

Use of wood in the Baltic courses architecture on the example of Binz in Ruges

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Abstract: *Use of wood in the Baltic courses architecture on the example of Binz in Ruges.* The town of Binz is a great example of a comprehensive renovation of a town built in a spa style using wood. Made of wood, balconies, loggias, porches, gables, half-timbered constructions of fragments or even entire floors of buildings, combined with various architectural elements, referring to different stylistic formations, creates a perfectly matching conglomerate of forms despite each other's diversity and the surrounding nature. Thanks to the forms of decoration used, the frontage of the building looks harmonious. Laurel ornaments give them a specific beauty that allows you to break away from reality and encourages relaxation. Accents in the landscape, especially variety of villas, prevent fatigue and add expression to the whole building giving desire to just watch them. However, without the use of wood usually painted white, this would never have been achieved. That is why they were often called "white pearls of the Baltic".

Keywords: resort architecture, wood, balconies, loggias, verandas, ornaments

INTRODUCTION

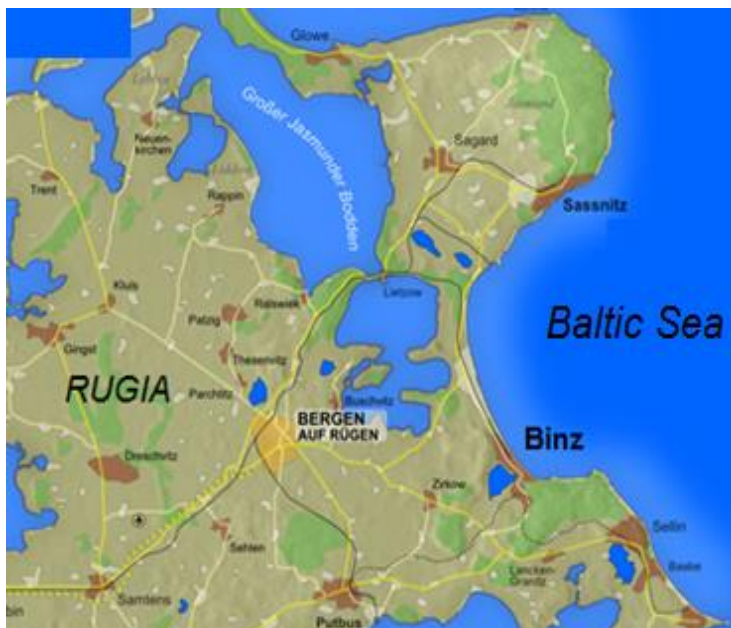


Figure 1. Location of the resort of Binz on the island of Rügen

Baltic resorts both in Poland and with our neighbors are very popular among tourists. Unfortunately, many of these once charming towns have lost their former character and beauty. Oftenly being irretrievably destroyed by ill-considered mega-hotels investments, building density and architecture introducing dissonance in space. Fortunately, there are still resorts that managed to preserve the vintige climate, harmony of idyllic architecture that fits into the landscape, thanks to the use of wood for building, finishing and decorating buildings. One of them is Binz in Rügen (GERMANY) - a

"white, lacy" town, with unusual, almost ephemeral architecture and perfect fit with nature.



Figure 2 View of the resort of Binz from the sea

CREATION OF SUPER-BALTIC COURSES

Socio - economic changes that took place in the nineteenth century, initiated, inter alia, the fashion for rest in the fresh air, in contact with nature. Thanks to the rapid development of railway networks, the time needed to reach even quite distant places has been significantly reduced, and the journey has become cheaper. The development of industry, mass production of cheap goods, influenced the increase in the standard of living of a large part of society. The nineteenth century was also a period of medical development. Among other things, climate treatment was introduced, and the value of fresh air and sea baths began to be appreciated. Thanks to this, seaside towns were becoming more and more popular, they were slowly transforming from fishing villages into elegant, seaside resorts.



Figure 3. View of the resort buildings in Binz and the seaside promenade.
The white color of buildings dominates.

The first German Baltic seaside resort was founded in 1791 in Heiligendamm. Mostly German and European aristocrats and rich industrialists came there. The resort was built of white buildings in the style of classicism, located on the seaside promenade [Rochov, Havermann 1993] The first resort in Pomerania, founded on the island of Rügen in 1810, was Putbus-Lauterbach. In the following years more resorts were created, such as Binz that took its origin from a fishing village.

