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## **Towns of the Wadowice Area at the Background of the Region's History**

**H**istory of the towns of the Wadowice area, like Andrychów, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Lanckorona, are historically and spatially linked with Wadowice. They are connected by an important road, called the 'Emperor's road', founded in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the present international road No 96. This road even today is a significant development factor, which is proved by the situation of Lanckorona, located further away and still suffering economic problems.

The towns discussed are situated on a clearly marked edge of the Beskid Region and the Carpathian Foothill Region in the Carpathian Province, which extends from east to west. A characteristic feature of landscape is the visible change of the high and steep peaks, reaching up to 600 m above sea level, into mild hills with slopes going down to the near Vistula. The valleys of the Skawa and Skawinka Rivers, going from North to South, have acted as gates to the mountainous, woody land of the Carpathians, and the comfortable settlement area. The geological relief shows mainly the soft, refolded sedimentary rocks, the so-called Carpathian flysch, partly covered with the erosion material related to the river valleys. The soil is, however, poor here, full of clay and stones; and the potential flora includes the oak-and-hornbeam forests, the high dry-ground forests and the fir forests in the upper parts of the hills. The characteristic feature of the region are the enclaves of the Carpathian beech wood, and rather frequent specimens of the rare protected plants and the relics of the marshy meadows in the damp ravines and rifts.

The region of Wadowice and the neighbouring towns is characterised by a variable climate. The harsh, mountainous winter within several hours gives way to the warm wind from the Moravian Gateway, and the hot summer ends suddenly when faced with the humid air masses from the Vistula Valleys.

The area is considered a tourist attraction, also due to its rich flora. The area is under various forms of protection, mainly in its mountainous parts, as the area feasible for agriculture has been largely transformed. This was caused by overpopulation and the accompanying greed for land, hence the specific scattering of the forest area, cultivated land and dispersed houses. This image, together with the

relief constitutes a picturesque landscape, but also a land difficult for implementing a rational, modern system of management.

The oldest traces of civilisation date back to ca. 4000 BC, the times of Neolithic settlements on the main Vistula route and in the Carpathian Foothills, which replaced the culture of the Stone Age. Archaeological excavations also confirmed the existence of settlements related to the Łużyce culture (1700 – 700 BC). Around fourth century AD the Celtic tribes crossed the area, and in the Roman period (until fourth century AD), the entire South of Poland cultivated the Przeworsk culture, traces of which were found in the Soła and Skawa River Valleys. The finding of Roman coins proves that the Wadowice area was crossed by merchant routes heading towards the Baltic Sea. Alexei Semionov also writes about the invasions of the Huns and Avars in the fifth and sixth century AD, and mentions the dependence of these regions on the short-lasting states of the Vistulians and Great Moravia.

From the late 10th century, the Skawa Basin saw the clash of Polish and Czech interests. The fortified settlements occur, as documented in the archaeological research of Zator, Bugaj and Izdebnik, and in the written sources.

In the late 12<sup>th</sup> century the border was set at the Skawinka and the Vistula Rivers. The area of Wadowice and Andrychów, lying west of the Żar Mountain stayed within the independent Duchy of Opole. On the side of the Duchy of Cracow lay the Upik Mountain (Lanckorona) and the 'Radwański' or 'Radwanicki Corridor' area, covering Brody, Zebrzydowice and Przytkowice, where the Radwanita Family lived on the Duke's charter. At the turn of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Silesian borderland became dependent on the Principality of Bohemia. This fact had to be acknowledged by King Casimir the Great who renounced the land in an international treaty.

The area was divided by the Polish and Czech border. Opposite each other, four watchtowers were erected: on the Polish side, there was the Lanckorona Castle, first mentioned in 1359, and on the Czech side – the Włodkowa tower, famous for rogue-knights on the Żar Mountain. In the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century Lanckorona received municipal charter, and that was also the first mention of Handrichow village (the initial name of Andrychów). Wadowice was mentioned as well, as a town which, together with Zator and Oświęcim, belonged to the Duchy of Oświęcim. In 1445 the Duchy of Oświęcim was split into three parts. The area of Andrychów and Wadowice up to the Żar Mountain and the Skawinka Valley belonged now to the new Duchy of Zator.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Polish kings were successful in claiming back the western Silesian duchies. In 1475 King Casimir IV Jagiellończyk (of the Jagiellonian dynasty) bought back the Duchy of Oświęcim, and in 1494 John I Albert bought back the Duchy of Zator, thus returning the Wadowice area to Polish rule.

