



<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.02.01>

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Tourist Routes of the Wilno Voivodeship in the Interwar Period

How to cite [jak cytować]: Gański W., *Tourist Routes of the Wilno Voivodeship in the Interwar Period*, "Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe" 2023, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 11–27.

Szlaki turystyczne województwa wileńskiego w okresie międzywojennym

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest zbadanie i opisanie systemu szlaków turystycznych istniejących w latach 1920–1930 na terenie województwa wileńskiego II Rzeczypospolitej. Wyniki badań zostały opracowane z zastosowaniem metodologii typu historycznego. W latach 1920–1930 w województwie wileńskim istniało wiele różnorodnych szlaków turystycznych: szlaki turystyczne dla turystów pieszych oraz szlaki turystyczne dla osób podróżujących koleją i drogami wodnymi. Dzięki zróżnicowaniu tematycznemu wspomniane szlaki turystyczne wychodziły naprzeciw potrzebom turystów z Wileńszczyzny i innych województw w zakresie wypoczynku i rekreacji; w tamtym czasie możliwe było odwiedzanie miejsc historycznych i obiektów dziedzictwa historycznego i kulturowego, wypoczywanie przy brzegach licznych rzek i jezior, korzystanie ze spływów kajakowych wzdłuż rzek lub podróżowanie po nich transportem wodnym. Z analizy autentycznych źródeł oraz materiałów archiwalnych wynika, że – biorąc pod uwagę ilość i różnorodność szlaków turystycznych funkcjonujących wówczas w tym regionie – lata dwudzieste i trzydzieste XX wieku można uznać za okres przełomu w rozwoju turystyki w województwie wileńskim. Przedstawiona w ar-

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tykule analiza systemu szlaków turystycznych, istniejących w latach 1920–1930 w województwie wileńskim II Rzeczypospolitej, może posłużyć jako materiał do dalszych badań dotyczących historii turystyki w Polsce, na Litwie i na Białorusi.

Słowa kluczowe: historia turystyki, szlaki turystyczne, województwo wileńskie, okres międzywojenny.

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to research the system of tourist routes of the Wilno Voivodeship in the 1920s and 1930s. To convey the intended study, historical-type methodology was applied. In the 1920s and 1930s, a large number of tourist routes were developed in the Wilno Voivodeship, both for hiking and for trips favouring road, rail or water transport. These routes were quite diverse in subject matter and could satisfy a variety of tourist requests in organizing recreation: visiting historical and cultural heritage sites, relaxing on the shores of numerous water reservoirs, as well as rafting on large and small rivers of the region or walks and trips along them by river transport. Finally, based on the analysis of the available primary sources issued in the covered period, it could be stated that the 1920s and 1930s may be treated as a turning point in the development of tourism in the Wilno Voivodeship, at least in terms of the number and variety of tourist routes then functioning in the region. The presented study may constitute useful material for any further research devoted to the history of tourism in Poland, Lithuania and Belarus.

Keywords: history of tourism, tourist routes, the Wilno Voivodeship, the interwar period.

Introduction

The history of tourism today is still replete with issues that require detailed study, including those that relate to the first half of the 20th century. This period is very important for the history of tourism. The 1920s and 1930s were characterized by the emergence of tourism on the territory of the Wilno Voivodeship¹ in its modern sense. It was then that many diverse tourist routes were developed for the first time, the first guides to tourist places in the region were published, large investment projects in the tourism sector were implemented. The Polish state, realizing the possibilities of tourism in the field of integration and economic development, began to exert a purposeful impact on the tourism sector, contributing to the revival and promotion of tourism in the Wilno Voivodeship. All this determined an unprecedented increase in the number of tourist arrivals to the territory of the Wilno Voivodeship in the 1930s, as well as the intensification of tourist activity among the local population. Therefore, the

¹ In the text of the article, the names of cities, towns and villages, as well as rivers and lakes, streets and squares are given in the form in which they were used in the 1920s and 1930s, that is, in Polish and in accordance with the Polish tradition. Since today these objects are located on the territory of Lithuania and Belarus, the official spelling of their names today is carried out according to the traditions and rules of the Lithuanian and Belarusian languages, respectively, and may differ from the historical ones and used in this article.

study of the historical experience of tourism development and the functioning of a network of tourist routes in contemporary conditions of active development of the tourism industry is of particular relevance and importance.