SEA COURSES ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of seaside resorts is a very wide group of buildings with various stylistic and formal features, various sizes and shapes of solids. Landscape include hotels,

guesthouses, villas for accommodating guests as well as sports facilities, concert halls, piers, restaurants and many more connected especially by location and adjustment to natural conditions. Their style is so characteristic that it even has its own architectural term *Bäderarchitektur* - a resort architecture that is typical of the northern coast of Germany. Resorts were built in undeveloped terrain, often near fishing villages, on the sea shore, i.e. in a place that has direct contact with exuberant nature. They were established along the beach forcing linear layout of the village. The sea has become an important factor in urban composition. The proximity of picturesque nature was not without influence on the diversity of architectural forms of resorts.

Starting with classicism the spa architecture developed using all the historical forms popular in the nineteenth century, moving to new fashionable styles at the turn of the century. Introducing "Art Nouveau" or various forms of picturesque architecture. The peculiarity of the architecture of the Baltic resorts is the successful combination of various stylistic forms incorporated into the coastal landscape. In the 19th century resorts, relatively small, several storey buildings were erected. Facades were enriched with balconies, loggias, breaks, gables and verandas. To make these elements, wood was eagerly used, which was relatively low-priced and convenient to process, and also blended well with the coastal landscape. Whole wooden houses were made as prefabricated elements were already used in the second half of the century [Omilanowska 2011].

Baltic resorts are often called "white pearls" as a result of the dominant facades colors. Most often, facades, both plastered and wooden as well as architectural details were painted white. In addition, bright colors were used, e.g. olive, beige or blue-gray. The multitude of wooden loggias, balconies, breaks, verandas, gables decorated with intricate patterns carved in wooden panels makes buildings, even large ones, look elegant and delicate.

WOOD IN THE SPA ARCHITECTURE

The popularity of wood as a building material in Germany has a long tradition dating back to the Middle Ages. Half-timbered constructions were most often used, with exposed beams forming decorative patterns bearing woodcarving decorations. In the nineteenth century, the popularity of wooden architecture increased and took on another meaning. It was caused by a number of factors such as tourism development, world exhibitions, searching for national styles, economical aspect and finally the availability of samples and prefabricated elements. Traveling to Italy via the Alps, fashionable in the 'upper realms' since the mid-18th century, is associated with the popularity of the 'Swiss style'. In wooden architecture the so-called „Swiss house" was adopted, inspired by traditional Alpine architecture [Gubler 1979]. This trend was usually associated with local traditions, which brought different forms depending on the region [Tarnawski 2012].

The search for national styles prompted architects to become interested in folk architecture. Especially the vision of Russian national architecture with its woodcarving decorations resembling lace has gained great popularity. Decorations of residential buildings in the former eastern territories of Poland corresponded with it [Gaweł 2010]. The project propagated thanks to industry publications, also gained popularity in Prussia [Szewczyk 2006].

An important role in the promotion of national styles was played by world or regional exhibitions, where wooden pavilions with native features were eagerly erected being cheaper, quick to install and easy to transport. In 1867, the design of a wooden summer villa was shown at the world exhibition in Paris what greatly popularized this specific type of building architecture. Wooden houses with columns, verandas, balconies with "lace" decor have become fashionable. The high availability of various types of architectural patterns and ornaments, company catalogs and construction handbooks also contributed to the

popularization of wooden architecture and wooden architectural details [Liebold 1893]. Over the course of time, a peculiar mix of various elements was created, a conglomerate of designs and templates, which was widely used in resort construction, creating picturesque and decorative, yet light in reception and perfectly blending with the sea and dune vegetation architecture [Bręczewska-Kulesza, Wieloch 2018].

WOODEN ARCHITECTURE IN BINZ

A beautiful, well-preserved example of a "white town" with facades enclosed by rows of loggias and verandas, kept to this day in a consistent style is the resort of Binz in Rügen. Year 1870, 80 guests stayed in Binz, and only five years later their number increased to 500. Consequently the rural cottages expanded by adding wooden verandas and porches. New buildings were erected next to Strandpromenade running along the beach. In 1880, Wilhelm Klünder built the Strandhotel as the first hotel near the beach. The largest increase in buildings number was between 1890 and 1910 [Verordnung 2002]. Villas and guesthouses, most of which were intended only for summer holidays, took fashionable and representative forms. Under the influence of fashion on picturesque architecture, spas and growing health awareness that fresh sea air has a positive effect on the human body, so-called resort architecture was developed. Main features for this style are open loggias, balconies and porches made of wood covering massive facades. Lumps of buildings, especially villas, were often additionally enriched with breaks, bay windows, ridge ornaments, towers and attics.

On the wave of fashion for 'picturesqueness', as well as for economic reasons, also half-timbered constructions, wooden architectural elements and decorations were used in Binz, which gave the buildings an 'idyllic' character. In most houses, both picturesque villas and buildings with simple, cubic blocks, enriched with elements made of wood, with a characteristic decoration of numerous ornaments made of laubzega¹.



