer technology. Buildings preserved to this day should be under special protection, because due to the small number of such facilities and the lack of a natural continuation of construction forms by the representatives of the ethnic groups, they are relics of the Polish history.

1. Introduction
The cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, is a record of historical changes, layers and coexistence of cultures. The centuries-old history of Poland, its complicated fortunes and borders changing over the centuries have caused the cultural heritage to be a reflection of the fate of the inhabitants, the intermingling of ethnic groups and the common formation of the culture of the region. The cultural area of southern Poland is particularly full of layers, where diverse historical and geographical influences blend together. The area of influence of the Lusatian culture has mainly covered the settlement on the Polish territory (including southern Poland) and the areas of other countries (modern) adjacent to it, among others, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Germany.¹ As a result of the development of the art of construction and thanks to the penetration of the different

¹ These are the common cultural roots of the countries creating the European cradle, however, the Lusatian culture has been very diverse internally and the direct references or comparisons are not indicated.
cultural elements over the centuries, a specific construction technique has been developed, characteristic of this type of influence contact. Timbered houses are a characteristic combination of the Slavic log construction with the half-timbered technique derived from Germany. This technique, as more than local building, which was functional and universal – had the possibility to be used even in complex soil conditions, has been adapted to the area of current Subcarpathian region by settlers from the area of Germanic influences.

2. Conditions and historical background

The presence of a common construction type of the wooden facilities on two ends of Poland, in two different geographical realms, is an interesting testimony of the cultural melting pot. This type of houses were built for the first time in the Middle Ages in the Upper Lusatia2, then this type of housing has spread to the northern Czech Republic and the western part of Lower Silesia (Figure 1). The design versatility of the timbered buildings is based on the separation of loads between the floors of the buildings. The essence of these facilities is the fact that the upper floors are based on the so-called timbers, that is arched supports (poles) surrounding the wooden log chamber. The wooden “crate” of the logged chamber is surrounded by pillars and its does not perform a bearing function for the roof and/or the higher floor. This design allows the use of craft for the functions (e.g. a weaving mill, sorting plant, etc.) in which the vibrations transmitted from the devices could weaken the structure or threaten it.

In Poland there are two main clusters of the occurrence of timbered structures: in Lower Silesia and in the Subcarpathian province, where the type of building was transferred along with the German settlers, called the Walddeutsche in this area.

![Figure 1. The diagram presenting the range. Author’s development based on the map “Deutsche Besiedlung Klempolens und Rotreuβens im 15 Jarhundert” by Kurt Lück. Legend: 1.- Main cities; 2 – More important towns; 3. – villages existing independently and colonies by the Slavic villages; 4. – areas for the German colonisation; 5, - the then state border; 6. – major rivers](image)

3. The study area

The main area of the occurrence of the timbered building is the border between Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland. The first wave of German settlement in the area designated for the research took place in the late Middle Ages. Some towns and villages located under the so-called German law were founded by German settlers. German colonization was characterised by two forms of settlement.

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2 Watching the archaeological reconstruction of the objects of the Lusatian culture (even very distant from the places discussed in the article) from this period, we cannot help noticing the analogy in the outer structure.
systems in the Lesser Poland and present Subcarpathian regions – this was the village layout, so-called Waldhufendorf, and the multi-street village. Waldhufendorf is a form found in the settlement systems founded by colonists on the “Greenfield”. Multi-street villages were usually formed as a result of the adaptation of Slavic settlement systems. (table.1)

**Table 1.** The set of the participation of German villages and colonies in the areas of Eastern Europe in the XVI century. Own study based on: Kurt Lück: Deutsche Aufbaukräfte in der Entwicklung Polens. Forschungen zur deutsch-polnischen Nachbarschaft im Ostmitteldeutschen Raum, Posen 1934

| REGIONALIZATION | CITIES WITH A GERMAN POPULATION ETHNIC GROUP | VILLAGES OF GERMAN COLONIZERS | SLAVIC VILLAGES WITH GERMAN SECTOR | GERMAN COLONIES BY THE SLAVIC VILLAGES |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| LESSER POLAND   | 66                                          | 70                            | 7                                 | 7                                   |
| RED RUTHENIA    | 38                                          | 61                            | 31                                | 4                                   |
| PODOLE          | 2                                           | x                             | x                                 | x                                   |
| VOLYN           | 3                                           | x                             | x                                 | x                                   |

German settlers between Wisłoka and San were called the Walddeutsche. Colonization was also accompanied by the model of plot development and type of construction moved from the west. Objects with a characteristic shape and structure have a lot of names to this day: in Poland, they are called the Lusatian houses or timbered houses, in Czech they are referred to as the “podstawkowy dům”, and in German as Umgebindehaus.

