

ON CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF EDUCATION

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TOURISM IN THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION. CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS¹

Introductory remarks

The recent political turn has affected all spheres of social, cultural, intellectual and economic life in our country. With the passage of time, these changes become more noticeable and perceptible for the whole society. Termination of the so-called „cold war” and breaking of „the iron curtain” which used to divide Europe (and the whole world) into two hostile camps, created new opportunities for development.

The first symptom of this new regional and global order was the growth in personal international contacts. This refers not only to business, scientific and cultural „exchange”, but also to the rank-and-file citizens’ interest in the mythical and inaccessible world, which once was known to them only as presented in the official propaganda or in their friends’ tales. And so, now Poland „is entering Europe” where she entered some thousand years ago – as the opponents of this slogan point out.

Independence, economic crisis and tourism

Citizens of Poland and some other countries of the former eastern bloc also enjoy freedom of travel, which was always a natural and obvious right for inhabitants of the West. These changes have created an entirely new situation for tourism which is understood here as a sociological phenomenon of „spatial mobility, i.e. temporary free movement from place to place, from community to community, as well as personal interactions with the visited environments (natural, cultural and social)”². This kind of tourist interaction under the former totalitarian regimes were thought to threaten their ideological and political systems. This resulted in

¹ Turystyka i krajoznawstwo okresu przełomu a implikacje kulturalno-edukacyjne, *Kultura i Edukacja* 1993, nr 1(3).

² K. Przeclawski, Turystyka a wychowanie (Tourism and Education), Warszawa 1973:12. See also J. Mączka, Definicje i określenia występujące w polskiej literaturze fachowej dotyczącej rekreacji (Definitions and Notions Met in the Polish Specialized Literature about Leisure), Tourism and Sightseeing, *Information Bulletin of the Institute of Tourism* 1974, No 3.

some purposeful restrictions on the tourist movement which was intended to control the import of „dangerous” political ideas and liberation trends that could have endangered the regimes.³ That is why all aspirations connected with visiting western countries were suppressed. So-called „passport policy” regulated the extent of civilian liberties. Disdaining the regulations of the Declaration of Human Rights, the authorities decided who could travel abroad, beyond the symbolic Berlin Wall.

Under the new circumstances, it is not passports but money which limits foreign tourism in the new democratic countries. At the same time, a class of the new rich has been creating demands for high standard, luxury tourist services. To meet these demands, tourist agencies offer more and more exotic trips and expensive (“5 star”) hotels, while a majority of the pauperised society cannot afford even the cheapest holiday. The result is a demand for cheaper forms of tourism, particularly for pupils and students, for example cooperation between particular institutions, cities or regions to „exchange” visitors from different countries. Foreign tourism is also hindered by the growing expense of travelling itself (petrol).

Paradoxically, hampering traditional forms of tourism, the economic crisis in Poland promotes a specific kind of „business” trip. Unemployment and low living standards in the country force the citizens to look for „good luck” abroad. A great many „tourists” go abroad to find jobs without work permit, to trade and to profiteer. These two stimuli (no passport restrictions and the economic crisis) brought about a rapid growth in trips abroad, 6 million in 1985 and 10 million in 1988, up to 19 million in 1989 and 22 million in 1990.⁴ Some tourists used to go abroad several times a year. A great majority of them were mere wheeler-dealers.

In 1990, 31% of tourists going to West Germany intended to spend 1-2 days there. They travelled to West Berlin mainly in order to buy or sell goods.⁵

The situation was repeated in 1991. The research carried out by the Institute of Tourism showed that the main purpose of these three-day trips was shopping (27%) or family visits (35%).⁶ Since *de facto* many people went abroad to do shopping, an invitation from their relatives was a mere excuse to cross the border. A formal invitation, for example, was necessary for individual tourists intending to go to the former Soviet Union or to Czechoslovakia. Having devoted his stay abroad to trade, the so-called tourist often failed to visit his friends or relatives, and formal invitations soon became a commodity in the „tourist market”.