The 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries saw intensive German colonisation of Silesia. The number of immigrants increased, especially the land-owners and the clergy. A simi-

lar situation was observed in the neighbouring Principality of Bohemia, where the discriminated Hussite Church spread 'like fire'. The Hussite Wars not only forced some people to seek refuge in Silesia, but also caused damage and riots in the Duchy of Oświęcim itself. The economic recession was observed in Andrychów and Wadowice.

The history of Lanckorona and the 'Radwanicki Corridor' was much more peaceful. King Casimir the Great and his successors took care of the borderland, confirmed and extended the charters of Lanckorona and improved the position of the Radwanita family. In the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, chronicler Jan Długosz mentioned the Zebrzydowski family at Zebrzydowice and Brody. The family marked the beginning of the famous line of the magnates.

The formal incorporation of the Wadowice area to the Polish Crown was performed in the times of the last kings of the Jagiellon family. The obstacle consisted of the religious differences, as in the multi-national Silesian melting pot, new religious ideas became very popular. Even a local branch of Calvinism was formulated, and practised by burgesses, noblemen, and peasants. The first congregation was created in the Myszkowski estate, and by the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, every third parish in the Wadowice area and the Radwanicki Corridor up to the areas of Przytkowice and Stryszów belonged to a church other than the Roman Catholic Church.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the town flourished. Wadowice received from the Polish kings numerous economic charters, fairs and customs duties. The municipal self-government was subject to the Cracow Starost, yet it had broad competencies. Andrychów, on the other hand, was a private property in the centre of the Schilling estate, and probably already then became the weaving craft centre.

The Wadowice area within the former Duchy of Zator with the capital in Oświęcim belonged to the County of Silesia. The Lanckorona Starostship and the Radwanicki Corridor were annexed to the Szczyrzyce County. The history of the castle shows that the Starostship was traded and fought for until it was acquired by the Zebrzydowski family in 1588.

The town itself was rather modest and dependent on agriculture, although it was self-governed, and had many economic charters, as well as city walls. The 16<sup>th</sup> century brings some information on the early forms of self-government in some of the towns discussed.

In 1359 the village, and in 1366 the town of Lanckorona was established. In 1325 there was a mention about the character of Wadowice. Andrychów was a village at the time, and the area of the present Kalwaria Zebrzydowska was then covered by forest.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century Lanckorona was already a settled, fully developed town, in many respects similar to the capital, Cracow. Wadowice could boast the renewed municipal charter of 1430, while the small village of Andrychów still did not even have a church. The 16<sup>th</sup> century was not favourable for Lanckorona, which even then suffered because of its location. The self-government structure in Wadowice

was well established, while Andrychów celebrated the foundation of a parish church. The borderland of the Zator and Lanckorona Starostships became the property of magnates. Possibly, the early forms of the local governments survived, although in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Polish Parliament gradually limited the freedom of towns, thus harming the economic wealth of the country. The growth of the Zebrzydowski branch of the Radwanita family caused great changes in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Mikołaj Zebrzydowski, the Great Marshal of the Polish Crown and the Cracow Voivode, the Lanckorona Starost, had many posts, yet at the same time fought against the king and his neighbours. This was also the time of the Swedish invasion, which damaged the Wadowice area in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. After about 50 years another war against Swedes involved the Carpathian Foothills. More turmoil occurred during the patriotic Bar Confederation and the Napoleonic Wars. The wars not only caused the deaths of many people and damage to the buildings, but also the social and economic chaos, numerous taxes for the army, theft, hunger and diseases. The compact, wooden buildings were often destroyed by fire. The periods of failure alternated with attempts to re-establish the former wealth through new trade charters, organised fares and tax exemptions.