During the interwar period, the following types of tourism became widespread in the Wilno Voivodeship: water tourism, the most popular form of which was various rafting activities on rivers and lakes; child and youth tourism in the form of recreation centers, camps and hikes; ecological tourism, which involved visiting forests, swamps and other especially valuable natural areas; auto-tourism; resort and wellness tourism, where the functions of climatic resorts were performed by the lakes of the Braślów and Narocz groups (this territory was also called the Wilno Lake District), where the tourist infrastructure necessary for resorts was created; rural tourism, when rural residents provided conditions for recreation for citizens in the summer months².

The historiography of this subject matter is represented by works of a very diverse nature: both small essays on individual phenomena and processes, descriptions of the life of local communities, and in-depth monographic studies of individual areas of social life in the interwar period. The historical fate of this city and region (the city of Wilno is located today on the territory of Lithuania, while most of the former Wilno voivodeship is now the territory of Belarus) determined the interest in it of both Polish, Lithuanian and Belarusian authors. Among the Polish authors of the interwar period, who were the most significant for the study of this topic one should mention P. Krasnopolski,³ Z. Kotosowski,⁴ M. Węgrecki,⁵ S. Leszczycki⁶ and Tilgat.⁷ Modern Polish authors whose research is thematically close to this topic are R. Gawkowski,⁸ J. Chelmecki,⁹ K. Jędrzejczyk,¹⁰ M. Kacprzak¹¹ and E. Małolepszy.¹² Among the Lithuanian historians who have made the great-

² A. Белья, *Развіццё турызму ў паўночна-ўсходніх ваяводствах міжваеннай Польшчы: пачатак складання мазаікі*, "ARCHE" 2014, no. 7–8, pp. 259–294.

³ P. Krasnopolski, *Wilno i województwo Wileńskie*, Nakł. Wiktorii Krasnopolskiej, Wilno 1937.

⁴ Z. Kotosowski, *Szlaki turystyczne po Braślowszczyźnie*, Magata, Braślów 1933.

⁵ M. Węgrecki, *Ruch turystyczny w Polsce w roku 1929*, Nakł. Związku Polskich Towarzystw Turystycznych, Warszawa 1930.

⁶ S. Leszczycki, *Uzdrowiska Polski: ich rozmieszczenie oraz rozwój w latach 1921–1938*, Kraków 1939.

⁷ T. Wilgat, *Rozmieszczenie przemysłu pensjonatowo-hotelowego w Polsce*, Kraków 1939.

⁸ R. Gawkowski, *Wypoczynek w II Rzeczypospolitej: kurorty, rekreacja, zabawa*, Wyd. Dragom, Bielsko-Biała 2011.

⁹ J. Chelmecki, *Państwowe i społecznie inicjatywy rozwoju ruchu turystycznego i krajoznawczego w Polsce w latach 1919–1939*, [in:] K. Ruchniewicz, J. Tyszkiewicz, W. Wrzesiński (ed.), *Przełomy w historii: XVI Powszechny Zjazd Historyków Polskich*, vol. 1, Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2000.

¹⁰ K. Jędrzejczyk, *Polskie Towarzystwo Krajoznawcze (1906–1950): zarys dziejów*, Wyd. Państwowej Wyższej Szkoły Zawodowej, Włocławek 2006.

¹¹ M. Kacprzak, *Towarzystwo Rozwoju Ziemi Wschodnich, 1933–1939*, Wyd. Ibidem, Łódź 2005.

¹² E. Małolepszy, *Turystyka w działalności wiejskich organizacji młodzieżowych w Polsce do 1939 r.*, "Folia Turistica. Historia turystyki" 2008, no 19, pp. 141–153.

est contribution to the study of this thematic area is L. Šabajevaitė.¹³ Among the Belarusian historians who are interested in the development of tourism and related fields in the territory of the Wilno Voivodeship in the interwar period are A. Biely,¹⁴ I. Mielníkaŭ,¹⁵ U. Ganski,¹⁶ I. Citovič^{x17} and A. Hiecevič.¹⁸ The studies presented in this historiographic review, on the one hand, create a basis for analyzing the system of tourist routes of the Wilno Voivodeship, and on the other hand, confirm the need for its further study. The issues raised in the study were not adequately covered either in Polish or in foreign (Belarusian, Lithuanian) historical science. To date, there are no comprehensive special historical studies that would be directly devoted to this subject matter. One of the current problems of studying the history of tourism on the territory of the Wilno Voivodeship is that today this territory is outside Poland and divided between Lithuania and Belarus. Accordingly, sources about the history of tourism development in this region in the 1920s and 1930s turned out to be stored in various archival and library institutions of these countries. In addition, Lithuanian and Belarusian historians in their studies of the interwar period are often limited to the territory within the modern borders of these countries and do not yet fully perceive the history of the interwar Wilno Voivodeship as an element of their own history. As a result, the territory of the interwar Wilno Voivodeship today is practically not considered as a single tourist region, which does not contribute to the comprehensive study of the history of tourism on its territory.

