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**A SECELCTION OF CASE STUDIES REGARDING THE CHANGES  
BROUGHT ON BY TOURIST TRAFFIC IN THE AREAS CONTAINING  
EXAMPLES OF PRESERVED TIMBER ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE  
ON THE BORDER BETWEEN POLAND AND UKRAINE**

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**Abstract.** Carpathian tourist traffic has been developing in its various forms since the 1960's. At first it was unorganized, after the area of the Bieszczady Mountains became popular and the renewing of the interest in timber architectural monuments – it evolved from the setting up of boy and girl scout camps in the direction of qualified tourism. Cultural tourism became its final form. The tourist trails that have been set up, including a timber architecture trail, and the introduction of the preserved timber Eastern Orthodox churches onto the UNESCO World Heritage Site List were the causative factors in stimulating this change. Unique structures found their place as parts of the open air museums, while the museums themselves started to pursue new methods of exhibition and marketing in order to raise awareness of what they have to offer. Within the main cities of the micro-region, museums that provide good conditions for the exhibition of the most precious collections of paintings, icons, sculpture and effects of folk art, were set up. We can also observe a consequent revitalization of historical structures, performed under the watchful eye of the conservation authorities. The exhibition of the region's culture could be rounded out and become more dynamic with the introduction of the promotion of the domestic multi-cultural traditions which were so characteristic of the area of Galicja and its current borderland, especially concerning the culture of the Lemkos.

**Key words:** heritage tourism, Carpathians, Lemko

Motto: *“Travelers from the west, however, do not realize  
how great the influence of Byzantine art and its  
craftsmen was on European art”.*  
(Cunningham, 2007)

## **1. Introduction**

The south-eastern edge of Poland, this beautiful fragment of the Carpathian Mountains, a mountainous part of "God's world" is of great importance in terms of preserving the cultural heritage of our country. Within it, and especially in its landscape, we can observe a record of the beautiful and tragic history of the interaction that takes place on the borderlands of the East and the West, both in its immaterial and material sphere. This ages long friction, mixing and mutual rounding out of works of intellect, literature, poetry and music finds its expression in the unique material, spatial forms of buildings and structures: the civic, the temples, the synagogues, prayer houses, Eastern Orthodox and Catholic churches, cemeteries, ancient burial mounds and an entire wealth of archeological findings. Within the scope of large spatial forms, despite a great amount of destruction wrought upon by war after war, natural disasters and unfortunate coincidences, we can be thankful

for the survival of cities, villages, parks that surround palaces, manors and larger public buildings, as well as many smaller structures scattered around the countryside, such as roadside chapels, crosses, hermitages, caves and ruins. The latter are an important fixture of the area's landscape, constituting evidence of the relentless flow of time, the inevitability of the passage of time and a form of a signal to onlookers of the need to act in order to preserve the beauty of these relics of old. The entire landscape, the magnificent swaths of fields, themselves being witnesses to the development of human settlement in the Carpathian Mountains, the gradual conversion of forests to farmland and the gathering of wood in order to construct the beautiful forms of the buildings that serve their inhabitants, despite the fragility of the material itself (Szalygin, 2003), that yet persist throughout the centuries, deserve respect. While making use of the wisdom that was passed down through tradition, beholding the beauty of the icons, we should continue this creative cultural dialogue that happens on the borders of cultures, ever so slightly different today, yet with the same roots at their respective beginnings.