Recent years have witnessed the same phenomenon appearing in the former Soviet republics, whose inhabitants find their visits to Poland a very profitable business. Invitations are given in mass by the state notary offices, but it is a „public secret” that they (*in*

³ J. Szczepański, *Sprawy ludzkie* (Human Affairs), Warszawa 1980:103.

⁴ M. Zawadzki, *Zagraniczne wyjazdy ludności Polski w 1990 i 1991 r.* (Trips abroad by the Polish population in 1990-1991), *Express Information of the Institute of Tourism*, Warszawa 1991:1. It should be added that only one-way trips abroad were counted. In 1980 only 9 million of Poles crossed the border.

⁵ *Op. cit.*: 10.

⁶ K. Łopaciński, *Wyjazdy zagraniczne Polaków w pierwszej połowie 1991 r.* (Poles Abroad in the early 1991), *Express Information of the Institute of Tourism*, Warszawa 1991.

blanco) can be bought easily at bazaars in both countries. The Polish authorities have been trying to stop these procedures but they have not been successful yet.

The phenomenon described above indicates that both the political turn of events (in former socialist countries) and the economic crisis have contributed to this new form of tourism. Social interactions between tourists and inhabitants of the visited countries generate some very difficult social problems which border on the social norm and social pathology⁷. Perhaps the term *para-tourism* is the best one to describe them. It is easily noticeable that these phenomena substantially endanger the socialization and education process. Thus „tourism may greatly affect the process of social integration and disintegration as well. It can contribute to the formation of the social order, but it may also bring about the demolition of the old one.”⁸ Pedagogy aims at the promotion of these integration and formation processes, and in this context, any destructive tendencies have to be followed by the processes of a construction of a new reality, whose fundamentals include generally accepted humanistic values.

It is true, however, that a quantitative development of tourism is usually accompanied by different social deviations. However, it also creates a good chance to improve and enrich its „spiritual and intellectual” forms. The fact that a crude and embarrassing „trade tourism” at bazaars in Berlin, Vienna and Budapest has been gradually dying out allows more optimistic prospects for future tourism.⁹ The temporary nature of „trade tourism” (which was considerably limited when Polish money became a changeable currency and when the discrepancy between Polish and foreign prices was soothed) allows the hope that it will disappear completely when the economic situation improves.¹⁰ At any rate, passport restrictions are not an acceptable preventive measure here.

Freedom of tourism cannot be identified with freedom of mobility because the latter is one of the fundamental human rights, while the former is limited by respective social norms, the safety of tourists, stereotypes or merely by the schedule of a given tourist trip.¹¹ Violation of these norms and regulations may lead to some deviant behaviours since, as Krzysztof Przeclawski believes, „tourism can generate pathological social phenomena in terms of its influence on tourists themselves”.¹²

⁷ See also: M. A. Text of J. Maciąg, *The Educational Eu-functions and Disfunctions of Foreign Tourism*, Institute of Pedagogy at NCU, Toruń 1992.

⁸ K. Przeclawski, *Humanistyczne podstawy turystyki (Humanistic Foundations of Tourism)*, Warszawa 1986:22.

⁹ In the recent years, mass-media have given numerous examples of these kind of the tourists' behaviour. The titles of articles and reports speak for themselves: „Everybody Who Can Trade”, „Horror at the Border”, „Leave to Earn”, 'Disfunctions of Tourism. The Polish Tourists Abroad' by I. Kulesza, in which he writes that the press evaluates the tourists' behaviour in different categories: „On one hand, the journalists condemn these behaviours, on the other, try to exuse them and put blame on foreigners.” [in:] *Tourism and Socio-economic Development, The Year-book of the Central Programmer for Basic Research 08.06*”, Warszawa 1991:96.

¹⁰ 6% fall in the trips abroad in 1991 compare to 1990 (20754 thousand) seems to prove this. The data refer only to our west border. See: K. Łopaciński (The Poles' Trips Abroad in 1991), and by the same author, (The Poles' Trips Abroad in the Early 1992), *Express Information of the Institute of Tourism*, Warszawa 1992.

