

## SOCIOLOGY OF TOURISM IN POLAND

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*The authors outline the problems which concern Polish sociologists of tourism. In the perspective of sociology of tourism they analyze the Works of Polish theoreticians and researchers with special attention to the humanistic current of research on tourism and travel. From the humanistic and cultural point of view arises the question of accepted paradigms, methodology, definitions and terminology. From this very perspective the cited concepts and works are important for the sociology of tourism or – more generally – for the humanistic theory of tourism as well as they are useful for tourist practice. They introduce content significant for contemporarily realized multidirectional cultural dialogues, for which the catalyst (as well as the effect) is tourism. In the discussed exemplary manuscript the proposal of the ‘sociology of tourism’ has been formulated in the perspective of general ‘theory of tourism’. Included here critical review of this monograph concerns especially the language of terms. Interpretation of various dimensions and problems of sociology of tourism has to be accompanied by unified terminology, and that has not been realized in the discussed book. The basic knowledge about socio-cultural aspects of tourism should be followed by the analyses of the phenomenon of tourism in multidimensional, socio-cultural context. Unfortunately, systematic approach is not yet a common paradigm (Obodyński and Cynarski, 2003; Obodyński and Cynarski, 2004) and the works of Polish scientists is not known well enough.*

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**Keywords:** *sociology of tourism, theory of tourism, Polish theoreticians*

### INTRODUCTION

#### Definition of the subject, its scope and problems

The term 'sociology of tourism' was introduced into the scientific circulation in Poland by Ziemilski (1958). In the 70s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century



research on holidays and weekends were conducted. The first monographs were published by Krzysztof Przeclawski (*Tourism and education*, 1973; *Sociological problems of tourism*, 1979) (Przeclawski, 2003: 44-45).

In sociology of tourism various issues are discussed, concerning relations between tourism as a socio-cultural phenomenon and areas and their communities – the countries where tourists and organizers of tourist services live as well as target places. Both conditioning and social effects of tourism are analyzed. Krzysztof Przeclawski presents the following definition: “Tourism – in sociological understanding – consists of the whole of phenomena of space movement connected with voluntary temporal change of place in space, change of the life rhythm and environment accompanied by making personal contact with the visited environment (natural, cultural or social)” (Przeclawski, 2003: 44).

Sociologists investigate tourists and the very phenomenon of tourism. Tourism in modern globalized world appears as a privilege or necessity for people being in motion, apt to move. Zygmunt Bauman calls them tourists and wanderers respectively (Bauman, 2000: 92-120). The former are trans-border scientists, sports people or employees of international corporations, the latter – people migrating in search for better living conditions. In reflection of sociology and political sciences the problems of tourism – in its various signs – are interpreted on the basis of emerging different theories and in reference to crucial problems of contemporary times such as globalization, meeting and dialogue of cultures (of the same or different cultural circles) (Shaw and Williams, 1996; Cynarski, 2002; Cynarski, 2003; Tokarski, 2004), problems of multiculturalism (Cynarski and Obodyński, 2005 a), economic social inequalities (MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 1996; Bauman, 2000), etc.

## HUMANIST APPROACH IN RESEARCH

The sociologist reflection on the issue of **travel** and the traveler may be realized in various ways with various distribution of emphasis or depending on accepted theoretical perspective. The traveler or wanderer is most often shown in the perspective of sociology of culture or cultural anthropology. The theoretical basis for the analyses of the phenomenon of travel can be e.g. ‘the anthropology of the route’ (Wieczorkiewicz, 1996 a; 1996 b). With the use of similar semiotic instrumentation e.g. the travels of contemporary warriors studying Far-Eastern martial arts (Cynarski, Obodyński and Litwiniuk, 2004; Cynarski and Obodyński, 2004 a) are discussed. In a way the anthropology of tourism by Turoso

(2003) is the anthropology of travel.

For a few years an approach called a humanist theory of tourism (Cynarski and Obodyński, 2004 b) has been developing. This approach includes the works of Zbigniew Krawczyk's (Krawczyk et al. 2005), Marek Kazimierczak's (Kazimierczak, 2004) teams as well as those of such researchers as Tuross, Podemski, Ożdziński or Cynarski.

