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Transformations of the Vicinity of Daniłowicz Shaft Headroom and the
Park of St. Kinga in Wieliczka

Abstract

The paper focuses on reconstruction of changes occurring on the surface in the vicinity of the Wieliczka's Daniłowicz Shaft from the beginning of its operation in the 17th century until the present times. It shows changes in the vicinity of the facility constituting, at the present moment, the most recognizable part of the above-ground infrastructure of the mine and the main place where tourist traffic in Wieliczka is concentrated. It presents facilities which exist in the area between Daniłowicza Street (from the east) and Matejki Street and Kinga's shaft headroom (from the west) and within the borders of plots belonging to the Wieliczka Salt Mine and Cracow Saltworks Museum Wieliczka. It mentions a number of shaft-adjointing buildings, residential houses, an employee bathhouse (the so-called saltworks bathhouse), public toilets, green areas, landscape architecture, including the decorative fence from the side of Daniłowicza Street. The issue of foundation and development (since 1870) of the present-day Park of St. Kinga was brought to attention in the article. This landscape-type park, established by the saltworks company as a specific form of a patronage project, harmoniously combined various production, transport, residential and social functions. Open to the public, it has evolved towards a spa park model in relation to intense tourist traffic and sanatorium activities.

The article touches upon the contemporary conservation problems related to the complex of above-ground facilities, which should be carefully protected as integral elements of the cultural heritage of the historical salt mine in Wieliczka. Protection of cultural landscape of this type is a great challenge – in the past, several historical buildings were demolished and in place of the disassembled authentic building of the so-called Saltworks Bathhouse, a new structure was erected for hotel purposes, making references to the picturesque forms of architecture from the beginning of the 20th century.