¹¹ K. Przeclawski, *Humanistic...*, op.cit: 61-62; and by the same author, *Stan turystyki polskiej (The Condition of Polish Tourism)*, *The problems of Tourism*, 1991 No 1-2. See also: D. Mac Cannel, *The Tourist. A New Theory of Leisure Class*. New Yor 1976.

¹² K. Przeclawski, *Humanistic...*, op. cit.: 62.

Political changes and youth tourism

The rapid social and political changes gave birth to some new processes and social phenomena. Tourism and youth tourism belong to them. The young are particularly vulnerable to everything which is new, unknown and forbidden. Equipped with all these attributes, tourism is for young people an extremely interesting form of pastime. However, their participation in different forms of tourism make young people share all related threats. Moreover, only a small minority of them „are aware of their own social situation and fail to notice some national and global problems”¹³ which accompany our „entering Europe”.

Enchanted by this entering, or we should rather say „return” to Europe, we do not realize that our youth is not adequately prepared to participate in foreign tourism. Neither are they able to take intellectual or emotional advantage of their trips abroad. What is meant here is not only their behaviour before, during and after a visit¹⁴ but also their education for tourism, practised in accordance with the EUROPEAN standards.

This form of tourism excludes the herds of „tourists” who swarm to cities and bazaars offering cheaper merchandise¹⁵. Meanwhile this form of „contraband-trade tourism” has prevailed among young people in Poland. We witness this unfavourable, or simply pathological, phenomenon in bazaars of western countries, at the frontier post, or in international coaches and trains. The most alarming thing is the age of these „tourists” — they are not only university and secondary school students but also children.

Therefore, questions which should be answered here are: *Will this group of young people be able to complement their future trips abroad with a cognitive component? Will they be able to experience true emotions in the face of beautiful architecture or wild life? How will these „trade tourism” experiences affect moral, ethical or aesthetic attitudes of the young generation? And last, but not least, whether this pattern of a smuggler-merchant will find many followers among young people in general?*

The above questions call for scientific research. However, it already seems obvious that tourist education in our country is far from being satisfactory. Meanwhile, this type of education is necessary to teach our countrymen civilized tourist behaviours before they leave for the tourist routes in Europe and beyond¹⁶. Particularly, the Polish youth abroad should remember that their behaviour gives evidence and forms an image of our country in the eyes of foreigners. They are to be taught that the notion of national dignity is not

¹³Z. Kwieciński, *The Young and the Values and Norms of Social Life. Empirical Research*, Toruń 1987:225. The author refers mainly to „the 15 years old graduates from primary school” but it seems that older students do not go too far from this pattern.

¹⁴Some different definitions of these stages are found in literature in of the topic. See: M. Boyer, *Le tourisme*, Paris 1972; B. Farrell, *Tourism. Human Conflicts, 'Case from Pacific'*, *Annals of Tourism Research* 1979, No 2. They are also reflected in some methodological pamphlets about school and club tours, e.g. T. Łobożewicz (ed.): *Sightseeing and Tourism at School*, Warszawa 1978; K. Denek, *Know-how for Organizers of School Tours*, Warszawa 1985.

¹⁵This analogy is by no means accidental. Poles have been successfully removed by Asiatics from the former Soviet republics. This phenomena is more and more visible also at bazaars in Poland.

¹⁶J. A. Malinowski, *Sightseeing and Tourism in the Period of Transition*, a paper delivered at the IV Congress of the Polish Sightseeing in Opole (1990). See also: a report of discussion in workgroup V by T. Kowalik, (*Ziemia* 1990:197-200), who stated that J. A. Malinowski advocated in favour of touristic education of the young **with regard** to our own identity and distinct character.

only an empty phrase but simply their duty. It would be an oversimplification to assume that only foreign tours threaten tourism. Some improper behaviour can also be seen in the country or even during guided tours for school children. It proves that being an important factor, our economic situation is not the only one which influences tourist behaviour. We can notice an upsetting and deviant form of social behaviour of young people in youth hostels, on trains and buses or on tourist routes throughout Poland. What is very agitating, this behaviour seems to result from the crass educational incompetence of the teachers taking care of these young people.

