Traditional Farms as Element of Rural Areas Landscape Identity

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Traditional Farms as Element of Rural Areas Landscape Identity

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Abstract. Cultural landscape of rural areas is one of the elements of civilization heritage. While so it should be respected and protected. Not only by creating of conservation protection areas but also by creation. Over the millennia characteristic settlements have formed of rural areas using their own system or systems. Traditional buildings (farms and huts) are a component of the landscape-architectonic heritage of them. One of the tools that save cultural and architectural tradition continuity on rural areas is correct perception while observe still existing, sublimated by ages traditional forms that are expressions of material culture. Polish country still possesses values that disappeared or destroyed in another’s countries.

1. Introduction

Rural areas in Poland are the territories that are situated outside the city administrative borders. Population density criteria are also taken into account. After become a member of the European Union in Poland following comparison criteria for rural and urban areas recommended by OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) is used - population density factor: Areas, where population density is less than 150 people per 1 sq. km are treated as rural areas. In parallel, also for comparison, areas treated as rural areas are ones where population density is less than 100 people per 1 sq. km. Used once basis country (rural areas) definition that attributed is connection inhabitants to soil are not valid any more. While we would like to include and protect that diverse landscape and cultural values that are the evidences of its attractiveness, another criterion appears – area development equals to the way of area usage. Significant is to remind that not only because of characteristic for rural production seasonal work population of those areas didn’t live only on agriculture. Specific for country high level of economic self-sufficiency require favouritism tools that will decrease production and increase circulation of work for balanced progress of all areas of economy and keep the community equilibrium. Tools that are directed, not only on rural areas, on maintenance and restoration of systems equilibrium. All resources are limited. Therefore, all of investments in region marked with long-term rationality should provide accordingly to the space optimal continuous progress of region itself as well as a space including all elements that create that space.

According to the latest research (2014, 2015) rural areas cover 93% (territories outside the city administrative borders), 91% (up to 150 people per sq. km) or 86% (up to 100 people per sq. km) territory of Poland. It is said that rural areas are occupied by 39,7% of population what gives 15253,67 thousand people presently. Comparing to 2006, the number of rural population increased by about 506 thous. (whereas the number of urban population decreased by nearly 153 thous.) [1], [2]. This was a consequence of two factors: a positive natural increase caused by higher fertility of families and a
positive net migration. Proportion between rural areas population and the population total lasts constant aside from small fluctuations since 1990. Phenomenon of that proportion increase has been noticed in some European counties. It has to be considered while following community events occur: mortality rate increases due the environment pollution, population ageing, wealth rate increase and migration from countries to cities decrease. Outflow from cities to areas "near cities" (rural areas) is being noticed. Attractiveness as a place to live and invest is increases. Rural areas located near large cities have higher population density, high positive net migration, lower share of the unemployed, better equipment with communal installations in comparison to remote rural areas.

Also, unwanted effects of processes mentioned above must be considered. They can cause areas where investments performed diminish. Settlement dispersion and disperse villages rise can be already noticed. Moreover, rural areas population percentage factor increase is caused by both migration to cities (work searching) and continuous increase productive age population while global (country) fertility rate decrease.

Investment attractiveness of given subject can be measured with economy tools by corresponding analysis attractiveness methods use. Investment attractive region is an attractive place of living, work and leisure. Regardless of used method architectural and physical rural areas culture values presented by examples of traditional farms should be considered in performed analysis or region investment attractiveness models. It is worth to remember that each region is unique, and unification leads to its degradation. Variety, historical continuity, order, harmony of each single element and unique attributes proclaim its quality. Regional diversification of unchanged environment, variety of its goods, cultural heritage and tradition can be evidences that confirm space attraction.

2. The variety of traditional rural architecture

Architecture, art that binds functionality, shape and construction in homogeneous work that is exposed and lives in definite space - environment, should provide spiritual and material satisfaction of human. Since begin while protecting itself and its property, mankind used and transformed whole environment. One of the tools that save cultural and architectural tradition continuity on rural areas is correct perception while observe still existing, sublimated by ages traditional forms that are expressions of material culture.

Figure 1. Kurpie traditional huts from the nineteenth/twentieth century in the Museum of Kurpie Culture, Kadzidlo: a) hut from Golanka, b) hut from Brzozowy Kąt, [3]

Attractiveness of rural areas in Poland enhances due the still existed examples of traditional rural building like cottages or homesteads. They determine cultural variety that occurs in area of architectural form. Its maintenance allows rural landscapes protection and keeps settlement variety. Traditional cottages and homesteads differ in each region of country as different is landscape itself. Kurpie cottage is not like Podlasie (Figure 1, Figure 2). Krakowska (Cracow) is different from podhalańska (Podhale) although both areas abut. Cottage (form seems to be unchanged) is poor and simple. This poorness and simplicity are constituting its richness and variety. Variety of material and construction, shape and used
Architecture of traditional, build and grown in given region hut, define its uniqueness and place self-existence. Symbols of place are repeatedly the key of understanding the life space of given population. It binds both spiritual and materials areas in one. Traditional cottage defines unique places that allow keeping the identity and protecting from its loss.