Research Problems and Methods

While working on the article, the following research questions were formulated:

- What was the territorial organization of the system of tourist routes that operated on the territory of the Wilno Voivodeship in the 1920s and 1930s?
- How did the tourist and recreational resources of the region determine the structure and specifics of tourist routes and formed tourist sub-regions within the Wilno Voivodeship in the Interwar period?

¹³ Л. Шабаявайте, *Развитие исторической науки в Вильнюсском университете Стефана Батория (1919–1939 гг.): диссертация кандидата наук, Академия наук Литовской ССР, Вильнюс 1987.*

¹⁴ А. Белы, *Развіццё турызму ў паўночна-ўсходніх ваяводствах міжваеннай Польшчы: пачатак складання мазаікі*, "ARCHE" 2014, no. 7–8, pp. 259–294.

¹⁵ І. Мельнікаў, *Заходнебеларуская Атланта 1921–1941 гг.: паміж Варшавай і Масквой*, Галіяфы, Мінск 2016.

¹⁶ У. Ганскі, *Турызм ў Заходняй Беларусі (1921–1939)*, Ковчег, Мінск 2022.

¹⁷ І. Цітовіч, *Краязнаўчы рух на тэрыторыі Заходняй Беларусі (1921–1939 гг.): дысертацыйнакандыдата навук, Беларускі дзяржаўны ўніверсітэт*, Мінск 2006.

¹⁸ А. Гецэвіч, *Транспартшляхі зносіну Заходняй Беларусі (1921–1939 гг.)*, "Vesnikof Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno" 2015, no. 3, pp. 6–12.

- How was the process of forming a network of tourist routes of the Wilno Voivodeship? Which subjects (public institutions, NGO, other stakeholders) took part in this process?

These research questions were answered by the historical analysis of primary sources, which are now stored in the Lithuanian Central State Archive in Vilnius and the Zonal State Archive in Molodechno, as well as the analysis of tourist publications of the interwar period and modern scientific research by Polish, Belarusian and Lithuanian authors. Information from these sources made it possible to form a holistic view of the system of tourist routes in the region and created a factual basis for answering the research questions posed above.

The degree of study of the research topic, the purpose of the study and research questions determined the pluralistic nature of its methodological approach. During the research and writing of the article, the principle of historicism, the objectivity principle and the consistency principle were applied. Methodologically, the article is based on the systematic approach combining the structural-functional, dialectical and hermeneutical methods. The author used the systemic and institutional approaches, as well as special historical methods: the typological method, the descriptive method, as well as the historic-geographic method. The methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, comparison and generalization were used as for general logical methods in the study.

The Formation of the Regional Structure of Tourist Routes

Several hundred different tourist routes passed through the territory of the north-eastern voivodeships of Poland in the 1920s and 1930s. The Eastern Lands Development Society, the Wilno Society of Friends of Sciences, local divisions of the Polish Sightseeing Society and other public organizations and associations, as well as the tourist commission of the Wilno Voivodeship Administration, district tourism referents and travel agencies took part in their development. Most of them were then approved at the state level, and information about them was included in specialized reference publications.

Even before the end of the 1920s, 96 official tourist routes were developed and approved by the joint efforts of these organizations and individuals on the territory of the Wilno Voivodeship: land routes (including 31 pedestrian and 25 automobile ones) and water routes (including 28 small and 12 motorized ones).

A characteristic feature of the Wilno Voivodeship was that the number of water tourist routes laid on its territory was comparable to the number of land routes, which was due to the presence of significant water resources (rivers and lakes) on its territory, as well as insufficient development of the road network and infrastructure. This also largely determined the great popularity of water

tourism in the interwar period, primarily among young people. Most of the tourist routes in the region were developed as part of the Summer in the Eastern Lands promo campaign.

The Summer in the Eastern Lands promo campaign was held by the Eastern Lands Development Society together with the Ministry of Communications during 1934–1939. In the Wilno Voivodeship, it was held annually since 1935, in the period of time from June 1 to September 30. During this period, discounts on rail travel were provided for the participants of the action. The discount on travel was 45–75% of the full ticket price.¹⁹

It should be noted that summer holidays on the territory where the Summer in the Eastern Lands promo campaign was held were the cheapest in the whole country, and the level of their organization was quite high. Moreover, each tourist could independently choose the form and place of rest on the territory determined by the terms of the promo campaign. During this campaign, various tourist routes were developed. Most of the trips were organized through the Orbis travel agency, which the Eastern Lands Development Society actively cooperated with throughout its existence.

