

Designs of wooden floorings in historical buildings in the Kolbuszowa County

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Abstract: The study presents the design of historical decorative wooden floorings in four buildings in the Kolbuszowa County. Design characteristics consist of showing the floorings aspect, direction of fibres, kinds of wood as well as the kind of sections of the components forming the panel design. Additionally, original interiors were measured, and the arrangement and design of the panels was marked. Apart from the design, the structure and dimensions of the panels were specified.

Keywords: flooring, panel, structure, design, manor house

INTRODUCTION

In Kolbuszowa County in Podkarpackie District, there are several historical manor houses with adjacent buildings, where original decorative wooden panel floorings have been preserved. A manor house is a residential building serving for wide variety of dwellers. It may resemble a peasant cottage or take the form of a small palace. The architectonic model of the manor was often copied in annexes, vicarages and inns. Its layout is usually practical – manor house is a one-storey building, often on a rectangular plan, its construction is not a complicated enterprise and its design and dimensions may be easily altered afterwards. Manor houses were usually made of wood, a resource easily accessible on the grounds of Sandomierz Forest, and had shingled roofs. Preceded by a porch, there was a middle entrance hall having mostly brick floor as well as whitewashed walls with ceiling made of sawn timber or canvas. On the sides of the entrance hall, there were guest rooms, bedrooms, studies, dressing rooms, chambers and corner annexes. Their floorings were made of wood. It could be simple floors made of boards or sometimes the boards were decoratively arranged into squares between the front slats. Sometimes, such blind floors were covered with decorative panels with geometric patterns or even elaborate rosettes. For this reason, the design of manor house floorings depends significantly on their representative character and expresses the ambitions or social status of the owners.

SELECTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BUILDINGS

The main criterion while selecting the objects of the study was the originality of their decorative wooden floorings. Although Kolbuszowa County boasts numerous manor houses, only four buildings were fit to study the flooring design. As a result of the change of their purpose, the interiors of manor houses and palaces (e.g. Tyszkiewicz Palace in Werynia and Manor House in Dzikowiec) were laid out in a new way. Due to improper use they gradually became dilapidated, and the new owners, while bringing back their former magnificence, usually completely replaced their floors or even the entire joinery. During the refurbishment works, historic floorings were of the least concern and were, even without recording the original state, replaced with the modern floor panels (as it happened in the manor house in Niwiskie).

Adopting the said principle, i.e. the originality of the floorings, resulted in selecting four objects of study in Kolbuszowa County: manor house in Witkowice and Niwiskie, manor house outbuilding in Kolbuszowa and vicarage in Ostrowy Tuszowskie. The project is a part of the research grant No. 1374/B/P01/2008/35 focusing on the analysis of design, structure and workmanship of decorative wooden floorings in manor houses and palaces in Southeast Poland.

The manor house in Witkowice (Śnieżyńska-Stolotowa, Stolot 1991, Swaczyna, Różańska 2010), was constructed between 1797-1806 for the Lubienieccy family and designed most probably by Jakub Kubicki, the eminent royal architect of the Stanisław Poniatowski era. It has distinct features of a small classical palace. Kubicki is credited also with two outbuildings. The whole complex has been thoroughly renovated and is in the hands of private owners. The manor house itself is a masonry, one-storey building (two-storey on the extreme axes) with a cellar and hipped roof, presently covered with metal sheets. The palace has a rectangular plan with central and lateral risalits where the elevation is longer, a risalit, as well as a one-storey extension from the West and a portico from the East. There are five-axis, two-bay interiors in the central part and three-bay interiors on the extreme axes. The rooms were designed as an enfilade. Along the central axis, there is a Hall and behind it, in the garden section, a living room called the Banquet Room. It has a circular plan, the circle being demarcated from a square by Ionic columns, with alcoves in the corners, covered with semi-domes. It is crowned with a flattened dome with a central plafond. The central plan of the Banquet Room interior is marked by a decorative floor rosette made of several kinds of wood, although only its central part is genuine. The remaining part of the Banquet Room flooring, as well as the geometric wooden panel floorings in the side rooms, are a reconstruction. The reconstruction of panel floorings was possible on the basis of the preserved basic panels, kept in the Castle Museum in Łańcut (Muzeum Zamek w Łańcucie).

