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CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE BESKID NISKI MOUNTAINS

Abstract: This study is described in review manner a general characterization of cultural heritage of the Beskid Niski Mts. and the interactions among select elements this heritage. The author paid attention to a specificity and a character of the cultural and historical values, which are a factor of tourism development in this region.

Key words: cultural heritage, touristic activation, touristic movement

Attractiveness of the tourist regions highly depends on natural and cultural environment's values and is comprehended as area, where global amount of tourists accumulates because of attractions and supply of the tourist services (Gołembski, 1998). Cultural environment's attractions can refer to nonmaterial aspect (for example tradition, folklore, religion, enterprises) or material (sacral buildings, castles and fortifications, castles, palaces, cemeteries). From the tourist point of view it is very important to differentiate site attractions and enterprise attractions (festivals, fair) while decision concerning arrival depends on existing enterprise in given place and the time. In the field of tourism "cultural heritage" definition has been in common use for the last a few years, which in the light of UNESCO convention regarding protection of the worldwide cultural and environmental heritage means *monuments and groups of buildings of the high value from historical, art and scientific point of view, and sites of the significant, universal value from historical, esthetical, ethnological and anthropological point of view* (Medlik 1995).

Appropriate making cultural environment available to visitors is indispensable condition of tourism development, which has become one of the most important economical factors in the region's life for the last years. In the process of region restructuring a local populations are higher and higher interested in their own economical development throughout tourism. It appears in sites, which attract the visitors. The site

is also connected with cultural heritage: cultural heritage is a part of site and influences its features.

Cultural heritage is not only a base of scientific knowledge regarding human past and his culture, but also is a material register, which comes from the past of nations' identity and ethnic groups. Being particular source of memory, cultural heritage plays huge role in consolidation of sense identity and relations between selected human units, social groups and chosen country, region or site (Ashworth 1999).

The aim of this article is to introduce the specification of cultural heritage of The Beskid Niski Mts. as a factor of tourism development in region.

In the Carpathian Mts. – The Beskid Niski Mts. belongs to the largest physico-geographical units if area is taken into account (about 2100 km²) and one of the lowest per cent of population density (41 persons/km² in comparison 127 persons/km² in the Carpathian Mts. in 1988). Due to war operations and, first of all, to removal actions: in 1941 towards the Soviet Union, in 1944-1947 towards the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and in 1947 according to "Vistula" Action towards Regained Areas, this region bore huge population and material losses. The consequence of human displacement was coming to existence the areas called by A. Maryński as "population emptiness". Till present days 26 villages (14.8% general amount) has not been inhabited. Signatures of houses and cemeteries' existence, the ruins of the Orthodox Church, savage fruit orchards exist also today and are one of the landscape components, which can not be notified anywhere in Europe (Koszałka 1999).

The Beskid Niski Mts. is a very attractive region if the scenery is taken into account and it has great tourist values. However, in comparison to neighboring regions – in the east the Bieszczady Mts. and in the west the Beskid Sądecki Mts. – it is characterized by low communication access and low tourist economy process. Tourist model, which exists on the researched area and has its source in area history, is a unique issue and has never been seen in any part of the Carpathian Mts. before. From one point of view there is a low interest among leaders in mass tourism, and from the other side there is a high interest among individual tourists and youth groups (mainly students) – both examples create tourist movement in region and make it explorative (Birek 1992). Shape of this model correlates with cultural wealth created by living communities and history, which left clear trace in the scenery.

Great ethnographic values, cultural wealth of Łemko people and their heritage draw tourists like a magnet. Motivation to participation in the tourist movement in the Beskid Niski Mts. are important component for tourist attractiveness.

Until World War II the Beskid Niski Mts., which was the part of so called Łemkowszczyzna belonged to separated anthrop geographical region (Smoleński J. 1935). From ethnographical point of view 73.6% of general region surface are situated on the Łemkowszczyzna terrain, which border was marked out by Roman Reinfuss before World War II (Soja 2001).