Overland tourist routes of the Wilno Voivodeship, developed as part of the Summer in the Eastern Lands promo campaign comprised:²⁰

- tourist routes of the Wilno Suburban Area: Troki, Nowa Wilejka, Werki, Niemenczyn, Landwarów, Pikieliszki, Podbrzezie, Mejszagota, Suderwa, Olkieniki, Turgiele and Dziewieniszki;
- Wilno – Kobylnik – Miadzioł;
- Wilno – Olechnowicze;
- Wilno – Jaszuny – Turgiele;
- Głębokie – Dzienia;
- Dukszty – Druja;
- Królewsczyzna – Druja;
- Lida – Wilno;
- Nowe Święciany – Kobylnik;
- Orany – Wilno – Turmont;
- Oszmiana – Holszany – Wołożyn – Iwieniec.

The water tourist routes of the Wilno Voivodeship, developed as part of the Summer in the Eastern Lands promo campaign, included:²¹

- Narocz Lake – Narocz River – Wilia River;
- Dzisna Lake – Dzisna River – Druja;

¹⁹ У. Ганскі, *Турызм ў Заходняй Беларусі (1921–1939)*, Ковчег, Мінск 2022, pp. 165–179.

²⁰ Lithuanian Central State Archive. Collection 51 “Wilno Voivodeship Administration”. Inventory 10. Case 443.

²¹ *Ibid.*

- Dzisna Lake – Dzisna River – Dryświata River – Dryświaty Lake;
- Braslaw Lakes and Drujka River: Drywiaty Lake – Drujka River – Druja;
- Żejmiana River: Ignalino – Wilia River;
- Stracza River: Kobylnik – Wilia River;
- Mereczanka River: Jaszuny – Olkieni.

The tourist routes in the Wilno Voivodeship were serviced mainly by the Orbis travel agency with the support of the Polish Sightseeing Society. Local branches of the Polish Sightseeing Society often served as tourist information centers, and active members of the society served as a guides.²²

Tourist trips in the Wilno Voivodeship were designed for a period of several days up to several weeks. Depending on the purpose, a trip plan was formed. For example, if it was a trip for religious purposes, then while choosing the objects visited, the emphasis was placed on monuments of church architecture, for example, the Chapel of the Gate of Dawn and the Cathedral in Wilno. In the case of a cultural trip, the emphasis was on castles, for example, the ruins of castles in Troki, Krewo, Holzszany, Miedniki Królewskie, and palace ensembles, for example, the estate of Michał Kleofas Ogiński in Zalesie near Smorgonie, objects of civil architecture of cities and towns, etc.

Tourist Routes of the Wilno City and the Wilno Suburban Area

During the interwar period, the city of the greatest tourist interest in the northeastern voivodeships of Poland was Wilno. Tourists were attracted to it primarily by the rich historical and cultural heritage of the peoples who had inhabited this region since ancient times. The most visited objects in the city were numerous monuments of religious architecture (first of all, the chapel of the Gate of Dawn with the famous and especially revered icon of the Virgin Mary), the university, the ruins of the castle, palaces (bishop's palace, Small and Large Radziwill Palaces, Pac Palace, Chodkiewicz Palace, Tyszkiewicz Palace, Sapieha Palace, etc.), dwelling places of outstanding writers and poets (Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Ignacy Kraszewski), saints (Saint Casimir, Saint Andrzej Bobola), scientists (Joachim Lelewel, Jan Śniadecki, Jędrzej Śniadecki, Ignacy Domeyko) and statesmen (Józef Piłsudski, Jakub Jasiński, Emilia Plater, Szymon Konarski), as well as fairs and cultural events.²³

Although in the interwar period museums were not as popular among tourists as they are today, Wilno had a great offer in this area. In the city, there were

²² Lithuanian Central State Archive. Collection 51 "Wilno Voivodeship Administration". Inventory 10. Case 1171.

²³ P. Krasnopolski, *Wilno i województwo Wileńskie 1937*, Nakł. Wiktorii Krasnopolskiej, Wilno 1937, p. 164.

museum collections of Stefan Batory University, the museum of the Wilno Society of Friends of Sciences, the archaeological and ethnographic museums of Stefan Batory University, the Belarusian Museum, museum collections of the Lithuanian Scientific Society, the Jewish Museum, the natural history museum of Stefan Batory University²⁴.

