

USING ART AND ARTISTS AS A TOOL TO PROMOTE TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to demonstrate the role of art and artists in the promotion of regional tourism in the post-pandemic period. The Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have suspended or severely restricted tourism worldwide. The negative effects of the pandemic are particularly visible in the regional economy. Despite financial support from states and international organisations, including the European Union (the EU Reconstruction Fund), many regions which lived off tourism until now are struggling with great economic difficulties. The aim of the study is to show the possibility of using art and artists as tools for the promotion and economic development of the local community. These activities may increase interest among potential tourists and investors. The analysis of the possibility for using the new method of local promotion with the use of artists is enriched with reference to the effects of the local economic recovery programme implemented in 2015 and 2016 by the Otwock district. The research hypothesis is the statement that today it is necessary to search for new and unconventional means of promoting countries and regions. The result of the analysis is to show possible forms of using art and artists for local promotion in the post-pandemic period.

KEY WORDS: *cultural tourism, art, artists, Covid-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine.*

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Introduction

This study is an attempt to analyse the relationship between the role of art and artists and tourism. The concept of art belongs to concepts that are extremely difficult to define unequivocally. Moreover, it is constantly evolving through the emergence of new forms and types of art. Hence, over the centuries, the concept has sometimes acquired a different meaning. In antiquity and the Middle Ages, art was understood as knowing strictly defined rules and following them (Wood, 2021: 47–52; Whitley, 2022: 225–249). Hence, the work of craftsmen, potters, tailors and even lawyers was defined as art. Their products were sculptures, paintings, legal regulations and rhetoric. Consequently, poetry, which was the product of inspiration, and not the work of human hands, was not included in art.

In the 17th century, Charles Batteux introduced the concept of the fine arts, to include painting, sculpture, architecture, music, rhetoric, poetry, dance and theatre. Thus, art became independent of craftsmanship, and was associated with notions of creativity, originality, individuality and innovation. Creators of art understood in this way are defined as artists who express their feelings, deal with their own or human problems, and satisfy the emotional and aesthetic needs of society (Batteux, 1746: 1).

Nowadays, the term ‘art’ is not defined, due to the fact that newer and newer forms of art are also created using ICT devices with the use of artificial intelligence. Art is also considered to be a product of human technology, including planes, and even skyscrapers, such as Burj Khalifa in Dubai. Therefore, it is more and more difficult to distinguish between the work of the human mind, the work of human hands, and the product

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of ICT devices or new technologies. Nowadays, all this is referred to as art, and is included in the local, national and world cultural heritage (Vuk, Bosnar, 2021: 99–111).

Art, or universally understood culture, has become a powerful industry. Hence, apart from the communicative, aesthetic, cognitive, emotional, therapeutic and integrative identification functions, art serves primarily as the revitalisation of local or national tourism. More and more regions and countries are trying to encourage potential tourists to come, by promoting art and the creators of art as far as it is possible to identify them (Parfinenko, Yevtushenko, Panova, Podlepina, Onatskyi, 2021: 1568–1584; Zadora, 2014: 79–96; Kotylak, 2013: 7115–728).

The aim of this study is to analyse contemporary offers to tourism in terms of identifying the presence of elements of art in promotion. Art can be perceived as a tool for the development of tourism in a global and local dimension. This analysis includes not only general trends in the world, but also an analysis of the local policy of the Otwock district in Poland. This comparison of the phenomenon of using art in the promotion of tourism will have a complementary nature. It is worth noting that artists who are creators of ancient and contemporary works of art play a significant role in using art to promote tourism. The basic research hypothesis of the study is the statement that art and artists should constitute the foundation for the promotion and development of tourism. The research method used in this work is an analysis of the views of the doctrine and examples of tourism campaigns. The result of the study is the evaluation of actions taken in advertisements using works of art and artists.

1. Tourism and art and artists

Contemporary tourism is based not only on beautiful landscapes, sandy beaches and wide and well-prepared ski slopes, although these are undoubtedly essential elements of so-called mass tourism (Sitek, 2007: 25–26). The flow of tourist traffic is currently being expanded to include products of universally understood art and artists that are becoming increasingly essential elements in the promotion of new tourist destinations and new facilities, including hotels, water parks and other tourist facilities. The need for the stronger introduction and implementation of art and artists into tourism promotion is gaining importance in the context of rebuilding the tourism market after the slowly passing Covid-19 pandemic, and in the context of the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.

