

THE TOWNS OF THE KALISKIE VOIVODESHIP IN 1815-1830

(SUMMARY)

In my doctorate thesis I focused on the kaliskie voivodeship in 1815-1830. A lot had happened in that short period of time. The events permanently changed the towns of the area. There were state and privately owned towns. The years between 1815-1830 brought economic growth. The industry became a leading force in changing the appearance of the towns and their social structure. Most importantly, the local governments started to rebuilt the housing. Their condition in 1815 was terrible as a result of Napoleonic wars and the partitions of Poland. The 18th century economist Wawrzyniec Surowiecki compared the city housing to the one of the countryside. He wrote about empty city markets, town halls with no windows or roofs, streets without houses. This period had also changed the way of thinking about towns and the middle class. Well developed towns became the national strength, just as the smallest cells contribute to the good condition of a whole organism.

The surveys from 1817 and 1820 were a valuable source of information to my project. They were sent to the towns by the government officials. The town mayors answered questions about the housing estates, sanitary condition, industry and education. Picture of the cities, which appeared from the research, was really poor because of bad financial and administrative management. The administrative issues are dealt with in chapter one. The basic criteria for obtaining the town privileges was the decree, which imposed a 600 polish zlotys fund for the mayor. Low town income was to be filled with residents donation and the owner's fund, especially in private towns. The city owners benefited from the fund, but they not always fulfilled their financial commitments.

The second chapter is about the appearance of the cities. The housing was mainly wooden, therefore flammable. Fires were a common phenomenon. Apart from a few towns, which had administrative functions, such as Kalisz, Konin, Sieradz, Wieluń, Piotrków, there were no public facilities. Many towns did not even possess a church or a town hall. They got destroyed and there were no sufficient finances to rebuilt them. Schools and hospitals, which were former beggars and old people hostels, were usually rented from townsmen. The sanitary condition, even of those bigger cities, was bad. The roads were not paved and lots of houses were in danger of demolition. The Kingdom of Poland officials wanted to rebuilt the housing. In 1820 the City Committee and the Building Council came into existence. These institutions were to introduce order in the towns and make them look better. Chapter tree deals with this issue, which in my opinion is wery important. For the first time in our history the country's

officials paid attention to the view of the towns. It marked a change in perceiving the housing estates. City life had become important.

A lot of maps and building projects were created. New buildings could not be built without the approved project. Housing architecture was designed as well. The rules of the Building Police from the 26th of September 1820 forbidden to build wooden houses, but financial shortages made people disobey the rule. Ruined housing estates were to be demolished and the empty city squares were to be rebuilt. The ruins damaged the appearance and they were flammable. The churches and city halls were rebuilt as well and the medieval walls surrounding the cities were demolished. The demolition debris were used for building new houses and paving the roads. Aesthetics became very important then. The town markets were paved. They were surrounded with one-storey and bricked tenement houses. It was forbidden to build bungalows in main streets. Even the colours of the established dwellings were imposed on the owners according the Building Policy rules. The best shades were pale yellow and green. Dark red or navy blue as well as any bright colours were not welcomed. The Jewish people lived in the restricted area because they were not expected to be residents of the town centers. Their overcrowded and temporary houses were supervised. Wealthy Jews who could afford to buy a brick house were allowed to live outside the restricted area.

The fourth chapter is about the industrialization of the Kingdom of Poland towns. The economic status of polish lands was weak. The government was eager to shorten the distance between the Kingdom of Poland and the Eastern Europe counties. On the other hand, a lot of craftsmen, mainly from Germany, became unemployed due to big factories developing in their countries. There were few specialists in our country, therefore the government offered beneficial settlement conditions to people from Germany, mainly in the mazowieckie and kaliskie voivodehip. The textile industry started to develop. The customs border between The Empire of Russia and the Kingdom of Poland was opened since 1825. The goods were exported to Russia and even to China. The government provided beneficial bank loans because there were no bank institutions. That is why the factory fund was created. It offered bank loans for building factories, machines, raw materials and housing development as well. Some towns became "factory settlements" because they were located in the forests, had the access to rivers or to important roads. People from German countries were more than welcomed in those cities. The state towns and the private ones competed for the immigrants because they guaranteed the town's development. The kaliskie voivodeship had a good location by the border. Józef Radoszewski, the President of the Voivodeship Committee, contributed greatly to the development of Kalisz. The most important and the biggest

manufactories were Benjamin Repphan's in Kalisz, Adolf Harrer's in Sieradz, Karol Neuville's in Wieluń and Adolf Fiedler's in the private town Opatówek. Other cities, such as Pabianice, Turek, Koło, Częstochowa and a private town Zduńska Wola, had grown as well. The economic finest period lasted until the November Uprising. After the Uprising the border with Russia was closed. As a result, a lot of factories went bankrupt.

The fifth chapter is devoted to the cultural life and the education. It is difficult to trace back any cultural events of that time because there was little information about the issue. It seems that it was not yet developed. There were hardly any buildings in which one could watch some forms of entertainment. There were also few people responsible for organizing cultural life. The cultural awareness was little, as well. Those interested in the issue were the teachers, doctors and civil servants from the upper class.

The system of education underwent some important changes between 1815-1830. The elementary schools were set up in most of the towns. They were financially supported by people living in the area. The money contribution was compulsory, nevertheless some residents refused to donate. Teachers obtained little wages irregularly, their difficult material conditions were common. As a result, students were taught by unqualified people, who sometimes neglected their responsibilities.

The period between 1825-1830 described in the present work had an enormous influence on the development of the towns. These fifteen years contributed greatly to the appearance and the function of the towns in later days, and even contemporarily.

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