Numerous fairs were also held in Wilno. On St Casimir's Day on March 4, the fair "Kaziuki" (Saint Casimir's Fair) was held on Łukiski Square, where mainly wooden products, curly gingerbread and bagels were offered for sale. On St George's Day on April 23, flowers, medicinal herbs, seeds were mainly sold on Eliza Orzeszkowa Square.²⁵ On the day of St John, June 23, on the square in front of St John's Church one could mainly buy flowers. On the day of St Peter and Paul, June 29, a fair of linen and wicker products was held in the Antokol district. On Palm Sunday, near almost all local churches, peasants from surrounding villages sold the so-called "Wilno palms" made from dried herbs, colorful immortelles, ribbons. Most of all, residents of villages around Lake Sałaty near Karolinka specialized in this. The fair of folk crafts operated on Castle Street and mainly fabrics, ceramics, linen and wooden products were on display.²⁶

For the entrance to the Castle Hill in Wilno, tourists were charged a fee of 15 groschen for adults and 10 groschen for children and schoolchildren. On the left side of Mała Pohulanka Street, not reaching Zawalna Street, there was a botanical garden, the entrance to which was also paid – 30 groschen for an adult and 10 groschen for children and military. The fee was also taken for the entrance to the palace park in Werki – 20 groschen for an adult and 10 groschen for a child.²⁷

From Wilno, citizens and guests of the city were offered regular trips to the nearby suburbs and surrounding areas: Trynopol, Kalwaria and Werki. In summer, river steamboat excursions were very popular: on working days, the steamer departed from Tadeusz Kosciuszko Street four times a day, at weekends and on holidays every hour, or in case of a large number of people every 30 minutes. Such a trip took about 1 hour to get there and about 30 minutes back. Along the route, on the river banks, many paid (in Tuskulany and Olkieniaki, 5 km from Wilno) and free (in Werki, 8 km from Wilno) beaches were organized. The same route could function as a land route, since public transport also applied

²⁴ Lithuanian Central State Archive. Collection 51 "Wilno Voivodeship Administration". Inventory 6. Case 563.

²⁵ Lithuanian Central State Archive. Collection 51 "Wilno Voivodeship Administration". Inventory 6. Case 664.

²⁶ P. Krasnopolski, *Wilno i województwo Wileńskie 1937*, Nakł. Wiktorii Krasnopolskiej, Wilno 1937, p. 164.

²⁷ Lithuanian Central State Archive. Collection 51 "Wilno Voivodeship Administration". Inventory 5. Case 212.

along the same way. From Werki, vacationers could get to the picturesque Green Lakes by cab (about 5 zlotys with downtime of several hours) or rent a boat. The cabmen were waiting for their customers right next to the pier.

There was also a popular route from Wilno to Ponary, Landwarów and Troki (about 25 km) among vacationers at that time. Buses went there from Eliza Orzeszkowa Square 7 times a day on weekdays and more often on weekends. The one-way bus fee was 2 zlotys. On this route, tourists were attracted by the picturesque hilly landscapes of the surroundings of Wilno, as well as historical monuments and especially the ruins of a medieval castle.²⁸

Numerous summer houses, which were rented out for the summer period for recreation to citizens, picturesque hills overgrown with dense forest, attracted vacationers to the town of Nowa Wilejka and its surroundings. Good and inexpensive connection with Wilno (15 minutes by rail, 20 minutes by bus, ticket price 20 groschen, or on foot along Subocz Street or Popławska Street) in combination with recreational resources (river, forest) made it one of the most popular summer holiday destinations among residents of the city in the interwar period.²⁹

Going to rest in the nearest suburbs in the summer in the 1920s and 1930s was extremely popular among the residents of Wilno. In settlements located at a distance of 5 to 30 km from the city, even in the days of the Russian Empire, whole settlements consisting of small summer houses intended for renting to vacationers began to arise. In the first half of the 1930s, there was a boom in their construction.