Figure 4. Porches and balconies of wooden structure filled with openwork panels Murkanerstrasse 1

¹ The form of decoration was created by cutting out the ornament with a thin saw in boards, placed in the tops of buildings, porches, as a support at the remnants of purlin beams, sometimes window frames, under and window panels. It did not require complicated technology, only the fantasy and precision of the contractor, and was used in both wooden and brick buildings. - In search of the lost tradition of construction, Work. coll., Nowy Dwór Gdański, 2009, pp. 49-50. In other regions of Poland it was called an openwork or lace.

What is noticeable and dominant in Binzs' architecture are wide wooden verandas, less often balconies or loggias, arranged in very different configurations. Often spread over the entire width of the façade or on other walls, on the sides on both sides or on one, on the corners, between breaks or endearing break. Most create multi-storey divisions with a separate roof on the last floor. The skeletal structure of the verandas is based on columns and beams forming the frame of the veranda, supported between floors by the ceiling beams.

Swords and decorative forms of braces were often used. Between them, in the window areas and above the javelins, panels cut out with lace patterns were placed in the brackets. Wooden elements were painted in bright colors, usually white often giving freshness and cleanliness of the environment Fig. 5.



Figure 5. Decorative window zone villa on Margaretschhof

A large part of the porches were originally open however currently some are glazed.

After World War II, due to the lack of apartments in the destroyed cities, refugees came to Binz and the buildings were adapted for year-round use, which meant a lot of renovations. The decorative panels cut out in various patterns were used in two ways, either by putting on a smooth background from a wooden

board or boards to make contact, or by placing them apart, thanks to which the light shone through them. Both ways caused a specific play of light and shadow. Probably due to climatic reasons, the veranda under the windows, balustrades of balconies and loggias were more built-up. Decoratively cut boards, placed vertically on a full background or less often alone.



Figure 6. Construction of balconies and decorative panels in Villa Meeresgruss on Marienstrasse 1

Boards were cut into modest patterns in the form of small circles, hearts, ovals, tears, stylized motifs of lilies, crosses. Sometimes boards were cut in the form of flat balusters, then the background was not underlay. (Fig. 5).

Concavities were cut at the edges of the boards and shaped into longitudinal teardrops, only the arched ends were cut out or balusters in the form of posts were used. The number of patterns was very diverse, most of the buildings had their own style consistently applied throughout the entire building.



Figure 7. The gable decoration is made of boards with a decorative motif

In the upper zone under the javelin in open constructions or above the glazed windows, decorative panels with laubzeg ornament were used, with glazing placed on the background of a wooden board. Here, too, each building had its own, consistently applied theme. A conglomerate of various forms, both plant and geometric, was used. Most probably inspiration came from both Renaissance and Art Nouveau.



Fig.8. Window decoration

Some designs resemble stylized ferrule or arabesque ornaments, others are based on circles, squares with curving lines and flowers. The decorations filled every free space between beams and columns. Thus giving the facades lightness that attracted attention from a distance.

A much simpler solution was to use instead of decorative panels, decorations in the form of stylized swords, braces and ridge ornaments, ending in spherical forms. As such, they required an appropriately decorative setting. On the other hand, the buildings, viewed from the beach, pier or sea, were to be a showcase of the resort, to attract the attention of potential patients.



Figure 9 i 10. Openwork decorative panels



Figure 11. Wooden balcony with decorations

Despite the large variety of forms, enriched with rows of multi-storey verandas and loggias or balconies, all decorated with intricate patterns carved in wooden panels, the guest houses look very coherent and harmonious. (Fig. 3, 14).

Among them are also projects showing the stylistic pluralism of nineteenth-century resort architecture. In terms of functionality, loggias and verandas were an extension of peace, they were a link with the surrounding nature, places where not only one could take fresh air comfortably resting on a sun lounger, but also especially in buildings located on the seafront promenade watch what was happening outside. They were the equivalent of theater lodges, where the stage was a promenade with a continuous "spectacle" played by walking holiday makers, and the decoration of the sea and dune vegetation. As such, they required an appropriately decorative setting.

The architecture of Binz seems to be dominated by white buildings with facades enriched by rows of multi-storey verandas and loggias (Fig.14), but among them there are also projects showing the stylistic pluralism of 19th-century resort architecture.

These are objects that formally correspond to various styles popular in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, among which there are several implementations evoking fashionable trends in wooden architecture. Three outstanding objects must be mentioned. They are buildings made in various construction techniques, referring to various stylistic forms. Their architecture is characterized by a subtle form, darker or more vivid colors and a greater diversity of architectural elements.

The first of them, built in 1890, is the Villa Undine at Strandpromenade 30, near the spa house (Kurhaus) and was commissioned by Countess von Münster and was her private residence. [Omilanowska 2011].