Strangely enough, this wild fancy of unrestrained, most often drunk, young tourists is seldom censored or punished by the education authorities or parents who are little interested in their children's tourist behaviour. It is only the press which sometimes deplores this social phenomenon. However, most of the tourist ventures spoiled by the young trouble-makers are not given much publicity. Of course, they cannot be a pattern to follow or to enrich young people intellectually and spiritually.

These anomalies are still more annoying, because they hinder young people from taking part in true tourism, which as such represents valuable educational values¹⁷. Moreover, parents and schools cannot often afford to pay for sightseeing tours organized for their children.

Freedom of travelling and sightseeing

Sightseeing is an intellectual soul of tourism¹⁸. The new political situation calls for a re-evaluation of social phenomena connected with sightseeing in the country and abroad.

It was at the IV Congress of Polish Sightseeing¹⁹ where this problem was discussed by both practicians and theoreticians of tourism and sightseeing²⁰. All the former congresses summarized the hitherto achievements of tourism and formulated its prospects for the future. The congress held in Opole²¹ focused on the future rather than the past. The programme theses of the congress were outlined in the programme paper, whose title – *Sightseeing on the verge of the 21st century* – speaks for itself²².

¹⁷ The evidence can be found in the abundant literature, e.g. K. Denek, *Krajoznawstwo i turystyka w wychowaniu dzieci i młodzieży szkolnej* (Sightseeing and Tourism in Education of Children and School Students), Warszawa 1989; T. Łożewicz, op. cit.; L. Turoś, *Turystyka i samokształcenie* (Tourism and Self-education), Siedlce 1984.

¹⁸ Sightseeing is understood here as many-sided and complex knowledge of a country, its past and present (with special consideration to one's own region) which is acquired in a group or individually during tours, and from other sources. This definition was accepted by the Main Board of the Polish Tourism Association (PTTK).

¹⁹ Introductory papers were prepared by some outstanding scientists, e.g. A. Gieysztor, K. Mazurski, T. Jarowiecka, J. Kolbuszewski, K. Przeclawski, Z. T. Wierzbicki and J. Zdebski.

²⁰ Information referring the I Congress can be found in a paper by P. Małuśkiewicz, *I Ogólnopolski Kongres Krajoznawczy w Poznaniu* (The I All-Polish Sightseeing Congress in Poznań), *Kronika Wielkopolska* 1990, No 1. The congress was held in 1929.

²¹ The contribution of regional councils was presented in Regional Councils before the IV Congress of Polish Sightseeing (Sejmiki organizowane przed IV Kongresem Krajoznawstwa Polskiego), (ed.) K. R. Mazurski, J. Twaróg, Warszawa 1990; see also: J. A. Malinowski, *Współczesne problemy edukacji krajoznawczej dzieci i młodzieży* (Contemporary Problems of Touristic Education of Children and Young People), *Nauczyciel i Wychowanie* 1989, No 1-2.

²² See Z. Gordon, *Krajoznawstwo u progu XXI w.* (Sightseeing at the Verge of the 21st Century), *Ziemia* 1990.

The scheme of sightseeing for tomorrow considered the complexity of the internal situation in Poland as well as its European and world determinants. It was declared that any financial and civilizational deficiencies cannot excuse our narrow-mindedness and shortsightedness while formulating the tasks of future tourism. It was assumed that it is a function of tourism to counteract a visible crisis of values, to reconstruct the national identity of Poles, to protect nature and culture, and to prepare people for living in the new European situation²³.

The present integration of Europe requires a re-defined notion of „sightseeing”. As K. Przeclawski argues, „the notion *country-sightseeing* should be replaced by the notion *world-sightseeing*. In fact, it is not the phrase that matters. The point is, to use the term *sightseeing* not only with reference to Poland but to the whole world, and particularly to Europe. (...) We will not enter Europe without a good knowledge of this continent, and if we are not able to think in a global, open manner”²⁴.