According to data from 2018, collected by the World Tourism Organization before the Covid-19 pandemic, the most visited countries were France (89.4 million), Spain (82.8 million), the United States (79.6 million), China (62.9 million), Italy (62.1 million), Turkey (45.8 million), Mexico (41.4 million), Germany (38.8 million), Thailand (38.3 million) and Great Britain (36.3 million). In this ranking, Poland was placed 19th, with 19.6 million tourists annually (Tourism Highlights, 2019). These statistics are from before the pandemic. At the very beginning of the pandemic caused by the Covid 19 virus, in 2020, the tourism market collapsed. The introduction of lockdown in most countries resulted, among other things, in a 60% decrease in air traffic. The World Tourism Organization noted that the largest decrease concerned international traffic, approximately 74%, and a much smaller decrease concerned domestic traffic, approximately 50%. Consequently, the tourism sector experienced 8.8% job losses and huge financial losses. Other numbers also show the scale of the collapse of the tourism market. In 2020, the number of tourists was around 300 million; while in 2019 the number of tourists was around 1.5 billion (Tourism Highlights, 2019).

The war between Russia and Ukraine is the second element which has had a significant impact on global and local tourism. So far, there are no studies showing the impact of the armed conflict on tourism. However, it is not difficult to imagine that the conflict itself and the sanctions imposed on Russia are already causing far-reaching disturbances in the functioning of the tourism market. The ban on flights by Russian aircraft will undoubtedly deprive many countries of Russian tourists, and so it will be exceedingly difficult to access resorts or works of art located in Russia. Concerts with Russian artists are often cancelled. According to Unesco data, as a result of the hostilities in Ukraine, 53 world heritage sites have been completely or partly destroyed.

Attempts are currently being made to rebuild the tourism market to at least the level from the pandemic, with reference, of course, to the marketing activities undertaken earlier. Michał Żemła points to the need for a fresh look at the tourism product. It should be created for individual social groups, companies or tourist areas. Designing new tourist destinations and forms of spending free time should be correlated with the experience and preferences of tourists who enrich a perfectly designed tourist product (Żemła, 2017: 9). Postmodern philosophy, which also influences the way of thinking of active and passive participants in the tourism sector, indicates the need to depart from mass activities in favour of their individualisation (Frochot, Batat, 2013: 1–5). This optics perfectly fits the use of art and artists to create a tourist product customised to the needs of the contemporary consumer of the product.

The conducted education of passive participants in tourism makes them more and more aware not only of the need to protect the natural environment, respect the rights of local people and respect the principles of local culture. Contemporary tourists, or consumers of tourist services, are more and more flexible and independent, and above all oriented towards experiencing values. Hence, they are interested not only in a beautiful beach, but also in history, monuments and famous people living in the area. Modern tourists are also interested in the industrial heritage, literature, film, politics, cultural events and lifestyles. The new generation of tourists not only wants to see or learn something, but also to understand and even experience (Żemła, 2017: 11–12). In this way, tourists become participants in events, and not just passive observers. Of course, the mass flow of tourism will still play a fundamental role in the tourism sector, but its diversification will increase. However, education in this area changes the preferences of tourists (Bohdanowicz, 2005: 176).

Pierre Gervois, a lecturer at New York University, and his students, analysed how state, county and local authorities dealing with the organisation of tourism (Destination Marketing Organizations, DMO) reacted to the Covid-19 pandemic. The subject of the analysis was the method of communication on websites, content posted on social media, and the content and nature of communication by public authorities (Gervois, 2021: 1–2). The conclusions of the analysis show the need to search for updated content that is characteristic of building a tourist offer addressed to the consumer in post-Covid times. It was pointed out that beautiful beaches can be found not only in Florida, but also in other countries in North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand (Lück, Seler, Radic, 2021: 1–9). Similarly, beautiful mountains are found on all continents. Therefore, the question arises about novelty in tourism offerings.

