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Tourism in the Eastern Carpathians during the Second Polish Republic.

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The beginnings of mountain tourism can be dated to the end of the 18th century, but in the more modern sense - the 19th century, when the first hikers climbed the peaks of the Tatra Mountains. Since it was the period in which Poland was under the partitions, curiosity to get to know country was a spark that ignited more and more frequent mountain trips. The passion for mountain hiking in the Tatra Mountains resulted in the establishment of the Galician Tatra Society in 1873, only to be renamed the Tatra Society a year later. As one of the first started their operations was the branches in the Eastern Carpathians. Their activity mainly consisted in designating and reaching the peaks of Czarnohora and Gorganów, but also taking care of the development of tourist infrastructure in the mountains.

Their activity was interrupted by the outbreak of World War I in 1914, and resumed under a new name after its end. Undoubtedly, the Polish Tatra Society in the period of the Second Polish Republic should be granted unquestionable merit in the field of mountain tourism. A network of hiking trails has been created from scratch in almost the entire Polish Carpathians. Thanks to the initiative of PTT activists, the Main Carpathian Route was created and divided into parts of the West and East, formed the lines of passage through the mountains from Ustroń in the Silesian Beskids to the Stoh summit on the border of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania. In addition to the passage and the designation of new routes, each of them has been appropriately marked. The instruction for marking tourist trails was also prepared by PTT, and the appearance of marking the trails after slight changes is still valid today. Thanks to these activities, mountain tourism could fully develop and become more and more popular.

In the case of the Eastern Carpathians, mountain trips often took longer, and less populated areas made it difficult to find suitable accommodation. Therefore, it was necessary to expand the network of shelters. After the end of World War I, only three buildings remained. During 21 years, thanks to the initiative of PTT, not only were it possible to rebuild shelters destroyed after the war, but also to significantly expand them. In 1931, 80% of all shelters in the Eastern Carpathians belonged to PTT departments. With the development of tourist traffic,

this situation changed and at the end of the 1930s only 54% of accommodation facilities in the mountains belonged to PTT. Some of the facilities were prepared for mountain shelters by the Society for the Promotion of Skiing, a small percentage also belonged to the Przemyśl Ski Society.

Initially, the burden of supporting mountain tourism actually fell on the shoulders of PTT, whose merits in its development and popularization are invaluable. For this reason, the history of PTT has been undertaken many times by many researchers. However, the example of the mountain shelters themselves shows that this situation has changed over time. Therefore, the idea behind this work was to look at tourism in the Eastern Carpathians from the perspective of other organizations and tourist societies. Undoubtedly, the merits of PTT in the development of tourism in mountain areas were significant, but in the interwar period other organizations were established that were just starting their activities. PTT cooperated with some of them, while others were viewed unfavorably due to the contradiction in their activities.

In 1935, the Tourism Support League was launched. This organization, created by the Ministry of Communications, was to promote holiday trips among the widest possible number of people. These were the beginnings of mass tourism, accessible even to less wealthy people. Until now, only the members of tourist associations have had the opportunity to travel cheaper thanks to the discounted journeys guaranteed to them. With the launch of the so-called popular trains, which were supposed to offer cheap journeys, enabling the wider masses of the population to travel, discounts for members of tourist associations were abolished.

The availability of trips for a larger group of tourists meant that tourism was no longer a luxury good, and it was becoming widely available. Due to the development of employee legislation, and thus the granting of more vacation days, people with free time could use it for tourist trips. The Tourism Support League was offered in response to the need to organize short-term trips. Popular trains or trips to the so-called participation cards assumed weekend stays in a specific place and time, proposed by Tourism Support League. The offer included a train ride and assistance in finding accommodation. Usually, these were trips to specific places in connection with, for example, an important anniversary or an event such as "Grape picking" in Zaleszczyki.

The second entity that developed its activity in the 1930s was Travel Agency "Orbis". By concluding an agreement with the Ministry of Transport, this office undertook to conduct an action promoting the development of tourism in Poland. It offered short trips that could be organized all over the country. Several of them concerned the offer directly in the Stanisławów

Voivodeship. Most of it included one-day or several-day mountain trips combined with visiting local tourist attractions, such as the Hutsul Museum in Żabie.

Both the Orbis Travel Agency and Tourism Support League organized lump-sum stays in the Eastern Carpathians. The offer of these two organizations was differed from each other. Orbis offered flat-rate stays in the summer season in the most popular holiday resorts such as Vorokhta or Yaremche. Tourism Support League focused on cheap employee stays, which would be organized before the summer season, in spring or autumn, and the participants' accommodation would be available in less popular places. Thanks to that it was possible to offer tourists low prices, which were to increase the tourist traffic among employees. These activities generated an increase in the popularity of another form of tourism, which was recreational tourism.

When analyzing the activities of individual ministries in the field of tourism, it can be noticed that since the publication of information on the positive impact of tourism on the economy, solutions were introduced to maintain the growth tendencies in tourism. This was achieved, among other things, by the creation of new organizations which, with the financial aid of the government, were to target tourists at selected events. In order to improve the comfort of people staying on holiday in summer resorts or winter camps, regulations and provisions were created that had to be followed by people running accommodation facilities and restaurants.

As in the case of the Eastern Carpathians, mountainous rural areas saw a real chance to improve their existence in the increase in tourist traffic. Due to the lack of other possibilities of additional source of income, the arrival of tourists was a good way to get funds. However, in order to be able to talk about the real economic impact of tourism, it was first necessary to raise the level of services provided. Most of these farms showed significant deficiencies in sanitary facilities or simply keeping the rented rooms clean. Locally established unions such as the Regional Intercommunal Union "Eastern Carpathians" were established precisely with the idea of improving the tourist values of the region and its proper promotion.

First, however, the focus was on improving the level of on-site services. Therefore, a number of workers were employed, such as household instructors or gardeners to take care of green areas in the towns. Household instructors were entrusted with the task of learning and disseminating good hygiene habits among the hosts. First of all, the rural population was shown the benefits of maintaining cleanliness, which had a positive effect on their health, and in the future could have contributed to the reduction of epidemics that break out cyclically in rural areas. Regional Intercommunal Union "Eastern Carpathians" also took care of the appropriate

level of training of employees working in the hotel industry. Therefore, regular training sessions for maids, waiters and cooks were organized. Education in management was also taken care of among the owners of guesthouses and hotels. All these activities positively influenced both the local community, giving it development opportunities, as well as tourist traffic and a greater number of tourists.

Most of the actions that were taken, whether by local societies or by the Tourism Support League, began only in the 1930s, when the Second Polish Republic was recovering from the prevailing crisis. In just a few years, a relatively large increase in interest in the Eastern Carpathian region was achieved, and further planned investments would only increase it's range. Data from 1939 show that spas in the region accounted for 12% of the nationwide spa movement. During the period under review, this share grew by only 2%, but in absolute numbers, the increase was significant, fourfold. The number of visitors to the health resorts of the Eastern Carpathians increased from 8,576 people in 1921 to 35,589 in 1939.

In the case of recreational tourism, the Eastern Carpathian summer resorts were in fourth place in the country, generating 8% of the total summer traffic. In the case of mountain tourism, these values were much higher. It was estimated that the areas of the Hutsul Region and the Eastern Beskids were visited by about 26% of the national mountain tourism movement during mountain expeditions. The commencement of hostilities on September 1, 1939, followed by the change of borders and the annexation of the Eastern Carpathians to Ukraine closed this chapter forever.