Krawczyk defines axiological basis for tourism (Krawczyk, 2002) relating its establishment and development to the sphere of values of the Western culture. He describes various attitudes of tourists towards the nature and ecology (Krawczyk, 2004 b). He presents tourism and recreation as an element of the 21<sup>st</sup> century man's lifestyle, especially in case of the young people (Krawczyk, 2004 a) as well as in relation to the patterns of activity and the forms of spending free time. He also analyzes contemporary tendencies in the development of tourism. He distinguishes the following types of world tourism: **1) cognitive-educational tourism; 2) religious-pilgrimage; 3) escapist; 4) health-recreational; 5) sport; 6) congress; 7) professional tourism** (Krawczyk, 2005).

Kazimierczak concentrates on the issues of tourism ethics, which is close to the humanist approach in sociology. From the axiological point of view and from the perspective of philosophical anthropology the reflections on tourism by Jerzy Kosiewicz and, quoted above, Anna Wieczorkiewicz are valuable. Kosiewicz (2004: 383-453) indicates, among others, crucial anthropological, sacral and educational functions of tourism and recreation. One of very interesting attempts of indicating theoretical framework for tourism is the proposal of introducing **anthropology of tourism** suggested by Lucjan Tuross in his book with the same title (Tuross, 2003). Here the perspective is the borderline of cultural anthropology and theory (various concepts) of education.

Also Podemski (2004 a; 2004 b) accepts cultural perspective resulting from the humanist paradigm of sociology. References to cultural (social) anthropology appears in the quoted thoughts of C. Lévi-Strauss and definitions of J. Clifford. The latter gives, following P.L. Pearce, 15 categories of roles connected with pilgrimage. Those are in particular 1) tourist – [the one who] takes photos, buys souvenirs, visits famous places does not understand local people; 2) traveler – he stays in one place for a short time, experiments with local food, visits famous places on his own. Such a convention seems easy to classify but Podemski does not do so (Podemski 2004 a: 92-93)<sup>2</sup>. Also in relation to Bauman's criticism of

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<sup>2</sup> Only in conclusions on page 318 he writes: „There is no such thing as the social role of the *traveler*.”

commercialized 'post-tourism' and post-modern metaphors Podemski preserves distance limiting himself to neutral (without assessing and evaluating) description of quoted concepts. He proves that the post-modern thesis "we are all tourists" is not true – the empirical experience of tourism gives the picture of the minority of richer societies which do tourism in an active way.

Podemski concentrates on the term and phenomenon of **travel** which he thinks is essentially different from tourism. Both people and cultures travel. The author of *The sociology of travel* assumes, following Clifford, that generally travel is connected with space mobility of a human and with the change of environment where he has stayed so far. In the theoretical considerations about travel and traveler we find here 1) the notion of an 'alien' (G. Simmel, A. Schutz, F. Znaniecki, T. Todorov, E. Cohen), 2) interpretation of travel as a form of cultural contact (from Tylor to G. Hofstede), 3) associations with colonialism – 'the invasion of metropolis inhabitants to suburbs' and 4) the perspective of a ritual and *sacrum*. The description of the area of research which Podemski calls the semiotics of travel is interesting. Podemski (2004 a: 9) defines **tourism** as a journey being a service, sales product and consumption goods. He also gives a more general understanding of tourism as 'the action of sightseeing'. Unfortunately none of these explanations does not take active forms of tourism into account – climbing, cycling, horse riding or hiking one – and from the point of view of the physical culture sciences it is difficult to accept. Associating tourism with sightseeing and consumption results in the fact that in this scope crucial since 17<sup>th</sup> century (*Grand Tour*) (Prahl, 2002: 234-247) educational and self-realizational dimensions of tourism are neglected (McIntosh and Goeldner, 1990; Tuross, 2003). Those dimensions are essential for the humanist perspective of the theory of tourism (or the tourism sciences).

Podemski researches the travel activity of Poles analyzing tourist activity, directions of travel, aims, forms of organization of trips abroad and statistical data. He takes into consideration the specific for Poland 'pendulum' tourism for work. He also discusses the issue of travel as a form of intercivilizational contact and **intercultural dialogue**. He describes the experience of 'strangeness' and caused by it various strategies of reaction: an attempt of getting used to this strangeness, rejecting it or ignoring. Cultural dialogue takes place in the spheres of sensual perception, understanding and evaluating. Podemski refers to the works of a researcher on the cultural dialogues, indologist and eliadist Tokarski (1984; 2004).