The authors of the above-mentioned analysis of the most frequently offered tourist products conclude that art and artists have always been unique. Sculptures, paintings, murals, monuments, museums, cultural centres and artists have always been unique as the character of a given region or country (Gervois, 2021: 3). Art and artists have timeless values. They can be and are an essential element in the promotion of a region, country or local community, in connection, of course, with natural elements such as beaches, lakes, forests, rivers and mountains.

Artists play a special role in tourism promotion. Tourists visit interesting places not only because of the famous people from the area or living there. Artists can be actively involved in the process of creating tourism offerings. That is why they are more and more often entrusted with designing all kinds of advertisements and advertising banners. They are often the source of original and unique photographs and drawings which are used to promote specific tourism products (Gervois, 2021: 3). Artists can run or co-host Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter profiles, encouraging readers or followers to visit a site. Artists can also prepare unconventional performances that attract tourists. The old traditions of masked balls in Venice and the Palio in Siena are good examples of this.

Art and artists can therefore be an important instrument for revitalising the tourism sector. The Covid-19 pandemic, and now the war in Ukraine, has had a significant negative impact on the dynamics of the sector's development. Searching for ways and tools to restore the economic position of the tourism sector, it seems it is important in promotion to use universally understood art and artists to create the content of a tourist offering and create specific artistic events that potential tourists may be interested in.

2. Art and artists in the promotion of tourism

Art is increasingly the subject of content offered in a tourism product. Thus, art becomes a tool aimed at attracting as many tourists as possible to a given place, and consequently increasing the revenues of a particular town or region. But is this the only purpose of including elements art in a tourism offering? The literature on the subject also indicates other reasons for including elements of art in a batch of material on the tourist sector.

According to U. Eco, art uses poorly defined codes. It is common that secondary elements outweigh relevant ones. However, this allows for different interpretations, depending on the recipient of the message that flows from a given object (Eco, 2008: 271). The Camp Nou Stadium in Barcelona for some people is only a venue for football matches. For others, it can be an architectural facility or a place for entertainment. Art, therefore, is an instrument for transmitting information with a special social importance and meaning in an unusual way, usually opposing the everyday course of things and the needs of practical communication (Couchez, Heynickx, 2021: 23; Porębski, 1972: 277; Eco, 1972: 292).

It should be noted, however, that the transmission of information in tourism offerings cannot be too complicated. The consumption attitude of mass tourists does not induce them to make too much intellectual effort. This message should be easy and relatively simple, arousing emotions of delight, surprise and admiration, but without a deeper reflection on the essence of the message that emerges from a given object of art (Couchez, Heynickx 2021: 32). Hence, art objects with the simplest possible form of conveying content that may be of interest to potential tourists are promoted most often.

An advertisement by the tour operator Rainbow for holidays in 2022 deals mainly with the promotion of beaches, hotels and swimming pools. In the promotion of cities, however, architecture is primarily used: this means objects that are characteristic and recognisable, such as the Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps or the Basilica of St Peter in Rome, or the Parliament building in Budapest. Only for London, apart from the architecture, is there a reference to contemporary literature: Harry Potter and the Magic of London (Rainbow, 2022). In turn, in the offer from the tour operator Tui for Poland (Tui Polska, 2022) and for Germany (Tui Germany, 2022), only beaches and hotels are advertised. A similar trend can be noticed from the largest tour operator Best Reisen (Promotions: summer 2022, 2022).

Elements of art appear quite intensively in organisations typically dealing with cultural tourism, such as the travel agency KulTour.pl. Some travel agencies offer cultural tourism as a complement to the mainstream tourism offerings, i.e. beaches, hotels and mountains. These are, for example, the travel agency Sabat from Starachowice (the Holy Cross Mountains area) and the travel agency CST Travel located in Krakow (Malchrowicz, 2011: 78–89).

Art and artists are used in offers prepared as part of a promotional campaign for individual regions and even countries. The VisitCalifornia website encourages visitors to the state to visit museums, architectural and technical sites rich in exhibits, but also to see performances in the Los Angeles amphitheatre and numerous street performances (Arts and Culture, 2022). Art is also reflected in the promotion of individual countries as interesting and attractive places to spend holidays not only on the beach. Art and culture are used in the promotion of, *inter alia*, Italy (The Art That Made Grand Tourists, 2022), Poland (Promotion of Polish culture, 2022), and Lithuania (Burneika, 2015: 91–105; Lithuania Gives, 2020).