Russian Orthodox churches and Greek Catholic and Russian orthodox chapels, mainly those from 18th and 19th c., representing several architectural types, are inseparable elements of the scenery. They mainly decide about high attractiveness of the Beskid Niski Mts. Łemko people created their own style of sacral building, which has never

been noticed in different area, but their place of existence. Typical issue for East culture is traditional longitudinal solid, covered with splashed sky, but here baroque helmets and towers are added, adopted from Małopolska and Roman Catholic Churches. Before World War II on the researched area there existed 151 Russian and Greek Catholic Orthodox sacral objects, including 131 Orthodox Churches and 20 chapels. Wood was basic building material, hence most of them, i.e. 87% of the whole, were wooden. The most beautiful preserved Orthodox Churches are located in upper Ropa river basin: Bartne, Hańczowa, Kwiatów, Owczary (Rychwałd in the past), Ropica Górna, Skwirtne, and in upper Wisłoka river basin: Kwiatów, Świątkowa Wielka, Świątkowa Mała.

World War II and its consequences, and first of all removal actions of native societies in the Beskid Niski Mts. contributed to devastation of tremendous amount of sacral objects. Together with removal actions there was started devastation and cover up Russian and Ukrainian tracks with the aim to secure oneself against not comfortable national and religious problems in the future. Greek Catholic sacral objects became the subjects of ideological manipulation, what was the result of the country's present policy towards Greek Catholic Church, which dominated before World War II in the Beskid Niski Mts. (58.7% of confessors in 1921) and authority relation to national minorities. As a part of post Ukrainian properties, according to the decree from 5th September 1947, these objects were left to individual disposition for the Treasury (Musiał 1990). 56 Orthodox Churches and 14 chapels do not exist any more, i.e. 46% of all existing Orthodox Churches before 1939 (Brykowski 1997; Wojewoda 1994). Only a few monumental objects were destroyed during World War II or battles with UPA till 1947, the other were destroyed during the peacetime. After the war Orthodox Churches were simply dismantled, sometimes they decayed by themselves, without maintenance and protection. Some of them were adapted for warehouses, which also led to devastation.

On the researched area there do not exist the old Orthodox Churches in the following countries: Barwinek, Ciechania, Czeremcha, Czertyżne, Czystohorb, Darów, Długie, Dołżyca, Grab, Jasiel, Jawornik, Lipna, Lipowiec, Moszczaniec, Mszana, Nieznajowa, Olszanka (Wilsznia in the past), Ożenna, Polany Surowniczne, Puławy, Radocyna, Rostajne, Surowica, Szklary, Świerzowa Ruska, Tarnawka, Wisłoczek, Wisłok Górny, Wola Wyżna, Zawoja, Zydranowa, Żydowskie. In Bartne, in monumental wooden Orthodox Church from 1812, branch house of Regional Museum in Nowy Sącz and Sanok came into existence. At present a few Orthodox Churches and chapels are threaten – generally by oblivion. Buildings, which had not been exploited for years can tumbledown or be devastated, what took place in the sixties in Nieznajowa. Picturesque mountain's scenery consists on wooden Orthodox Churches and chapels and are the certificate for architectural wealth and regional culture. Some of them are in the state, which does not let forget about the history and which decided about their present appearance. There are no huge, overpopulated villages like before World War II. So far the number of population in the Beskid Niski Mts. has not reached the state from 1921: 88 149 in 1998 towards 102 886 in 1921 (Koszałka 1999). For many tourists it is a drawing magnet, which is a condition of uniquely "wild" region.

Unique cultural heritage of the researched area is stressed by history of the Beskid Niski Mts., and particularly events from time of World War I and II: gorlicka operation

in 1915 and dukielsko-preszowska operation in 1944. Although, keepsakes from dukielsko-preszowska operation are gathered in a few places in the middle part of the Beskid Niski Mts., keepsakes from gorlicka operation – war cemeteries – are situated on the wide space, adequately to front line from 1915. They are inseparable elements of cultural scenery in the Beskid Niski Mts., which appropriately popularized, can become an important issue in the tourism development of the region.