Simultaneously, at the eastern end of the Wadowice area, an unusual phenomenon was observed – the Mikołaj Zebrzydowski foundation in Kalwaria which soon became the centre of religious life, and an example of the architecture and gardening of the Polish Mannerism. Around 1617, on the land belonging to the Bernardine Monastery, Zebrzydów settlement was started, and from the very beginning called 'a town'. In 1640 Nowy Zebrzydów (the New Zebrzydów) was granted a municipal charter and a local government, dependant both on the Monastery and the Zebrzydowski family, and their successors.

In 1767 Andrychów was also granted a municipal charter with the local government dependant on the owner of the estate. The local government of Wadowice, despite its broad functions relied on the Starost of Zator.

After the first partition of Poland the area belonged to the Habsburg Empire, Lanckorona and Barwałd becoming governmental property, which was subsequently sold, while Wadowice County was annexed to the Wieliczka and later Myślenice land. The construction of the 'First Galician Trade-and-Mail Road' created a chance for economic revival of the towns, as the road linked Kęty, Andrychów, Wadowice and Kalwaria with Myślenice, making a connection between Vienna and Lvov. The road had a strategic function as well, as it incurred spatial development of many towns. Governmental communal and military institutions activated, and radically transformed Wadowice, which trend also involved Kalwaria. Only Lanckorona was left aside, the consequences of which it still experiences today.

Tourists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century visiting the Wadowice area observed the outstanding beauty of the landscape and enormous poverty of the region. The 19<sup>th</sup> century began with the Napoleonic Wars of 1805 and 1806. It was also the time of various natural disasters. The inhabitants of Wadowice suffered from the epidemics of cho-

lera, crop failures and floods leading to hunger. Galicia saw a wave of peasant rebellions. The peasants, in an attempt to escape the poverty, migrated to towns where they became servants or beggars, or abroad. The situation did not improve even after World War I.

At the same time, however, construction activities flourished, stimulated by changes in the administrative organisation, as well as requirements of the defence, industry, or construction of new roads or railways in the years 1881 – 1888.

Andrychów became a textile industry centre, initially based on the locally cultivated flax, and possibly due to the group of German and Belgian immigrants from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, who specialised in this craft. The market for the products manufactured in Andrychów expanded into the neighbouring countries. From the 1830's the production increasingly switched onto the imported cotton, which ruined the farmers, and made the weavers rely on the entrepreneurs, which complicated the existing social and production relations. Andrychów saw the rise of the enriched merchant and factory-owner families, while the town itself became an industrial centre.

In 1819 the capital of the region was moved to Wadowice, which triggered the town's development. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a number of public buildings were erected, the population grew, and the present market was extended. Cultural life flourished, and the town gave rise to many outstanding citizens.

Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, despite the salt customs offices located here, remained a poor town. The Sanctuary and the Kalwaria's Mysteries, however, became world-famous. Nevertheless, it was hard to live on the poor soil and the servicing of irregularly coming pilgrims. The inhabitants of Kalwaria took up crafts, producing modest furniture for local markets. The dependence on entrepreneurs kept them, however, in constant poverty.

Lanckorona also experienced an unfavourable period, organising fewer markets, and relying on the rather primitive forms of agriculture. As a result, in 1934 it lost its municipal charter. Lanckorona remains under the care of artists and custodians, yet attempts to revitalise the town through tourism and heritage protection have not been fully successful. In the period described, local governments under the Austrian partition enjoyed relative liberty. This encouraged the formation of cultural, academic or sport societies, which cultivated local and patriotic traditions. After the abolition of villeinage in 1848, local governments of the so-far private towns became independent from the estate owners.

The war between 1914-1918 fortunately spared the Wadowice area. It was near the front, therefore the inhabitants were recruited to the army and had to organise field hospitals and bear even more poverty. After a period of enthusiasm after acquirement of independence, a new economic crisis came, the effects of which were suffered until the World War II. Andrychów experienced it harshly, with several strikes of the workers. At the same time, local authorities drew attention to

the landscape and tourist attractiveness of the area. Modern tourist facilities and a sanatorium were erected in the region.

In the period between the wars, Wadowice was already an important cultural and intellectual centre with state and church schools, theatres, artist societies and geographical associations. Among many outstanding graduates of the Wadowice secondary school, one has to mention Pope John Paul II.

The towns discussed represent various examples of the provenience of the towns in the Małopolska Region, which form a mosaic of the vivid administrative, educational, trade and industrial centres.

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