Evolution of tourism is an unavoidable and desirable process. However, admission into the European community of democratic states cannot be done **at the sacrifice of our own national and state identity**. Thus, the balance between regionalism and affection towards motherland and a sense of European and world citizenship should be carefully kept. Therefore, apart from „world-sightseeing”, „country-sightseeing” should be equally promoted, and particularly the knowledge of our own country and its cultural heritage²⁵. So, the thesis „that even after complete abolition of borders, the notions of „motherland” and „national heritage” will survive” sounds justifiable²⁶.

Region is a territorial unit which is going to grow in importance in the united Europe of the future. That is why a good knowledge of one’s own region seems a key task.

Region used to be a span which connected the country and national culture heritage in the past. Nowadays, it is the whole Polish culture heritage which exists beyond the borders of our country that forms a span between „country-sightseeing” and „world-sightseeing”. This span comprises knowledge of the history, achievements and current status of the Polish emigrants and their contribution to world output in the fields of culture, technology and science. As Aleksander Gieysztor argues: „Sightseeing of today explains why we have grown into one with Polish soil, but it also shows our interconnectedness with traits of Polish culture possible to ‘track down’ anywhere”²⁷. Fully accepting this opinion, Krzysztof Łopaciński remarks additionally: „If we mention our return to Europe we should not forget that our family, trade, legal and national traditions are deeply rooted not only in the Polish, but also Italian, German, Lithuanian, Bielorrussian, Ukrainian and Turkish culture. Then, closing tourism within the borders of Poland is an unforgivable mistake”²⁸.

²³ See: The Resolution and Conclusions, *Ziemia* 1990.

²⁴ K. Przeclawski, Młodzież a turystyka (The Young and Tourism), *Ziemia* 1990:181.

²⁵ J. A. Malinowski, Krajoznawstwo i turystyka... (Sightseeing and Tourism), op. cit.

²⁶ R. Harajda, Przygotowujemy krajoznawstwo bez granic (We Have Been Arranging Sightseeing with No Borders), *Ziemia* 1990:192.

²⁷ A. Gieysztor, Krajoznawstwo i tożsamość kultury (Sightseeing and Cultural Identity), *Ziemia* 1990:97.

²⁸ K. Łopaciński, Turystyka a wychowanie. Dylematy współczesności (Tourism and Education. The Present Dilemmas), *Ziemia* 1990:185.

Tourism can mean studying guidebooks, albums, films etc. But first of all, it is a personal interaction with a given territory, culture or community, which of course costs money. The question is how to promote tourism without an excessive and inaccessible financial support in our present economic situation. One solution seems to be different forms of cooperation between schools, tourist associations abroad, and particularly in bordering countries. As for youth tourism, the former international long-term agreements on tourist „exchange” should be recognized and continued.

While doing tourism abroad and „tracking down” the traits of Polish culture there, we should respect the national feelings of the inhabitants of a given country who may appear extremely vulnerable to our investigations²⁹. Fortunately, the situation in which Polish tourists in the Soviet Union were forced to visit grave yards (Rossa Vilna, Luczakov — Lvov) in secret, since it would have annoyed the Soviet guides (and some of the more eager Polish guides), has long passed away.

A cognitive value of sightseeing (particularly of historical sightseeing) requires a true interpretation and evaluation of the past. To obey this methodological and moral dictate, we should accept Bogdan Nawroczyński's concept of integrated education which includes forming not only patriotic attitudes towards one's own country, but also humanistic ideals in general³⁰. However, this kind of patriotic education should be clearly distinguished from any nationalistic ideology, and the teacher who employs tourism in the education process has to emphasise the contribution of other nations to our national culture.

Thus, sightseeing must be open to the world, and the youth should feel affiliation with their community. It is particularly important for the unification process in Europe and for national schools in the countries that have just won national independence. It is the teachers' task to build up the national identity of their students and to prevent nationalistic hostility which would affect the development of international tourism³¹.