On the terrain of the Beskid Niski Mts. there were built 79 cemeteries, i.e. 19.7% of the total amount of objects existed in district “Western Galicja”. Over 80% of all cemeteries were designed by two artists: Dušan Jurkovič (28 objects) and Hans Mayr (37 objects). Unfortunately, one can observe a lot of destroyed, neglected and what is more devastated objects (for example Pętna, Rotunda, Długie, Lipna). Among 79 cemeteries, nearly 35 are in bad condition. Considerable amount of destroyed and neglected objects are situated on the terrain of uninhabited villages till 1947 and uninhabited one so far like the following: Czarna, Długie, Lipna, Krzywa. Removal actions towards Łemko population during 1944-1947 was the beginning of the secondary nature wilding process, caused by economy disappearance on the large area, and in consequence the process of natural woods wide spreading. Higher situated cemeteries, which in the beginning were noticed from large distance, at present are hidden in a dense shrubs or in the wood and it is very difficult to find them (for example cemetery number 50 on the Wysota near the Wysowa). Significant role in the popularization of knowledge regarding Galician war cemeteries is played by tourist route near the object like above. Until nineties of 20th c. one had passed over precious objects, situated in inaccessible places. Only for the last a few years one can notice some positive changes in the sphere of improvement towards some routes course or signs of enter routes to Galician war cemeteries. At present, there are enter routes to most of war objects, usually along old roads, marked out during the time of cemeteries building process during 1915-1918. Bearing in mind amount of war cemeteries and their historical, cultural and landscape values, it seems to be highly unsatisfactory and the process requires further and effective actions from an appropriate service. Before World War II Roman Reinfuss paid much of attention to this problem and in 1935 he appealed to take into account war cemeteries if tourist routes are planned to be built (Reinfuss, 1935). An important example of inappropriate action is omission one of the most beautiful objects – cemetery number 51 on the Rotunda, designed by Dušan Jurkovič. Only from 1980 this cemetery, as the first one and for a long time the only one, has been recognized as the monument. The rest of war cemeteries has been included in the monument register for the last ten years. For over 80 years cemetery on the Rotunda had been situated in the distance of 40 minutes walk from the most important route in the Polish Bieszczady Mts. – main Beskidy route. Only from 1999 there has been route correction process, which contributed to bigger cemeteries popularization and bigger destroy process.¹

From the World War II time, famous and bloody keepsake became events from September 1944 within area of Dukla and Przełęcz Dukielska, where 38th Army

¹ In 2001 on the initiative of members of The Student Group of Beskidy Guides in Warsaw, there came to existence Social Committee of Cemeteries' Reconstruction on the Rotunda.

of Iwan Koniewa managed to break Hitler defense, but with tremendous own losses. There are a few keepsakes from so called dukielsko-preszowska operation from 1944 in polish part of the Beskid Niski Mts. and they are less seen in cultural scenery: common cemetery of killed in action soldiers in Dukla, monument on the Franków Hill, exposition in Historic Museum in Dukla. These events stayed very deeply in inhabitants' mind and memory – today place of the most bloody fights near the Iwla and Chyrowa is called as Death Valley. One can meet there very often individual tourists, who look for military keepsakes from the past.

After war changes and removal actions towards native population gave secondly original features to the scenery of the Beskid Niski Mts. and caused that tourism practiced on this area has still specific features and it demands from tourists deep experience and self reliance. Events from the both World War and cultural heritage of living here group of Łemko mainly influent specific character of this region, and in consequence its tourist activity. Participants of the tourist movement are generally different groups and youth organizations, mainly students. The “Watra” is the most popular meeting, which associates each year in July the greatest amount of tourists. The meeting took place for the first time in 1983 in Czarna near the Uście Gorlickie, and next one in Czarna, Hańczowa, Bartne, and from 1990 in Zdynia. Greek Catholic religion celebrations enjoy great interest, for example: religion service in the middle of July and October on the Jawor Mountain near the Wysowa, fair in May in Olchowiec, holiday from Rusal to Jan organized near the Museum of Łemko Culture in Zyndranowa and folk workshop *Sobys Name Day* organized in Jawornik by the Band under Santa Nicolas Patronage. Youth and students groups have their own night – base, it means camping site, leased or bought village cottages². They are located in the larger villages: Bartne, Huta Wysowa, Regietów, Wawrzka, Zyndranowa, and in not accessible parts of the Beskid Niski Mts.: Jawornik, Nieznajowa, Polany Surowiczne, Radocyna, Ropianka, Wisłoczek, Zawadka Rymanowska. Groups of individual tourists very often use places, which are located in hard to get area, to put up a tent and also guests rooms from native inhabitants. This situation is caused by willingness to spend the night in wild and hard to get area, and not by small amount of vacancies. On the base of performing for a few years observations, one can conclude that the tourist movement with explorative character becomes more dominative year by year.