4. **Reasons and the present spatial context**

In 1772, the southern part of the territory of the Republic of Poland came under the rule of the Habsburgs as a result of the I Polish partition. One of the elements of the invader’s policy was to settle in these lands by people loyal to Austria – mainly Germans and to a much lesser extent, the Czechs. This was to affect the subordination of the seized lands, and to raise the economic level of the region. The colonization plans have already been developed at the times of the Empress Maria Theresa, which was culminate by the publication of the patent in 1774 encouraging artisans and merchants to settle in Galicia. This law included both Roman Catholics and Protestants, while the Roman Catholic settlers were allowed to settle anywhere, and the Protestants could only settle in Lvov, Jaroslaw, Zamość, Zaleszczyki, Kazimierz and Brody. Although the sizes of the colonization at the times of Maria Theresa were small. Only after her death, during the reign of Joseph II, the colonization developed on a much broader scale, issuing separate patents. The patents, called Josephine, introduced a series of changes. The tolerance patent was very important (1781), which allowed the non-Catholics to have their own schools, temples, pastors and teachers. The Josephine patents have provided an additional series of legal and financial privileges for settlers of German origin. With these privileges, the mass influx of colonists from Austria and Germany to Galicia started in the spring of 1782 (Figure 2).

5. **The study area**

The architecture of the Jasielsko-Sanockie Valleys and the Dynowskie foothills is an interesting, though a very poor form in relation to the Sudeten houses, as the architecture non-recurring in other Polish regions has been formed as a result of the intermingling of the cultures. According to F. Kotula (page 41) a statement can be quoted that essentially “the timbered house comes in two varieties, rural and urban. The rural house is a two-winged building, when the clean through hall is the transverse axis. In one wing there is a residential part, and in the second wind, the economic part, which may consist of two chambers, or a chamber and a barn, or something else.

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3 The Walddeutsche – an ethnographic group of the German-speaking population rooted in the Polish Carpathians since the late Middle Ages. The Walddeutsche have largely succumbed to the Polonization until the times of partitions, the total assimilation occurred in the XVIII century.
Figure 2. The distribution of the centres of populations of the German origin in the times of annexation in the Subcarpathian region. Developed based on: “Ethnographic map of Austria-Hungary (census 1880)(Galicia-Handatlas Andrees 1881): Legend: 1.- an area with the majority of the Polish population; 2. – the areas with the majority of the Ruthenian population; 3. – enclaves of the German population; 4. – more important towns; 5. – rivers; 6. the Vistula river

The roof is based on four pairs of poles, of which the central pair is the closest to each other, connected with the bolts and swords in the middle and with purlins on top. Bolts and swords run on the edge to the outside of the bridgehead walls (Figure 3), while the inner ones through the hall”. In the area of Rzeszów “…a German ethnic group has been formed furthest east in the Polish country already in the Middle Ages (not including the cities of Lvov and Przemyśl). Such strong clusters were neither present in Lesser Poland nor in Greater Poland, they could probably match the German colonies in Silesia or Pomerania. Thanks to their late formation and power, the island was well throughout the XV and XVI century, and only at the end of this period it started undergoing Polonization.”

Timbered houses located in the region of Saxony, Zittau or Jizera Mountains have a developed form corresponding to their fate, as this building accompanies the craft or these were urban houses. In the region of south-eastern Poland the rural residential and economic buildings dominate. Settlements in the area of Tri-borders of Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic differs from the previously described historical type of villages in the Lesser Poland and Subcarpathian region. The field system in the Sudeten region and the activities related to the farm work affected the appearance of the landscape with a dispersed housing, which belongs to the typical characteristics of the Sudeten villages. Since the mid-XIX century, small centres of mountain habitats began to thicken. Therefore, in the remaining mountain habitats different spacing between the houses is typical to this day.