The manor house in Niwiskie (Malczewski 1978) has been gradually converted from wooden into masonry mansion since 1850. The sources did not record the subsequent phases of the conversion. The building plan comprises two rectangles positioned as to form the right angle. The main entrance is located on the West side of the elevation. The part of the building located on the North-South axis is a one-storey construction with three-hipped mansard roof. The other part, located on the East-West axis, is a two-storey construction, topped with saddleback roof and triangle gables. The roof from the East side is extended and its eaves forms an arcade supported by pillars. In the section where Eastern and Southern parts join, the eaves becomes more distinct and is supported by four pillars jutting out from the porch line. The Western elevation has two significant risalits, southern being the dominant height of the building. The central part of the elevation is a one-storey construction, covered with mansard roof. The last owner of the manor house, doctor Jan Antoni Ernest Hubka, added the porch and the terrace on the Southern elevation as well as the railing with turned balusters to the collonade in the garden elevation from the East. Towards the end of the XIX century, Jan Hubka asked his friend from the cabaret named „Zielony Balonik”, well-known painter and designer Karol Józef Frycz, to design the interiors. As a result, Frycz completed polychromies in three rooms on the base floor and in two rooms upstairs. After the war was over, the manor house was taken over by the state and was subsequently devastated. Many paintings were destroyed, among others, the wall dividing the Baboon Room (Dining Room) and the Office was brought down, and the enlarged room was turned into a local cinema. Precisely in this room a panel geometric pattern of the decorative wooden flooring was preserved. Similar flooring with different pattern was preserved in the room upstairs until 2009. It was replaced with modern panels, and the fate of the original panels is unknown.

The manor house outbuilding in Kolbuszowa (Skowroński 2000, Śnieżyńska-Stolotowa, Stolot 1991), built in the second part of the XVII century, located by the two-storey

Lubomirski palace, is a one-storey (although with a cellar) plastered log construction made of larch. Erected on a rectangular plan, with two-bay interiors and hipped roof, currently covered with metal sheets. Toward the end of the XVIII century it was adopted as the residence of the new owners of the town – the Tyszkiewicz family. In the middle of the XIX century, as the Tyszkiewicz family moved to Werynia, it was inhabited by numerous subsequent owners who also introduced certain changes to its layout. It presently hosts the offices of the Muzeum Kultury Ludowej (Folk Culture Museum) in Kolbuszowa. The outbuilding was fitted with oak panel floorings with geometric pattern, disassembled during the general refurbishment between 1984-89, several of these panels were preserved.

The vicarage building in Ostrowy Tuszowskie (Skowroński 2000, Śnieżyńska-Stolotowa, Stolot 1991) was erected nearby the parish church founded in 1901-1902. The present wooden vicarage building, which replaced the former ones, is made of larch acquired during the demolition of the church founded in 1593. It is a one-storey construction on the plan of elongated rectangle, with a porch, topped with a saddleback roof and gables boarded with planks. Interiors follow the common manor house enfilade design, with entrance hall and a large room on the axis as well as two-bay residential rooms on the sides. Each room had a wooden flooring. The representative rooms had panel floorings with geometric pattern, while the less official once had floor boards with decorative square pattern divided by front boards. In the end of 2009, the administration of the vicarage was taken over by the Muzeum Kultury Ludowej (Folk Culture Museum) in Kolbuszowa. As a result, it was disassembled with the purpose of reconstructing it in the ethnographic park, as a part of the planned church and vicarage complex. Prior to disassembly of the floorings, a detailed conservator record had been prepared; and the original panels are stored in the Museum.

DESIGN AND STRUCTURE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FLOORINGS

While characterising the design of the floorings, the following works has been carried out: general or detailed photographs of the interior floorings, drawings of the basic panels with indication of the species of wood used as well as the fibre direction of the components of the panels along with the section type. Additionally, original interiors were measured and layout plans of the panels in the rooms were prepared, which allows for precise determination of the panels quantity and constitutes a detailed documentation of the floorings.

The most decorative floorings are to be found in the manor house in Witkowiec. In this case, floorings design is determined by the formal character of the interiors. The rosette in the Banquet Room corresponds with the lavish *piano nobile* floorings in the Castle in Łańcut. The floorings preserved in two other rooms of Witkowiec mansion – Billiard Room and Dressing Room – also modeled after Łańcut, are more practical, although not without aesthetic value. The pattern and layout of the rosette panels and the floorings of the mentioned rooms is presented on the drawings 1a, 1b and 1c.

The flooring design in the Niniwskie manor house is shown on the drawings 2a, b, c and d. The flooring shown on the drawing 2d has been replaced, as mentioned, with panels.