Balanced development of the whole area, with the special attention to cultural heritage can contribute to maintain and popularize these values, which attract tourists to the Beskid Niski Mts. and these values decide about it unique and not standard character on the whole Poland scale. Orthodox Churches and Łemko chapels, Galician war cemeteries from World War I, keepsakes after dukielsko – preszowska operation are inseparable element of the scenery and cultural heritage of the Beskid Niski Mts. Although, they were influenced by the destructive character of the time, but they still make an impression with their architecture and location. They are surrounded with conservatory care and the tourist leaders and they can become significant, real

² Sometimes these village are old, monumental, chyże łemkowskie – for example in Zawada Rymanowska.

and not only potential factor, which has influence on the tourism development in the Beskid Niski Mts. area.

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Dziedzictwo kulturowe Beskidu Niskiego

Streszczenie

Beskid Niski stanowi region bardzo atrakcyjny krajobrazowo i o dużych walorach turystycznych. W porównaniu jednak do sąsiednich regionów – Bieszczadów na wschodzie i Beskidu Sądeckiego na zachodzie – cechuje go słaba dostępność komunikacyjna i niskie zagospodarowanie turystyczne. Specyficznym jest, nie spotykany w żadnej części Karpat, model turystyki o charakterze eksploracyjnym, jaki panuje na badanym obszarze, który ma swoje źródła w historii obszaru. Kształtowanie się tego modelu ściśle związane

jest z bogactwem kulturowym wykształconym przez mieszkającą tu ludność oraz historię, która zostawiła niezatarty ślad w krajobrazie. Struktura narodowościowa i wyznaniowa ludności Beskidu Niskiego, stanowiącego przed II wojną światową część Łemkowszczyzny, w decydujący sposób wpływa na specyfikę i niepowtarzalność regionu. Przymusowe przesiedlenia ludności łemkowskiej, będącej w większości wyznania greckokatolickiego i prawosławnego, całkowicie zmieniły krajobraz kulturowy obszaru.

Położenie Beskidu Niskiego w szerokim pasie pogranicza kulturowego i etnicznego w znacznym stopniu wpłynęło na ukształtowanie się unikatowego w skali Polski krajobrazu kulturowego. Przenikanie różnych elementów religijnych i kulturowych zaowocowało niezwykle ciekawymi obiektami architektury cerkiewnej. Cerkwie te stanowią materialny dowód wielonarodowych i wielowyznaniowych społeczności. Stan zachowania większości z nich dowodzi jednak, że poświęca się im zbyt mało uwagi.

Specyfikę dziedzictwa kulturowego badanego obszaru podkreśla jeszcze bardziej historia Beskidu Niskiego, a w szczególności wydarzenia z okresów I i II wojny światowej: operacja gorlicka w 1915 r. w oraz operacja dukielsko-preszowska w 1944 r. O ile pamiątki po tej ostatniej są zgrupowane w kilku miejscach w środkowej części Beskidu Niskiego, o tyle pozostałości po operacji gorlickiej – cmentarze wojenne – rozsiane są na znacznym obszarze, nawiązując do przebiegu linii frontu z 1915 r. To one właśnie stanowią nieodłączny element krajobrazu kulturowego Beskidu Niskiego, który odpowiednio spopularyzowany może stać się ważnym czynnikiem rozwoju turystyki w regionie.

Obie wojny światowe, zmiany powojenne i akcje wysiedlenia ludności miejscowej nadały krajobrazowi Beskidu Niskiego cechy wtórnie pierwotne i sprawiły, że turystyka uprawiana na tym obszarze wciąż jeszcze posiada specyficzne cechy i wymaga od turysty sporego doświadczenia i samodzielności.

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