The above analysis of exemplary promotional campaigns conducted by tour operators, regional authorities and individual countries, with elements of culture or artists, still remains a side element of the entire component of the tourism offering. An exception is the promotion of more interesting states in the United States, especially California, where the world's largest centre for contemporary entertainment, which is part of pop culture, is located. This is where quite a large number of tourists from around the world go, not only to visit beaches and natural culture facilities, such as the Sequoia National Park, but also to visit the world's largest Hollywood film production company, or to have a chance to meet a famous actor or actress on Los Angeles Street.

In cultural tourism it is also necessary to mention religious tourism. Religion is part of the culture of individual countries and continents. Hence, religious elements are also used to promote the tourism offering. These elements are visible in the promotion of places with centres of religious power, such as Rome in Italy,

or a miraculous spring, such as Lourdes in France. Other religions also have their own places of worship where numerous believers who are also tourists come. Examples of such places are Mecca in Saudi Arabia, and the Taj Mahal mausoleum in India.

3. The implementation of the local economic revival of the Otwock district

The Otwock district borders the capital Warsaw to the south. The area is inhabited by approximately 130,000 people, and consists of seven local authorities. There are numerous architectural objects and natural monuments in it. The objects of architecture include, first of all, quite numerous and unique buildings made of wood in the Świdermajer style. The Italian architect Michał Elwiro Andriolli, who lived in the district in the 19th century, created this architectural style. The natural monuments include the Mazowiecki Park, the Calowanie Marshes, and the River Świder, one of the cleanest rivers in Poland. These sites are a sufficient reason for the Otwock district, due to its cultural uniqueness, to be a local area of tourism development not only for the inhabitants of Warsaw.

The implementation of the local economic recovery programme in 2016–2018 was an opportunity to boost the development of tourism in the Otwock district. The Local Economic Recovery Programme aims to support local communities in activating economic development, creating new jobs, and promoting them. Representatives of local authorities, businesses, banks, environmental organisations, commercial institutions and scientific units participate in this programme (Kłosowski, 2016).

At the initiative of the deputy starost of Otwock Paweł Rupniewski, and the Alcide De Gasperi University of the Euroregional Economy in Józefów, five workshop-type conferences were held, at which mayors of individual communes, representatives of the research community, non-governmental organisations and entrepreneurs, attempted to define the main directions of development of the Otwock district. Representatives of art and artists were also participants in these events.

One of the basic goals of the local economic recovery was to work out possible concepts for the economic development of the local community, and to select the best ideas to be implemented. The workshop participants finally developed six projects, in the fields of culture, education, entrepreneurship and tourism. From the point of view of tourism development, the following projects should be mentioned:

- ‘Cinema, café and walk in the district of Otwock’ concerning an invitation to residents to enjoy culture, entertainment and recreation in the district.
- ‘Przystanek Celestynów’ concerning the revitalisation of the railway station and its surroundings in Celestynów.
- ‘What, where, when in the Otwock district’, a programme for launching a mobile application presenting and promoting culture and tourism events in the Otwock district (fifth Conference, 2017).

Only the second project was eventually implemented. The local elections were the reason for the failure to implement these noble plans. The new district authorities were not interested in the programme for the economic and tourist revival of the district. The development of tourism in the Otwock district, especially with the use of elements of art and local artists, also did not find a place in the development strategy of the Otwock district for the years 2014 to 2020 (Resolution No 269 / XXXIX14). Work is currently under way on a new strategy for 2021 to 2027. An analysis of the course of the work on this document allows us to conclude with the statement that it will be a typical administrative document without wider public consultation. Thus, it can be concluded that the development of tourism will not be one of the priorities of the new strategy.

Conclusions

Increasing consumer awareness of the tourism offering is gradually being brought about by changing the main trends in shaping tourist products. An analysis of promotional campaigns conducted by tour operators and local, regional and state authorities shows the growing importance of art in promoting new ways of

spending leisure time. Artists rarely used to be active creators of the cultural tourism offering. The thinking related to tourism emphasises the need to use artists to create a tourism offering.