The most popular destinations for summer holidays were the following: Wilno – Werki, Wilno – Troki, Wilno – Nowa Wilejka (about 15 minutes by rail, about half an hour by bus, the ticket price was 50 groschen, or on foot), Wilno–Zameczek (on foot from Zwierzyniec) via Karolinka, Wilno – Niemenczyn (it took about an hour to drive, the ticket price was 2 zlotys), Landwarów – Zawiasy (the last railway station before the Lithuanian border), Wilno – Rzesza – Pikieliszki – Podbrzezie (it was necessary to go by bus for a little more than an hour, the ticket price was 2.2 zlotys), Wilno – Mejszagóła (it took about an hour by bus, the ticket price was 2 zlotys), Wilno – Suderwa – Dukszty Pijarskie (there were no regular public transport connections), Wilno – Olkieniki (a bus ride for about 2 hours for 4 zlotys), Wilno–Turgiele (the journey took about 1.5 hour for 2.5 zlotys), Wilno – Jaszuny – Soleczniki – Bieniakonie – Konwaliszki – Dziewieniszki (about 75 km, the trip time is about 3.5 hours)³⁰.

²⁸ У. Ганскі, *Турызм у Заходняй Беларусі (1921–1939)*, Ковчег, Мінск 2022, pp. 165–179.

²⁹ S. Lenartowicz (ed.), *Przewodnik po Polsce. Polska Północno-Wschodnia*, Nasza Księgarnia, Warszawa 1935, pp. 12–29.

³⁰ Ibid.

Tourist Routes of the Wilno Lake District

The basis for the formation of the network of tourist routes of the Wilno Voivodeship was the railway, which provided convenient communications both with the center of the voivodeship and with Warsaw and other major cities of Poland, which were places of formation of tourist demand and tourist flow heading to this region from other regions of interwar Poland.

Along the railway line from Warsaw and Białystok, the tourist route Orany – Wilno – Turmont was developed. At that time, the train covered the distance from Wilno to Orany in 1–1.5 hour, from Orany to the Turmont station on the Latvian border in 5.5 hours. For each station located along this line, a package of excursions and interesting places located no further than 5 km from the station that tourists could visit was developed. For example, during a similar excursion in Nowe Święciany, it was possible to hire a cab right at the station for 10 zlotys for the whole day. In this area it was recommended to go as far as Ignalino and take the train from there. In this town there was a reference tourist information point, a hotel, there were convenient ski trails and slopes 3–4 km long.

The narrow-gauge railway allowed tourists to get from Nowe Święciany to the Kobylnik station and the Narocz resort area in 7.5 hours. Tourists from Wilno travelling to Lake Narocz had to go to Łyntupy by an ordinary railway and change there to a narrow-gauge one.

A kind of continuation of this route was a branch of the narrow-gauge Dukušty–Druja railway (the border with Latvia), which allowed tourists to get from Wilno to the Brasław Lakes and the city of Brasławin in 4–5 hours. It was a tourist region with a sufficiently developed tourism industry for its time: hotels, restaurants, school and youth camps, etc. The tourist routes of Brasław County were designed in such a way as to combine picturesque landscapes with visits to historical and cultural attractions. The departure point of all tourist routes was the county center – the city of Brasław as the most convenient place for representatives of the board of the local department of the Polish Sightseeing Society to communicate with visiting tourists.

There were four hiking routes in the Brasław County: north of Brasław in the direction of Snudy Lake; west of the city in the direction of Opsa; in the direction of Miory and Leonpol; to Lake Dryświaty with an overnight stay. The first route provided for tourists to get acquainted with the Lake Strusto, visit the island on it by boat, then through the Strusto estate the route ran to the village of Okmienica³¹.

From the village of Okmienica, the route followed the shore of Lake Snudy along a good road through the villages of Krzywosielce, Pirtany to Jurany, a cou-

³¹ Z. Kołosowski, *Szlaki turystyczne po Brasławszczyźnie*, Magata, Brasław 1933, pp. 4–9.

ple of kilometers from Plusy. There tourists could explore the Lake Plusy. This place also offered overnight accommodation. From Plusy, the hiking path ran along the opposite shores of Snudy Lake in the direction of Zasnudzie, along the highway through the villages of Dańki and Obapie near Lake Wołos, then towards the town of Słobódka. In this village, those who wished could visit the officer's casino, restaurant and cafe operating at the local military unit.

The second walking route ran from the city of Brasław along the shore of Lake Drywiaty to the town of Opsa, 20 km from Brasław, where tourists were offered a tour of the estate, agricultural school and the lake. From Opsa, the route headed south through the villages of Miedziuki, the Albinowo estate to the village of Bohiń, where a lake, a chapel and an ancient Jewish cemetery could be visited. From Bohiń through the Hajdukowszczyzna, the route went along the shore of the lake to Czernica, to the factory estate of the Count of Plater, where a large textile factory was located. In the estate, overnight accommodation was offered to tourists on this route. From Platerówo, the return to Brasław was carried out through Nowy Dwór, Zamosze (overnight stay) and the Belmont estate.