## **2. Small townships as indirect targets of tourist traffic**

The settlement structure of this part of the historical region of Galicja is based on a very practical module – it was the distance that one could travel by a horse-drawn cart, starting in the early morning, so that one could safely spend the night at one's destination and travel further the next morning. These distances vary depending on the local terrain, which would allow for faster or slower travel in order to facilitate the transport of goods and trading. The towns would hold a market, which existed and still exists as an interesting social phenomenon, which often showcases the great traditions of an area, somewhat alongside the necessary exchange of goods amongst society. Gradually, residential and public buildings like schools or town halls would be built, depending on the wealth of the inhabitants, and usually three types of temples: a Catholic and Eastern Orthodox church and a synagogue. At times there were more of them, for instance due to the presence of monasteries of both Christian denominations. These temples needed furnishing with items and works of art of religious significance, which inspired the local artists and craftsmen to create new and more and more beautiful paintings, icons and ritual accessories and general purpose items that were needed to perform mass. In light of the very wide trade contacts of the populace, goods of foreign origin were exchanged and purchased, often in the form of paintings, books or non-religious works of art that were often brought from far away travels or pilgrimages and were then deposited in private collections or given as gifts – to serve the wider population. A series of these occurrences over time caused some townships to be able to boast about impressive collections of works of art, not only paintings, but also sculptures or finely made musical instruments. The art that stemmed from the traditions of Judaism would often produce excellent examples of illuminated documents, pottery and other items need in synagogues, as well as many characteristic items of everyday use. Icons, the greatest of which would often be found at Eastern Orthodox churches, were often a fixture of the houses of ordinary people, the inhabitants of towns and villages. The buildings within the towns themselves, often made of wood, were replaced with brick ones over time, while their architectural form evolved to follow that of their timber predecessors. This amazing charm of small towns, with their simple and beautiful urban layouts, market squares, town halls and characteristic houses remains somewhat underappreciated, and, sadly, the shifts in the needs and lifestyle of their inhabitants produces an ever growing pressure to replace the old buildings with new, with completely different proportions, materials and architectural form. One cannot omit the destruction brought on by the many wars, which did not spare these settlements from destruction. All in all, one can observe an acceleration in the rate at which the substance of these towns is replaced, and with it, a shift is made in the quality of the landscape, not only in the case of urban interiors, but also in relation to the open landscape. The pervasive and, sadly, negative spreading out of buildings, caused by too intense urbanization causes the border between towns, their suburbia and the surrounding villages to become blurred. All in all, apart from a select few enclaves, travelling along the main routes of the region feels like driving through a constant town-village, devoid of sights worth seeing. Sadly, there are very few chances for the traveler to contemplate the silhouettes of cities that are finely intertwined into the surrounding landscape that were present there not so long ago, with churches and temples surrounded by trees, manors with their meticulously composed gardens and wide stretches of fields, houses with a horizontal composition, their roofs blending in with the greenery around them. Why is it so? The stoic would simply state that along with the growing globalization of the economy and the rising importance of large cities (Podhalański, 2013) and the changing times, conditions, cultural norms, levels of

wealth and the overall conditions in which society functions are to blame. All of this, however, does not justify the complete abandonment of the drive to build a harmony between the built environment and the landscape, the search for beauty in a simple spatial composition and the construction of spatial harmony. In similar conditions regarding society in other countries, all of this is possible today, all one needs to do to see it is to travel along the sun's path for a day. Perhaps in this situation of a general negation of the beauty of our everyday surroundings lies the cause of the need to travel to these isolated isles, to the borderlands? This borderland that is a place where one can still find the beauty of the landscape preserved in enclaves in which timber relics of olden times sit (Jarema, 1961), taking us back to the past through their works of art. Reality in relation to the needs of tourists causes the motorized ones, the number of which rises every year, is that without a way to find lodging near the place of their destination, they use the tourist services found in these small towns, in addition to visiting their museums and galleries. This allows these towns to become beneficiaries of this traffic, whilst the tourist destinations themselves are beyond their borders.