However, it cannot be ignored that the tourism offering is still dominated by the promotion of beautiful beaches, well-equipped hotels, beautiful mountains, and, above all, low prices. This statement cannot be denied by examples of references to works of art or the work of artists, because it is marginal in relation to the main offering of tour operators, or cultural tourism is promoted by local tourist agencies, and is thus unknown in the international arena.

This situation could be explained by three reasons. The first is the reluctance of tourists to make an intellectual effort while spending leisure time on vacation, hence the cultural offering usually includes elements including a message which is simple and does not require much intellectual effort. The second reason why art and artists are omitted from promoting a region is politics, especially the lack of continuation of programmes implemented by predecessors. An example may be the situation in the Otwock district when after the change of local government authorities, the implementation of quite good programmes adopted by the previous authority was abandoned. The third reason that art and artists are under-utilised in promoting tourism is economic performance. It is much easier to convince potential tourists to take advantage of an offer that includes beautiful views and comfortable hotels than an offer which requires travelling in free time and having to think.

The final conclusion of the study is that cultural tourism will develop. However, a lot of time must pass to change the way of thinking of tourists, tour operators, and national and local governments.

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MENAI IR MENININKAI, KAIP TURIZMO SKATINIMO PRIEMONĖ

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Santrauka

Tyrimo tikslas – atskleisti meno ir menininkų vaidmenį, skatinant regioninį turizmą popandeminiu laikotarpiu. COVID-19 pandemija, karas Ukrainoje sustabdė arba gerokai apribojo turizmą visame pasaulyje. Neigiami pandemijos padariniai akivaizdūs regionų ekonomikoje. Nepaisant valstybių ir tarptautinių organizacijų, įskaitant Europos Sąjungos (ES rekonstrukcijos fondo), finansinės paramos, daugelis regionų, gyvenusių iš turizmo, vis dar patiria didelių ekonominių sunkumų. Tyrimu siekta atskleisti, kaip galima pasitelkus meną ir menininkus skatinti vietos bendruomenę veikti, įgyvendinant ekonominę plėtrą. Tai gali paskatinti potencialių turistų ir investuotojų susidomėjimą. Šio metodo, pasitelkus menininkus, taikymo analizė bus papildyta, remiantis 2015–2016 m. vykdytos vietos ekonomikos atkūrimo programos poveikiu Otwocko rajono savivaldybėms.

Tyrimo hipotezė – šiandien būtina ieškoti naujų, netradicinių šalių ir regionų reklamavimo priemonių. Analizės rezultatas – atskleisti galimas meno ir menininkų pasitelkimo formas vietinei popandeminio laikotarpio reklamai. Reikia pastebėti, kad turistams pateikiamoje informacijoje vis dar dominuoja gražių paplū-

dimių, puikiai įrengtų viešbučių, puikių kalnų ir pirmiausia žemos kainos reklama, tačiau dažnu atveju nepateikiamos nuorodos į meno kūrinius ar menininkų kūrybą konkrečiame regione. Kultūrinį turizmą skatina tik vietinės turizmo agentūros, tačiau tarptautinėje erdvėje menininkų darbai, kaip turizmo traukos objektai, nereklamuojami. Susiklosčiusią situaciją galėjo lemti trys priežastys:

1. Turistų nenoras dėti intelektines pastangas leidžiant atostogas, todėl kultūrinė pasiūla dažniausia apsiriboja elementais, kur didelių intelektinių pastangų nereikia.
2. Politikų pradėtų programų tęstinumas. Puikus pavyzdys – situacija, susiklosčiusi Otwocko rajone, kai pasikeitus vietos valdžios institucijoms atsisakyta įgyvendinti gana geras ankstesnės valdžios priimtas programas.
3. Ekonominė veikla: daug lengviau įtikinti potencialius turistus pasinaudoti pasiūlymu, kuriame yra gražių vaizdų, siūlomi patogūs viešbučiai, nei pasiūlymu keliauti laisvu laiku, kur dar reikia ir mąstyti.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: *kultūrinis turizmas, menas, menininkai, COVID-19 pandemija, karas Ukrainoje.*

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