It is worth to look at tourism and scientific reflection on tourism from

the systematic point of view (Chudoba, 1998; Obodyński and Cynarski, 2004), taking – as Eliade taught – the sacral dimension of human activity into consideration. While ‘looking for identity’ it is worth to refer to the concept of *homo viator* (the man – traveler, wanderer) by G. Marcel and to the Taoist philosophy of the Way or also to its Far-Eastern derivatives. While the phenomenon of ‘pilgrimage tourism’ has been quite widely described (Bergier and Żbikowski, 2003; Rut J., Rut P. and Cynarski, 2003), the concept of ‘esoteric tourism’ appears to be extremely interesting. Oździński introduces this quite wide category of a journey motivated by the need for inner (spiritual) development of the tourist. It may be connected with described by Kosiewicz (2004: 392) escapism, thus the will to escape from routine, convention, mediocrity, breaking the ties as well as with a form of holistic psychophysical therapy.

Cynarski, according to the paradigm of holistic (systematic) approach, refers his theoretical considerations in the field of tourism sociology to cultural anthropology (Cynarski, 2005 b), sociology of spare time (MacCanell, 1976; Prahel, 2002; Cynarski, 2005 a) as well as the theory of dialogue between cultures (Cynarski, 2002; Cynarski and Obodyński, 2005 b). He describes journeys of sports people practicing the Far-Eastern martial arts and combat sports as well as he discusses problems placing themselves on the borderline of relations between tourism and recreation (active tourism, horse recreation, sports camps).

## REVIEW OF A SELECTED HANDBOOK

In this perspective it is worth considering the contents of one of the handbooks on tourism sociology. Jerzy Suprewicz makes an attempt at synthesis of ‘the theoretical perspective of tourism’. He does it mostly in sociological perspective referring *explicite* to the works of Krzysztof Przecławski (1996; 2003). At the same time in several places Suprewicz (2005: 57, 65) defines the term ‘tourism’ as superior to a term ‘touristics’ (here ‘touristics’ = what is generally understood as tourism). It is supposed to be ‘a mixture of theoretical, economic, statistical, legal, cultural and social issues connected with widely understood tourist movement’, but only historical analyses of this movement and its macroeconomic implications exceed the range of the defined term. In another place Suprewicz explains that his term ‘tourism’ presents the phenomenon in a multidimensional socio-cultural context and in this way it is particularly useful for a sociologist as justified both theoretically and practically.

In the contents of the book we find 8 thematic chapters: 1) – devoted to basic sociological categories; 2) – discussing sociology of tourism; 3) – presenting tourist movement as a sociological phenomenon; 4) – on tourist enterprise; 5) – about the analysis of the social picture of tourist regions and places; 6) – on the issue of tourists' community; 7) about the socio-cultural influence of tourism; 8) – concerning professional qualifications in the tourist industry.

Both the promising introduction and reaching for wide socio-cultural interpreting perspective for tourism being in accordance with systematic paradigm are confirmed by the contents of the book only partially. An ambitious task of explaining many significant for the sociology of tourism and (or) tourism itself issues was not quite successful due to certain defects and errors. The basic defect is lack of coherence of stated theses. However, perhaps ambivalence of evaluation of the same social facts results from deliberate drawing the reader's attention to ambiguity of implications of socio-cultural phenomena accompanying tourism.

In the Introduction we read that the negative result of transformational processes 'is commercialization (being in accordance with the economic calculus) of culture, education, health service as well as tourism and recreation' (Suprewicz, 2005: 9). But on page 260 we find a statement about advised commercialization which will allow to develop tourist movement. Thus, perhaps it would be a good idea to distinguish the processes of professionalization and commercialization from pathological extreme commercialization.

In the book we do not find crucial and important watchwords such as 'globalization' and 'tourist risks'. It is lacking in reference to 1) related subfield of the sociology of physical culture; 2) wider discussion on the relations between tourism and ecology (Suprewicz, 2005: 243-244); 3) sociology of spare time and recreation. Losing this wider perspective and reference to the problems of spare time resulted in such errors as identifying mass culture with the culture of spare time. However, it is not necessary to describe the institution of the family and the typology of married couples (Suprewicz, 2005: 21-23). Unless, of course, one wants to repeat B. Malinowski's method of participating observance and live among the savage tribes.