### **3. Timber architecture trails as a potential catalyst of the development of rural areas**

One of the most valuable assets (Giemza, 2006) of the borderlands, aside from the beauty of their landscapes, is their timber architecture. This unique collection of monuments was, thankfully, acknowledged by UNESCO. Its UNESCO World Heritage Site List entry covers sixteen timber Eastern Orthodox churches, eight of which are in Poland and eight in Ukraine. The ones on Polish territory are: the church of St. Paraskeva in Radruż, the church of the Birth of The Holiest Mother of God in Chotyniec, the church of St. Michael the Archangel in Smolnik, the church of St. Michael the Archangel in Turzańsk (Subcarpathian Voivodship) and the church of St. Jacob the Younger Apostle in Powroźnik, as well as the church of the Care of the Mother of God in Owczary, the church of St. Paraskeva in Kwiaton, the church of St. Michael the Archangel in Brunary Wyżne (Małopolska Voivodship). The World Heritage List also includes, individually, six timber churches in Binarowa, Blizne, Dębno, Haczów, Lipnica Murowana and in Sękowa. The problem of the deterioration of these still preserved timber churches has long since been highlighted by cultural tourists, that travel along the trail of architects (Kurek, 2007), arts and the amateurs of timber architecture (Bocheński, 2002), who try to (often without any external funding) document these constantly deteriorating timber structures. Along with the wider and wider access to the Internet and the widespread use of mobile devices, these tools have become valuable assets of individual and group tourists, allowing them to plan their trips and access information in situations where it is not available to them on site. As a side effect, the authorities in charge of a given trail is given current and fresh opinions on the accessibility of buildings that can be visited, the quality of guide services and other information. While perusing the publications readily available on the web, one can come to the conclusion that the reality on the ground in the advertised area is not what it is advertised to be, with the situation that the building that one travelled very far to see is closed to visitors being quite common. Nevertheless, the idea of a trail for motorized tourists has become a very good idea in terms of promoting the various exhibits of timber architecture in their original locations that are far off the well traveled roads. It would be possible, with a little effort on behalf of the population that inhabits the immediate area of these monuments, to introduce some simple services for these tourists. This can come in the form of guide services in places where it is lacking, micro-gastronomy, the selling of local souvenirs – in other words, anything that a tourist meets in excess around far less worthy attractions that are advertised as great tourist attractions in, for example, the countries of the Mediterranean. Currently the existing open air museums attempt to attract more tourists by organizing various simple activities for children, exhibitions of weaving cloth or similar activities. Perhaps a cooperative or communal approach could ease the return to active use of these beautiful structures, which are often placed not that far away from each other and which cannot function without proper maintenance and can only deteriorate further. In towns that already have their own tourist trails – for hikers or cyclists, which can potentially increase the numbers of tourists, there exists a possibility of organizing small hostels in the fashion of the trail of St. Jacob, which generates the sprouting of many micro-businesses, which offer their services to persons that travel along the trail. It is imperative that attempts be made to support these types of initiatives, as the Strategy of the Subcarpathian Voivodship highlights tourism as one of the most important branches of economic development. Sadly, without actively supporting or at least promoting the idea of local micro-activities it is going to be very difficult to raise the level of participation and increasing the profits that local communities can benefit from due to various forms of tourism.

#### 4. Historical monuments in the light of dynamic changes in the built and natural environment

When taking into account the fast-paced changes in the economy, as well as the expectations of local societies in regard to their surroundings, the problem of preserving timber architectural monuments becomes one of the most difficult. Not only is the basic substance – wood, which is the main structural component of the buildings in question highly susceptible to deterioration and destruction by fire, an even greater threat to it lies at the hands of an unprepared owner, or the lack thereof. A very important task in these circumstances is the quick preparing the documentation (Giemza 1997) of still existing timber buildings in the form of traditional measuring their extant state. The development of digital design tools allows us to use more advanced methods of documenting their state, with methods like laser scanning, aerial or drone-assisted ortho-photography, as well as photogrammetry, which is currently being used less and less. As a result of systematic endeavors to document the buildings, the possibility of repair or reconstruction exists even after a building has been destroyed in a fire. Reading specialist articles regarding the conservation of monuments (Kurek, 2007) one can often come across information that indicate the deliberate destruction of historical timber buildings, due to their incompatibility with modern functional and technical needs. Here are some bitter words from one of these articles (Czuba, 2007): “It seems that the word “monument” is taking on a pejorative connotation in recent times and does not bring about thoughts on tradition or history, but about trouble, difficulties and backwardness. We must do everything that we can so that everyone of us should fight against this false and dangerous attitude, which has caused so much trouble to the cause of the preservation of religious monuments – including the timber ones.” appear to describe the scale of the growing problem. It is important to take action in order to reverse this trend, which is dangerous to the future of historical timber monuments, and stems mostly from the insufficient funding of conservation authorities (Stojak, 2008). Their activity, out of necessity, focuses only on establishing prohibition orders, which only causes frustration, disgruntlement and resistance on behalf of the owners of historical buildings, who often do not have the financial means of improving the technical condition of their property, who at times resort to deliberate arson. Of course, in light of the natural causes of the gradual depletion of historical substance, we can observe the emergence of a new type of landscape, with a clear cut contrast between the construction materials that are used, the color schemes and architectural forms of modern buildings against the traditional values regarding space and the open landscape. In this context, it is not surprising that important buildings are being given special status, like the “timber Greek Orthodox church of Pokrov Mother of God from Milkisz Stary (XVII–XIX c.) which adapts traditional orthodox stylistic and structural solutions on the grounds of timber architecture, with its baroque grandiosity. It is probably the only preserved example of a timber Orthodox church in south-eastern Poland that was so greatly inspired by the brick church structures of the Baroque.” (Kadłuczka, 2006). Other currently existing items, such as some of the iconostases (Tomaszek, 2009) and their common, based on the art of painting icons (Jarema, 1961) – and this is not the only example prevalent in the area being written about – point to a potential that is hidden in the area, which has only partially been made available to the wider populace in contrast to just a narrow specialized group of tourists. One must assume that, despite some failures, the idea of preserving this sphere of cultural heritage is going to succeed. This idea is reinforced by the cultural diversity of the borderlands and the possibility of making it easier to get to know its history, as well as similarity of its traditions and the ability to understand its message. There arises a question, however – in what way, if at all, are we going to find a link in the problems that were mentioned above to the Carpathian Convention? It appears that such a link exists, yet it is not direct. We can assume, as it was pointed out earlier, that if the tourist cannot find lodging and food in the area in which the timber architectural monuments are located, the role of small towns grows, as they can provide these services and act as concentrators of tourist traffic. This has the additional benefit of concentrating tourist traffic in these small towns themselves, allowing the surrounding countryside to remain in a more natural state, preserving its environmental properties. It is also a means of providing a growth factor to the towns, as they are far more suited for the development of services than the immediate surroundings of the monuments that we aim to protect, which at the same time preserves their unique relationship with the surrounding landscape. We also cannot underestimate the fact, that the beauty and authenticity of works of art should be observed in places that were chosen by their creators, that nevertheless do change over time and are often not conducive to their preservation and security. These dangers make us more prone to place them in museums, which are, more often than not, in small towns.