The third route ran east from Brasław. The route went from the city through the town of Ikaźń and headed towards the town of Przebrodzie, where overnight accommodation was provided. Then the route went to the Roadside and Apasionki through Orzechówka to the town of Miory, where overnight accommodation was also provided. From Miory, the route went to the village of Orcy and further on through the villages of Bosiny, Malce, Ilmowiki to Dołhinowo, where tourists had to spend the night so that they could reach Leonpol the next day. One and a half kilometer from the town of Leonpol, tourists could see a memorial column in honor of the Constitution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth on May 3, 1791, and in the town itself it was possible to spend the night. Then the route ran towards the town of Druja, where tourists were invited to explore the Church of the Holy Trinity and the monastery buildings. Tourists could return from Druja to Brasław by narrow-gauge railway.³²

The fourth walking route went from Brasław towards the villages of Jelnia, Usiany, Władysławowo to Lake Dryświaty. Overnight accommodation in tents was provided by the lake. From the lake, the route went to Czepukany and further to Rymszany, from where it was also possible to return to Brasław by narrow-gauge railway.

Numerous water routes were also available to tourists in the Brasław County. The most popular route started in the town of Dukszty and ran through the Dzisnand Dzisniszczce lakes, along the Dzisna River to the village of Kozjany, from where it went to the Dryświaty lakes through Lake Bohiń, then along the Dryświata River to Lake Dryświaty.

³² У. Ганскі, *Турызм у Заходняй Беларусі (1921–1939)*, Ковчег, Мінск 2022, pp. 165–179.

In addition, three automobile tourist routes were also available to tourists in the Brasław County:³³

- Brasław – Opsa – Dryświaty – Rymszany – Widze – Bohiń through Czernica to the Platerów estate, and from there to Zamosze and the Belmont estate;
- Brasław – Jody (visit to the palace) – Pohost – Przebrodzie – Ikaźń;
- Brasław – Strusto – along the shore of Lake Snudy through Krzywosielce to Plusy. From there to Słobódka and Druja.

The town of Druja on the border with Latvia, which was a significant center for cultural, educational and religious travel, could be reached from Wilno by another railway line through the towns of Woropajewo, Królewszczyzna and Miory. There, tourists were offered, among other things, 18th century architectural monuments, noble estates and Catholic churches. Taking advantage of this route, tourists also had an opportunity to get acquainted with the sights of the city of Postawy, from where it was also possible to go to Lake Narocz by rented transport (in Postawy it was possible to rent an 18-seat bus, which belonged to the restaurant “Gospoda Polska”).

Due to the development of water tourism, every year in the Wilno Voivodeship the number of youth tourist bases and children’s recreation camps was gradually increasing. Especially for the purpose of organizing recreation for schoolchildren and youth, special tourist maps of the Brasław County were developed and published for better orientation in the terrain. The maps indicated water and land tourist routes and included various information necessary for organizing active recreation. Such special maps existed for water routes along the Brasław Lakes from Lake Drywiaty to the town of Druja and from Lake Dzisna along the Dzisna River to the town of Dzisna, as well as for the Dzisna – Głębokie hiking route.

Outdoor enthusiasts were also attracted by water routes along the Wilia River. Most of these routes began in the town of Wilejka, and they could end more than 250 km away at the very border with Lithuania. Likewise, water routes along the Narocz group of lakes were popular too – along the lakes of Narocz, Miastro, Batoryno and Białe, as well as along the rivers of Narocz and Miadziołka, with numerous rental points for pleasure boats, kayaks and sports equipment.³⁴ In addition, rafting was widely practised on other rivers of the Wilno Voivodeship: Stracza, Żejmiana, Merezanka, etc.³⁵ However, these routes were significantly inferior to the Brasław and Narocz routes in terms of popularity and the level of development of tourist infrastructure.³⁶

³³ Z. Kołosowski, *Szlaki turystyczne po Brasławszczyźnie*, Magata, Brasław 1933, pp. 4–9.

³⁴ Zonal State Archive in Molodechno. Collection 9 “Molodechno District Commandant’s Office of the State Police”. Inventory 1. Case 7.

³⁵ Zonal State Archive in Molodechno. Collection 10 “Wilejka District Commandant’s Office of the State Police”. Inventory 1. Case 152.

³⁶ Zonal State Archive in Molodechno. Collection 10 “Wilejka District Commandant’s Office of the State Police”. Inventory 1. Case 235.