Perhaps the author should not discuss issues which are marginal in relation to the main subject of the work. In general there is more here about 'tourist products' and less about tourist values – the cultural and natural ones. The economic language does not justify giving up precision of the statement and abandoning basic terms accepted on the ground of sociology. The children and the youth do not constitute an 'age group'

(Suprewicz, 2005: 235) but they may be 'statistical', 'social' or 'sociological categories' due to age (see: Sztompka, 2002: 197).

Suprewicz gives the typology of tourism according to the variable of the (main) aim of travel. He distinguishes: relaxing, cognitive, health, religious, congress and studying (?) tourism (Suprewicz, 2005: 184). Unfortunately, other parts of the book lack in terminological coherence with suggested in this way typology. We find here, e.g., the term 'religious-pilgrimage tourism'. However, it is worth distinguishing various forms of this kind of tourism due to dominating religious goals and cognitive aspects (*compare*: Bergier and Żbikowski, 2003). In the glossary we also find the term 'pilgrim's tourism' which is identified with religious and pilgrimage tourism.

The sociologist from Lublin introduces quite light-heartedly other terms such as 'congress-business tourism' (Suprewicz, 2005: 229). Yet in another place the doubtful term of 'business tourism' appears, which is supposed to include congress, trade and motivating tourism (Suprewicz, 2005: 146). Is it justified to include participation in a scientific conference abroad (as a sign of congress tourism) into business tourism?

Taking into account educational and self-realisational motivation (Suprewicz, 2005: 120) is missing here and it applies to tourist journeys *sensu largo*. Although Suprewicz mentions Lucjan Turowski as a researcher who combines tourism with education and cultural anthropology but he does not pay much attention to those problems. Nevertheless he creates new classifications and typologies. From chart 11 (Suprewicz, 2005: 121) one may conclude that 'ecotourism' is of the same as 'ecological tourism', and e.g. 'walking tourism' as well as horse tourism do not belong to 'active tourism'. From the glossary we find out that 'agrotourism' is synonymous to 'country tourism' and with this statement not all theoreticians would agree.

There are other more specific errors as not taking Hungary into account while describing the territory of Carpathian Euroregion (Suprewicz, 2005: 220). In the reference section there are selected works published up to 2003. In German and English titles numerous mistakes appeared. Moreover, in some of quoted in appendices tables dates are missing (appendices 9, 25, 27) or it is not clear which year they concern (appendix 7).

For the sake of a full picture one should pay attention to more interesting parts of the book as e.g. 'Hypothetical model of tourism in 21st century' (Suprewicz, 2005: 251-252). Tourism is supposed to fulfill two functions in particular - educational and recreational one. Suprewicz also writes about great 'economic, social, political, cultural and educational'

benefits of tourism development, however these are well-known facts. A suggestion of attempting at the ideal of 'tourism for all' is interesting though not very insightful. The author writes about his book that 'it is a first attempt at gathering thoughts referring to tourism on the ground of Polish sociological science (...) [and it is] an attempt at presenting mechanisms allowing to manage tourism effectively and diagnose it correctly' (Suprewicz, 2005: 264). As it has been indicated above wide multithread and multidimensional approach to the presented issue is valuable. The book contains quite wide basic knowledge while developing formulated by Przeclawski and others topics constitutive for sociology of tourism.

Perhaps it was planned as a handbook for students or even as an attempt at a monograph on the subject. However, indicated terminological inconsequence and incoherence of the statement in the sphere of crucial issues significantly lower the value of the book.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

From the humanist and culturological perspective the problem of accepted paradigms, methodology, definitions and language of terminology results. They constitute the theoretical context of description, critical analysis and interpretation. From this perspective quoted concepts are important for the sociology of tourism or in general for the humanist theory of tourism as well as they are useful for tourist practice. They introduce significant ideas for contemporarily realized in a multidirectional manner cultural dialogues, for which the catalyst (as well as the effect) is tourism.

In the discussed book the proposal of 'tourism sociology' has been formulated in the perspective of general 'theory of tourism'. Presented here critical review of this monograph concerns particularly the language of terminology. Interpretation of numerous dimensions and issues of tourism sociology must be accompanied by terminological consequence and that has not been fully realized in the book under discussion. Apart from the basic knowledge about socio-cultural aspects of tourism there should also be included analyses of the phenomenon of tourism in multidimensional socio-cultural context. It is a pit that the systematic approach is not yet a generally perceived paradigm and the works of Polish scientists are not known in Poland.

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