The shortened classification of these objects with the timbered structure allows the determination of three groups of buildings. The first one is the floor building with log walls and roof supported on pillars. Another group includes the floor objects with a knee wall raised above the floor’s ceiling with a visible structure of a wooden truss. The third group are the storey buildings with the timbered-log structure of the ground and the transom floors.

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4 Swords (Piętnary) – it is a hardly ever used regional name that identifies a wooden diagonal structural element, stiffening two angled elements of the frame or truss, connected with them on the plate (usually as a dovetail). If there is no clearance between the design node and the small sword, this kind of bracing is called a dog. In the case of symmetrical struts, the name of stirrups can be encountered.

5 Z. Kaczmarczyk “German colonization east of the Oder”, Publishing House of the Western Institute, Poznan, 1945, p. 126

6 Regularly along the line designated by the local road or a stream only the mountain houses were located in the older cornfield villages, Rokytnice upon Jizerou. The oldest building of the Jizera Mountains was formed in the shallow river valleys of the Směda, Jeřice and Nysa rivers in the northern and western foothills
Figure 3. A timbered house with a beautifully preserved structure – open-air museum in Markowa near Łańcut

Most objects preserved to this day originate from the Polish-Czech-German region, where they were founded in the XIX century, when the timbered architecture was experiencing a boom. To this day, there is probably approx. 17,000 buildings of this type. Most timbered houses have been preserved in the eastern part of Saxony, where approx. 6200 have been inventoried so far. In the Czech Republic there is approx. 3600 of such objects. In Poland, approx. 400 of these houses have been described so far, however this is not a complete list. The Poland’s biggest assemblage of timbered buildings is located in Bogatynia. There is approx. 200 of them, of which 85 are in the register of monuments. In this region, the Association of the Kołodziej House takes care of the tradition and preservation of objects apart from the conservation authorities.7

Timbered houses – in the Subcarpathian region (Rzeszów houses), unfortunately, do not have such support. The only protection of the disappearing architecture are the open-air museums. In this area, there are two that present the regional resources: The open-air museum “Museum of Folk Architecture” in Sanok and the open-air museum of the Rzeszów village located in the Markowa village8, near Łańcut - where the thatched houses were moved, lower ones, usually without the pediment roof, not so impressive as the western forms (figure 4). In this area, the houses and farm buildings with the timbered structure were most often used by farmers and were not very impressive, so that the residents did not notice their uniqueness. In the Markowa village, many wooden houses from the XIX and the beginning of the XX century were preserved, with a characteristic timbered structure. Such structures were not found in other regions of Rzeszów.

7 Has conducted the activities successfully since 2006, which aim is to promote the timbered-log architecture as a unique cultural heritage of the Silesian-Upper Lusatian border. Among others, within the “Information and promotion cross-border campaign, of the Polish-German Land of Timbered houses” within the Small Projects Fund in the Euro-region Polish Nysa – Saxony 2012-2014 the offer of architectural designs has been formed, which were selected from the competitions, which are donated for a symbolic one zloty to people, who will relate to the timbered house while building their home in this region.

8 A village located in the Subcarpathian region, in the Łańcut district. It was a village located under the German law and settled by settlers from Upper Saxony, Lusatia and Upper Silesia. Markov lies on the Subcarpathian Path of the Wooden Architecture.
Figure 4. The agricultural property with the timbered structure moved from the village of Nożdżec near Brzozów to the open-air museum in Sanok

They disappear one by one in the natural landscape as a result of the lack of maintenance and the replacement of the old materials with objects in a newer technology.

6. Conclusions

Poland was a very open and multicultural country; it was a homeland for the ethnicities rooted here. Both villages and cities had a lot of ethnic minorities. The history they created together was the heritage of all groups and it should be perceived like his today. Buildings preserved to this day should remain under special protection, because due to the small number of such facilities and the lack of the natural continuation of construction forms by the representatives of the ethnic group they are the relics of Polish history.

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