Figure 2. Podlasie inhabited traditional huts erected and characteristically decorated from the twenties of the 20th century: a) hut in Trześcianka, b) hut in Soce; commune Narew, county Hajnówka, condition in 2014 (photo: M. Drożdż-Szczybura)

Place (homely) tradition means maintenance of cultural landscape and continuation of identity. Attribute of present day should be rational compromise. While we would like to protect cultural heritage, we cannot reach only for present civilisation attributes even due to positive motives. In modern world it is important how it treats the history. Not only the monumental one: cathedrals, castles or palaces, but also that poor and simple: cottages and huts. How it treats the history of ordinary day and ordinary people.

Significant is inter alia to predetermine, prognoses and plan how present traditional buildings will affect the selected areas of investment attractiveness of region, particular recognition of resources, its valorisation and enhancement and according to that providing correct legislation tools that will invite and stimulate not only its behaviour but also correct progress and continuation of architectonical tradition of present day material culture in rural areas. Scientific-research works guided inter alia by museums and ethnological institutions are focused through the nature of matter on maintenance and protection the objects. In that matter following dilemma should exist: "heritage or expansion". Present traditional buildings of rural areas are not only the factor of their identity, but it also should be one of the factors of progress positive stimulation in wide spectrum.

3. Selected methods of preservation of existing traditional buildings in rural areas

Investment processes and planning operations those take into account traditional buildings as a factor that increase investment attraction for both regional and local levels should be homogenous and coordinated. Only then consolidation of landscape and cultural values referring with spatial order preservation is possible. Isn't it high time to come from devastation to restoration phase? Should those couple of cottages and huts find their place in open-air museums but the great part of the rest should irrevocable disappear? Those kinds of operations will not increase rural areas attraction. Pointless and mistake would be moving all of those valuable huts (a lot of them still exist) to open-air museums, protecting them in situ, attaching to them only cultural and social functions - it's obvious. But nothing is against to use existing tools, create develop incentives systems, enhance that meaning and increase founds for correct actions of still existing huts and homesteads owners.

Important is also legislation problem - sensitive demesne subject. Creation of unitary and clear law system that will motivate owners to perform actions that would protect and improve connected with that
place architectonical solutions is necessary. Important is creation of develop incentives systems and motivation tools for correct modernisation and using of existing traditional architecture sources in rural areas. System directed to owners as well as to institutions and local autonomies. But case refers not only for founds but also for correct education. Especially while tool for creation of spatial order is spatial planning with local autonomies acting while according to agree for given area progress strategy (Development Strategy of the Community) or spatial planning project (Study of Conditions and Directions of Land Management and Local Spatial Development Plan), renovation of rural areas and cultural heritage protection proposals are processed while initiated by rural areas inhabitants and receive local autonomy opinion (rada sołectwa – Village Administrator’s Office Council). Afterwards they are reported through communal autonomy agency.

![Figure 3. Adaptation of an already non-existent homestead (old courtyard farm) in Białka Tatrzansa (Podhale) to a sculpting workshop. Student's project (stud. N. Pfont, A. Walczyńska), the merits protection M. Drozdź-Szczybura](image)

Therefore, correct architecture education is crucial. Country present as a material cultural heritage, where important places are reserved by windmill, barn, granary, cottage and homestead. Learning about native country architecture since the first levels of education (Figure 3). Responsible and correct learning about designing the rural areas.

Traditional cottages and whole homesteads that occur in rural areas and their single elements – livestock buildings, storehouses and warehouses (barns, granaries and others) besides the open-air museums, where exhibitions and in less part other functions are realised (Figure 1), can and should be saved through the:

1. first or so called "second houses" (keeping in place where built or moving) - those objects bears reside and recreation type functions and in limited range also not-agricultural production and service ones (home plus workplace);
2. agrotouristic, ecotouristic and ecologic homestead - objects bears residence-agricultural type function and non-agricultural one - production and service, in limited range museum-exposition;
3. summer resort village - objects bears residence and service type functions, in limited range museum-exposition.

In case of each group pointed above correct modernisation and adaptation actions need to be performed - conservation, architectonical and planning.

**4. Traditional rural buildings and agritourism**

Using of present resources of traditional rural areas buildings - huts and cottages – considerably increase agro tourism attractiveness. In agro tourism client is looking for folk, country roots of place that he reached, assurance of privacy and possibility of association with traditional local landscape.
Comparison made by Wielkopolska Agricultural Advisory Center in Poznań (Wielkopolski Ośrodek Doradztwa Rolniczego w Poznaniu) showed, that from two rooms with similar standards more interesting is that one, that represents traditional architectonical style of country houses, has sloping, covered with tile or thatched roof or porch [4].