It was also during this period that the first surge of tourist interest in the village of Mosarz near the town of Głębokie was noted. It was the former estate of the Brzostowski and Piłsudski families, where tourists were attracted by a dilapidated palace and a well-preserved church of St Anna, whose construction dates back to the 18th century. Overnight accommodation was offered to tourists in the city of Głębokie, where there were two hotels (“Warsaw” and “Commercial”), casinos, cafes and restaurants, as well as numerous monuments of sacred architecture.

Tourists travelling from the city of Lida by rail through the town of Mołodeczno and the town of Królewsczyzna to Zahacie (the Polish border station, the next station Wietryno was already on the Soviet territory) could visit the town of Budśląw, already known at that time as a center of cultural and religious tourism and Catholic pilgrimages.³⁷

Another tourist destination in the direction of the Soviet border, which was recommended to travellers in the Wilno Voivodeship by the authors of tourist guides published in the 1920s and 1930s, was the railway line from Wilno towards Minsk to the station of Olechnowicze, where tourists were offered to explore the villages of Kiena Panieńska and Gudogaje, the town of Smorgonie, the estate of Zalesie and their surroundings. The developers of the route offered tourists a visit to the palace and park complex in the Szumsk estate, castle ruins in Miedniki Królewskie, 18th century churches Kiena Panieńska and Ostrowiec, etc.

Tourists could get overnight accommodation in the city of Smorgonie, where there were hotels “Bristol” and “Europe”, cafes and restaurants, as well as architectural monuments interesting for tourists to see. However, the main tourist attraction of this route was the Zalesie estate of Michał Kleofas Ogiński located there, which included a palace and park complex from which only an outbuilding, a greenhouse, a chapel and park alleys with two commemorative boulders were available to tourists at that time. Despite this, the flow of tourists to the Zalesie estate only increased throughout the interwar period.

The automobile tourist route from Wilno to Wołożyn via Oszmiana and Holzany was also popular. Good bus connections on this route then gave tourists an opportunity to do without their own car. A trip along this route from Wilno could last either one day only to Oszmiana or 2 or more days at the request of tourists who could freely return back to Wilno from any point on the route. If there was time, tourists could visit not only these settlements, but also nearby attractions, for example, the ruins of a medieval castle in Krewo or Naliboki forest.

In the warm season, a trip to the lakes of the Naroch group along the Wilno – Kobylnik – Miadzioł route was especially popular among the residents of

³⁷ Zonal State Archive in Molodechno. Collection 9 “Mołodeczno District Commandant’s Office of the State Police”. Inventory 1. Case 6.

Wilno and guests to the region. The highway to this area was paved throughout its entire length from Wilno, buses to Miadzioł and even to the recreation center on the very shore of Lake Narocz ran along the road up to several times a day. The bus ride from Wilno usually took about 6 hours. In 1937, a narrow-gauge railway station was opened in the resort village of Narocz, providing a direct connection with Wilno via Łyntupy, and giving a new impetus to the development of tourism in the Narocz region.

The easternmost tourist route in whole interwar Poland was the route from the town of Głębokie to the town of Dzisna. The route was overland (could be covered either by car or on foot) with the length of about 75 km, but the road was not paved for 75% of its length. Tourists on this route visited, among other things, the villages of Łużki and Hermanowicze, where they could see a church and a Piarist monastery from 1756, and the Late Baroque Church of the Transfiguration of the Lord from 1787.

Conclusion

By joint efforts of state bodies, public organizations and associations on the territory of the Wilno Voivodeship, about a hundred tourist routes were developed, officially approved and operated by the end of the 1930s. A great contribution to the development of tourist routes was made by the Eastern Lands Development Society and the Polish Sightseeing Society. The specifics of the transport network of the region, as well as the presence of a large number of rivers and lakes in it, the increasing popularity of water sports (kayaking, yachting) determined the nature of the tourist routes of the region, a significant part of which was designed for waterway transport. Overland tourist routes, most of which were pedestrian, were built taking into account train and bus timetables, which provided tourists with transportation to the main objects of historical and cultural heritage of the region. At that time, several conditional tourist sub-regions and centers of tourism development in the region were formed in the Wilno Voivodeship: the city of Wilno itself, the surroundings of the city of Wilno, as well as Brasław, Narocz, Troki and their surroundings (which were then called the Wilno Lake District), each of them offering a specific tourist product due to the set of tourist resources available on their territory, cultural and natural heritage.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Tourist Routes of the Wilno Voivodeship in the Interwar Period*.

FUNDING

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Tourist Routes of the Wilno Voivodeship in the Interwar Period*.

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