Sightseeing itself includes two componenets: cognition and emotional involvement of the tourist, e.g. feeling of national pride and love for one's motherland. Nothing strange then, that tourism was thought to be an important pedagogical tool in the period of national slavery or when national identity of the country was being built. Therefore, education techniques used in tourism, supplemented with some new methods, should be introduced into our contemporary pedagogy. For example, one of these educational methods could be sightseeing camps for young people from Poland, Bielorrussia, Ukraine etc, held in a given country and situated in the region which used to be inaccessible for tourists in the past³². These camps could result in mutual respect and communication. The educational technique possible to apply during these camps may be a comparison of the pre- and post-war descriptions of this region in guidebooks and specialized magazines such as „The

²⁹ A. Gieysztor, op. cit.

³⁰ B. Nawroczyński, *O wychowaniu i wychowawcach* (On Education and Teachers), Warszawa 1968.

³¹ J. A. Malinowski, *Krajeznavstvo v roboti včytelia nacionalnoi školy*, [in:] *Učytel nacionalnoi školy. Tezy nauково-praktyčnoj konferencii*, Ternopil 1991, part I:119-122.

³² A problem of hermetic enclaves intended for tourists discussed J. Krauzowicz and P. Ostrowski, *Turystyka zagraniczna a przemiany społeczne i kulturowe w krajach odwiedzanych* (Foreign Tourism and Socio-Cultural Changes in the Visited Countries) [in:] *Turystyka a człowiek i społeczeństwo* (Tourism, Man and Society), K. Przeclawski (ed.), Warszawa 1984:154-157.

Earth" (*Ziemia*) or „The Eagle's Flight" (*Orli lot*). Undoubtedly, this would be a revealing history lesson for young people from both countries. The following year, students from Bielorrussia could visit the region inhabited by the Bielorrussian minority in Poland. In this way, that form of tourism could fulfil some cognitive and educational purposes and develop a mutual feeling of ethnic tolerance – a desirable attitude in all post-socialist states.

This kind of tourism, acceptable in the transition period³³ promotes so-called intercultural education, i.e. the education which aims at the understanding and acceptance of cultural differences. It is to prepare people to „interact with representatives of different cultures and to strengthen their own national identity through rational reasoning"³⁴. According to Danuta Markowska, „inter-culture education does not focus on shaping one, unified, global culture nor at replacement of one's native culture by a foreign one. On the contrary, insight of these cultures, their paradigms, symbols, institutions and behaviour patterns is a prerequisite for the achievement of the required values and a strong national identity"³⁵.

Final remarks

This paper was supposed to show how tourism and sightseeing „survived" the great political changes in Poland and other countries of the former socialist bloc. I intended to describe those components of tourism which have been most affected, and those which have been left „untouched".

The recent changes in tourism are of both a quantitative and qualitative nature and have both favourable and unfavourable consequences. One of them is the dilemma of choice between „massive tourism" and sightseeing³⁶. Another refers to a broadly discussed educational function of these two pastimes: it is indisputable that „tourism creates a good opportunity to abolish divisions, to think about other people in global human categories, and to look for something which connects rather than divides people"³⁷.

Thus, tourism in the transitional period makes a unique and interesting field of study. Paradoxically, these very important socio-cultural phenomena attract little attention on the part of researchers. This refers both to sociologists and pedagogues. On the other hand, the latter should be particularly interested in tourism since the animation techniques tourism employs (those which take into consideration individuals and their autonomy) may be very helpful in the education process itself.

³³ Thanks to the political changes in Poland and former Soviet Union, visiting territories that belonged to Poland before 1939 has become possible; these regions belong to Bielorrussia, Ukraine and Lithuania now.

³⁴ D. Markowska, *Siódmy nieprzyjaciel i siódmy świata kierunek* (The Seventh Enemy and the Seventh Geographical Direction), [in:] *Nieobecne dyskursy* (Absent Discourses), Z. Kwieciński (ed.), Toruń 1992, part II:73.

³⁵ The same: 73-74.

³⁶ A. Kamiński, *Studia i szkice pedagogiczne* (Pedagogical Studies and Essays), Warszawa 1978:298.

³⁷ K. Przeclawski, *Człowiek – Turystyka – Społeczeństwo*, [in:] (Man – Tourism – Society), [in:] *Tourism and Man...*, op. cit.: 8.