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KAZIMIERZ AND PODGÓRZE SALT STORAGE
(16TH – 19TH CENTURY)

Abstract

The Kazimierz salt storage operated from the 16th century on the area of the city of Kazimierz, on the right bank of Zakazimierka River, which initially was a peripheral and later the main river bed of the Vistula River. It was the storage of salt intended for rafting down the Vistula to the Masovian salt storages. Simultaneously, the facility operates as a shipping harbour organising salt rafting three times a year, serviced by rafters supplying proper vessels for salt rafting, including barges, *komięga* rafts, *galara*, *byk* and *lichtun*.

The development of the Kazimierz salt storage consisted of a house (a dwelling and a place where saltworks officials resided during salt loading), known as the manor house with adjoining farm buildings, including stables and storage sheds, distinguished by their vast sizes, assigned for salt loaves (salt clumps with columnar shapes and specific dimensions) and barrel salt (salt loaded into barrels in the mine and transported in this manner) usually built in parallel to the river bed, right by the water, next to the waterfront reinforced by fascine and wood. Descriptions of the development prepared by royal commissioners are included in the text of saltworks commissions from the period between 1581 and 1762.

Destruction of the Kazimierz salt storage during the siege of Cracow by the Swedes and the repeated flooding of the Vistula in the 1670s resulted in closing of the facility. Its role between 1690 and 1717 was taken over by the salt storage and shipping harbour in Mogiła. The Kazimierz salt storage was officially reopened in 1718. Construction investments were conducted between 1725 and 1751, and a manor house, a storage shed, a stable and an additional shed for lime (rafted down the Vistula to Warsaw for the needs of the royal court) were subsequently built. Between 1730 and 1762, a modern harbour was constructed with stanchions and an outer water gauge.

The Austrian administration which took over the management of the Kazimierz storage after the first partition of Poland in 1772, changed its official name into *Podgorzer Salzniederlage* in 1787; legal changes pertaining to the principles of salt trading made it subject to the Directorate of Salt Affairs in Lviv. The organisation of salt rafting was the obligation of the Imperial and Royal Podgórze Rafting Office (*C.K. Podgórski Urząd Defluitacyjny*), whose tasks were monitored, until 1795 (after further areas of the Republic of Poland were incorporated in the Austrian monarchy), by the Imperial and Royal Directorate for Salt Affairs in Podgórze (*C.K. Dyrekcja do Spraw Solnych in Podgórze*) (in 1805 transferred to Wieliczka). Between 1809 and 1815, the Podgórze storage, together with the entire district, was subject to the administration of the Duchy of Warsaw.

Construction investments from the Austrian times include a second storage building made of brick (after 1804), renovation of administrative buildings, the waterfront, regulation of the Vistula River, as well as erection of a new shed with two residential annexes and a large stable building with a storey. The last investment took place after 1810 and before 1820. The status of development is confirmed by the maps of 1779 – 1847. In 1847, the newly erected stable building was taken-over by the Austrian army for the cavalry needs.

The salt storage was handling the sale of salt for the Prussian government and the Russian authorities of the Kingdom of Poland. The final expiry of such contracts (in 1858 and 1872), along with development of rail transport resulted in closing of the governmental salt storage in Podgórze. Since 1873, the storage buildings, handed over to the Poviát Treasury Directorate (*Powiatowa Dyrekcja Skarbu*) in Cracow, were used by commercial companies, army and treasury guards. They were disassembled during construction of the third bridge across the Vistula and Vistula boulevards (approx. 1912). Only the stable building has been preserved from the entire Podgórze salt storage and continued to be used by the army until 1939.