The building is also very interesting for technical reasons, as an early example of finished houses, transported in parts and assembled on site. The villa was built from prefabricated elements produced by Wolgaster Actien-Gesellschaft für Holzbearbeitung, in the technology of a wooden skeleton filled with boards. The house was presented in the company's catalog from 1892.

The villa is distinguished by picturesque architecture, asymmetrical, fragmented structure of the body with a tower topped with a helmet, a veranda founded on a half-10-side plan, a break with a high triangular gable, smaller verandas and balconies and outbuildings. All elements of the block were covered with separate, gable roofs. The whole was painted in a dark burgundy color with which white window and door joinery as well as decorative elements of the gables were contrasted.



Figure 12. Willa Undine

Second - a little further east, also on the seafront promenade, is the villa "Quisisana" (Strandpromenade 15) built in the same year.

The upper part of the building is a half-timbered structure, "erected" on a lightly plastered ground floor. Originally, the light plaster of the ground floor was contrasted with the brick filling of the half-timbered wall. After renovation, the filling has been plastered. The block of the building was founded on the plan of the letter "T", strongly fragmented, and accented by a tower with a spire located in the middle. The villa is enriched with wooden wide verandas, decorated with a modest laubzeg ornament and what distinguishes this object is the exposed half-timbered structure. The house was the private apartment of a government official, Dr. Victor von Koerber, district administrator in Bergen auf Rügen and his wife. The house was rebuilt in 1929 and the owners, von Koerber, ran a guest house here [Finke, Pippia 2009].

Third - in the neighborhood of the Undine villa, on the west side, the house in the so-called Swiss style - Villa Ruscha, built in 1896 [Finke, Pippia 2009] is noteworthy.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, via competitions on Swiss national architecture (the first in 1852), world exhibitions in Paris from 1876 and Vienna in 1873. The Swiss style was even more popularized and took over many foreign patterns. However lost its original authenticity, becoming “the most universal and cosmopolitan style of wooden architecture” [Wojciechowski 1953]. As such it was widely used in various forms, e.g. combined with neostyle. Also, the Ruscha villa is not a building corresponding to the style of the houses from the Berne Pass. but it refers to the vision of such a household, transformed by a number of further solutions.



Figure 13. Willa „Quisisana“ (Strandpromenade 15).



Figure 14. Villa Ruscha, Strandpromenade 31

The villa refers to the style of Alpine architecture through wide, supported by woodcarving brackets, balconies, a massive gable roof with a highly eaves, and "lace" decorations. A foreign element is the use of delicate, decorative metal grilles on the balconies (currently only in the central balcony of the facade) and the gray-blue colors of the villa are a counterweight to the rustic style, contrasted with the white frames of the window frames. Universal elements are numerous bay windows, projections covered with separate roofs, which increases the expression of the body and gives the building lightness. The house was built as a guest house with 15 comfortably furnished rooms.

CONCLUSION

The wood worked perfectly in resort architecture. Balconies, loggias, porches, gables, half-timbered constructions of fragments or entire floors of buildings made out of wood and combined with various architectural elements, referring to different stylistic formations, creates a perfect conglomerate of forms, matched despite each other's diversity and the surrounding nature.

Binz is a great example of a comprehensive renovation of the city, thanks to which it has retained its original resort character. Thanks to the unified forms of decoration, the frontage of the buildings look harmonious, and the laurel ornaments give them artistry, which allows them to break away from reality and encourage rest. Accents in the form of villas with different forms prevent fatigue and add expression to the whole surrounding. However, without the use of wood, this would never have been achieved. This can be seen, for example, when looking at Binz photographs from the GDR period, where many houses were damaged, some of them lacked wooden elements. Today, after a comprehensive renovation or even after rebuilding, the eyes of crowds of tourists eagerly visiting Binz enjoy it.

Streszczenie: *Wykorzystanie drewna w architekturze kurortów nadbałtyckich na przykładzie miasta Binz w Rugii.* W artykule omówiono rolę drewna w architekturze kurortowej na przykładzie miasta Binz w Rugii. Dzięki pieczołowitej renowacji oraz odtworzeniu detalu budynków w Binz udało się zachować dawny klimat, harmonię sielankowej architektury zgodnej z naturą, dzięki zastosowaniu drewna do budowy czy wykończenia i elementów dekoracyjnych budynków. Binz jest świetnym przykładem dużego znaczenia drewna, jako materiału o szerokim zastosowaniu w architekturze kurortowej, niezależnie od ogólnej stylistyki budynków. Problematyka została omówiona na tle zagadnień dotyczących popularyzacji architektury drewnianej i stylów narodowych w XIX stuleciu.

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