B. Ideally, the laser scanning and photographic documentation should be performed on both the exterior and the interior of timber buildings, taking into account elements like polychromes and icons, as well as other furnishings and historically important ritual items.

C. Another course of action that needs to be taken is the introduction of fire protection installations in buildings that are listed in the central historical monuments registry, as well as all timber buildings, even those listed in the community historical monuments registries. Such a course of action can facilitate an increase in the chances of timber buildings being preserved for a longer period of time.

D. Only the preservation of timber architectural monuments “in situ” can result in the protection of the authenticity and uniqueness of the cultural landscape of the borderlands on a grander scale. The organization of open air museums is, however, a solution that cannot be ignored, due to the uncontrolled spread of the newly built environment and its negative impact on the landscape.

E. Efforts aimed at increasing the scope of services being provided to tourists and travelers in the small towns that are located on thematic trails of motorized tourism. An example of such a trail could be a timber architectural trail. These efforts can become a chance to improve the economic development of the towns and the quality of services being provided at sites of interest.

F. By concentrating tourist traffic in the towns themselves, their surroundings have a much higher chance of retaining their biodiversity, the beauty of their landscapes and, finally, their authenticity.

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**ПІДБІР ТЕМАТИЧНИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ СТОСОВНО ЗМІН, ЗУМОВЛЕНИХ  
ТУРИСТИЧНИМИ ПОТОКАМИ У РАЙОНАХ, ЩО МІСТЯТЬ ПРИКЛАДИ  
ЗБЕРЕЖЕНОЇ ДЕРЕВ'ЯНОЇ АРХІТЕКТУРНОЇ СПАДЩИНИ,  
НА ПРИКОРДОННІ МІЖ ПОЛЬЩЕЮ ТА УКРАЇНОЮ**

**Анотація.** *Карпатський туристичний трафік (Польщі) розвивається в різних формах, починаючи з 1960-х років. Спочатку – неорганізований, пізніше став популярним у районі Бецад і викликав оновлення інтересу до дерев'яних архітектурних пам'яток – туризм перетворився від організованих молодіжних таборів для хлопчиків і дівчат до кваліфікованого туризму. Культурний туризм став його остаточною формою. Створено туристичні стежки, зокрема слідами дерев'яної архітектури, а введення збережених дерев'яних православних церков до списку світової спадщини ЮНЕСКО спричинило стимулювання цих змін. Унікальні будівлі стали частиною музею під відкритим небом, водночас музеї самі почали застосовувати нові методи маркетингу та організовувати виставки для того, щоб підвищити обізнаність про те, що вони можуть запропонувати. У головних містах регіону, музеї забезпечили хороші умови для виставок найцінніших колекцій картин, ікон, скульптури й артефактів народного мистецтва. Таким чином, можна спостерігати послідовне поживлення історичних споруд, збереження яких було виконане під пильним оком влади. Експозиції культури регіону могли б бути цільнішими та динамічнішими зі запровадженням промування українських мультикультурних традицій, які були так характерні для регіону Галичини та його сьогоднішнього прикордоння, особливо щодо культури лемків.*

**Ключові слова:** *спадщина туризм, Карпати, лемки.*