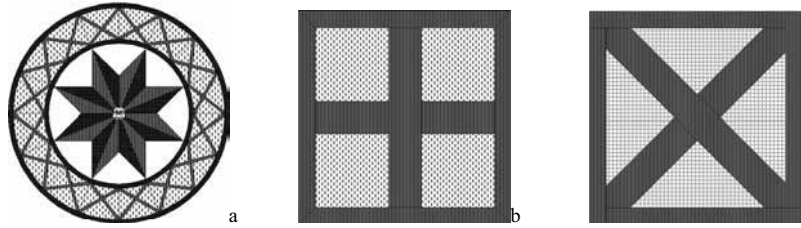
The flooring design in the outbuilding in Kolbuszowa is presented on the drawing 3, and of the vicarage in Ostrowy Tuszowskie, on the drawings 4a and 4b.

The components of the panels are connected in a tongue and groove technique. Take note that the justification for the selection of specific kinds of wood, particularly abundant in the rosette, was not only the colouristic values of the various kinds of wood, but also their similar functional features, such as density, wear resistance and hardness (Swaczyna, Tomusiak, Kędziński, Koryciński, Policińska-Serwa 2009).

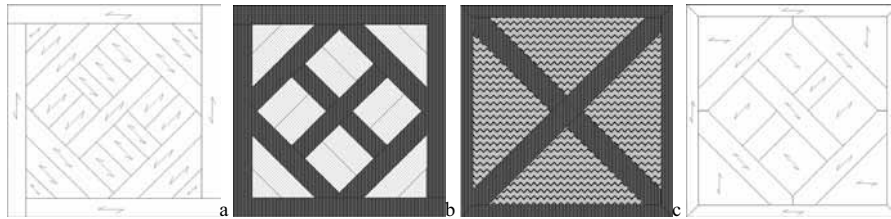
The panels are nailed to the blind floor which is itself nailed to the ground beams (drawings 5a,b,c). Between the blind floor boards and the panels, there is a layer of sand for levelling and smoothing the face side of the panel (drawing 5b).

SUMMARY

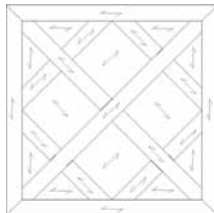
The flooring design in the historical buildings of the Kolbuszowa County is diverse, always geometric, with the correct selection of wood types. The panels are of single layer structure. The bottom surface is uneven, hence the need to use sand as a subfloor on the blind floor.



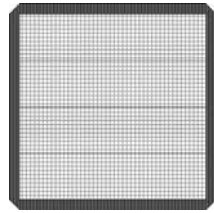
Drawing 1. Witkowice: a- pattern and wood species (taxus, oak, dark oak, beech) of the rosette in the Banquet Room (R.1090mm), b- pattern and wood species (oak, beech) of the Library panels (625x625mm), c- pattern and wood species (oak, pine) of the Dressing Room panels (625x625mm)



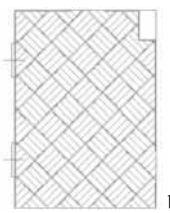
Drawing 2. Niwiska: a- pattern and fibres direction of the Baboon Room oak panels (505x505mm), b- pattern and wood species (oak, birch) of the Crow Room (Pokój pod Wronami) (505x505), c- pattern and wood species (oak, ash) of the panels from the first floor Corridor (620x620mm), d- pattern and fibres direction of the oak panels from a first floor room (620x620mm)



Drawing 3. Panel from Kolbuszowa (oak), pattern and fibres direction



Drawing 4. Ostrowy Tuszowskie: a- pattern and wood species (oak, pine) of the panel (900x900mm), b- scheme of the panel layout in the room



Drawing 5. Floorings' layout: a,b- flooring from Ostrowy Tuszowskie with the sand layer visible, c- forged nail that joined Kolbuszowa panel with the blind floor

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Streszczenie: W pracy przedstawiono wzornictwo zabytkowych ozdobnych posadzek drewnianych znajdujących się w czterech obiektach powiatu kolbuszowskiego. Charakterystyka wzornictwa polega na przedstawieniu widoku, kierunku przebiegu włókien, gatunków drewna oraz rodzaju przekroju elementów tworzących wzornictwo taflí. Ponadto mierzono wymiary oryginalnych wnętrz i nanoszono układ i liczbę taflí. Oprócz wzornictwa określono konstrukcję i wymiary taflí.

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