Agro-tourism farms make ca. 1% of total farms in Poland [5]. Progress of agro tourism isn't only the profit for farms owners. According to the fact that a lot of services have to be assured, its progress is stimulated. That influence provides boom in that region if region itself can use correct elements of attractiveness. Here is the place for protection and promotion of local articles that is a one of cultural heritage protection forms and grows of rural areas attractiveness. Agro tourism causes creation of new work places and effectively uses existing house resources where historical huts and homesteads are situated. It allows saving a variety and individuality of architectural regions. Moreover, depending on keeping old ones or including new functions, partially or totally, possible is more attractive through the form realization of those multifunctional agriculture elements like meant above agrotouristic, ecotouristic and ecologic farms.

Supplies of attractiveness that are situated in realisation of production operations that use traditional buildings that exist on rural areas could and should be use while enhancing mentioned above farms type. Those kinds of operations are desired and first of all rational and proper areas which are naturally and landscape valuable. For economical and touristic attractiveness, they have to be adapted and first of all well promoted. They should be included in development of spatial economics programs and functional enhancements, adapted to individual specification of given area and even place. Enhancements founded in width range that include and authorise interactions between existing and planned spatial structure. Those procedures should be included on local level that includes communities and the other administrative districts with transfer to regional level. Very important is joining grounds process. But necessary and desired is also not to overdo and "throw out the baby with the bathwater".

Poland in width range possesses trumps, those attractiveness factors that want to be restored as well by other European Union countries as by United States or Canada. Those countries "bet" once on huge homesteads and as an effect they lost their natural country structure. Now they work for splitting those huge homesteads into small ones. Polish country still possesses values that disappeared or were destroyed in any countries.

5. Conclusions

In present time production effectiveness should be treated equal to spatial order - protection of environment that will allow ecosystem harmony and optimal arrangement of its elements. Those kinds of operations will allow to "isolate" functions of the given rural areas in region with includes known rural areas homestead buildings.

While object of concern and investment (founds spend) should be attractiveness in competition aspect, then all of its parts: position, potential and strategy have to be solved in a proper way - it means including all areas of scope. Partially and occasional product isn't enough. Present results are not optimistic. Examples of destroyed and wrong adapted from the planning side traditional architectonical objects can be multiplied. Even those for which new function in included according to various projects and programmes - founds have been spent for material cultural values destruction.

In attractiveness and competition areas implementing general, ordinary standards isn't enough. Necessary is aspiration to higher level of effectiveness. Lack of protection and adaptation culture for new needs is still considered for less important, old buildings. That kind thinking caused that we don't know (and what's worse don't care) and don't use neither the position nor the potential in area of existed traditional buildings on rural areas. Incorrect investment, modernisation or adaptation is irrecoverable loss. Most precious objects have been protected and not only backwardness and poorness caused their survival. They survived because as well their form as function or construction and material allowed for correct realisation of usable programs in XIX, XX and XXI centuries. They proclaim now authentic evidences of tradition of place - not fair-scenicly decorations that are characteristic among others for young populations, who fast and modern try to "create tradition" (sic!). Competitive region due its
variety and identity of rural areas space needs regard usage, continuation and progress of local buildings tradition and organisation of space. Only then regions and while so rural areas, can keep, improve and intensify itself character that distinctive them.

Cultural landscape of rural areas is one of the elements of civilization heritage. While so it should be respected and protected. Not only by creating of conservation protection areas but also by creation. So harmonic transformed to allow talking about continuation and evolution and not degradation and devastation. Clear sense is need for obligatory (legal) homogenous method for influence of investment for environment factor in visual-aesthetic aspect. Method that will as well shows as prognoses the change in visual landscape structure that arises due to fact of plans of spatial economy realisation. Scientific-research works carried out by museums and ethnological institutions are focused through the nature of matter on maintenance and protection the objects [6], [7]. The narrow and limited scope of the so-called "Landscape Act" [8] it is not satisfactorily implemented.

The point isn't to stop the necessary process of country transformation. Irrevocable is to point the right reception, connotation and association known traditional country buildings. Especially in architectonical activities area that due to no technological limits base only on area of imagination and totally devaluate the meaning of remembrance. Activities that reject with disgust old forms as regressive and conservative and constitute new ones those prove to be inappropriate in a lot of particular ranges. Tradition and culture define the ecology of remembrance, that will not let to ignore and destroy local cultural potential and authorise historical "to be" in given community. It defines cause-effect relation that runs between environment and ability of organisms to save and replay impulses and experiences. Ecology of remembrance related to the ecology of human and psychology of being should include whole saved and kept heritage as a system or subsystem all of material and spiritual goods and accepted criteria of quality. It authorizes ability of tradition to create and consolidate common rules of behaviour of local community and strong relationship of that group with emotional compounds of consciousness. Especially tradition as a process of values, beliefs, knowledge and skills transfer across generations - intergenerational transfer of cultural goods. Process that runs in accordance with maxim: Consule praeteritum, praesens rege, cerne futurum! – Consult with the past, manage the present, and watch the future!

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