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Title of dissertation: “The tourist space of Krajna”

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SUMMARY

The primary aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate and evaluate the tourist space of Krajna, the historical and geographical region of Poland, its tourist potential and attractiveness in relation to other Polish regions. The research was conducted in the years 2008----2010. The author focused on analyzing locally available documents (land and mortgage registers), investigation of local tourist infrastructure and conducting surveys among tourists and local authorities, which provided much data that could be potentially used to popularize Krajna as a region attractive to tourists.

There appears to be a number of conceptions concerning the boundaries of Krajna. The author of this dissertation chose the division suggested by Paweł Szafran (1961) in his research on the settlement network in the region, where he referred to region's historical boundaries that overlapped with Nakło powiat (district) from the 16th to 18th century. Krajna was chosen as the subject matter of the study for a number of reasons. Firstly, while there are several history (O. Goerke 1918, I. Geppert 1926, P. Szafran 1961, S. Łaniecki 2008) and archaeology (prof. A. Kokowski 2011) publications on this region available, there have been no attempts to investigate Krajna from geographical and touristic angle. Thus, the region remains largely unexplored despite its potential. Secondly, tourists are unaware of Krajna's existence and this dissertation along with data here included may bring Krajna to tourist's attention and/or help the local authorities of Krajna accelerate tourist development of the region. A separate survey conducted on tourism and relatives showed that approximately 95% of respondents had no idea where is Krajna or, in fact, what is it in the first place. Thirdly, Krajna has much to offer with its pristine landscapes, rich folklore and unique cuisine. These elements may be very attractive for potential tourists and can be used to increase tourist traffic in this region. Lastly, Krajna is located away from big agglomerations which is the basis for the theoretical discussion on region's future development.

According to W. Christaller (1955, 1964) regions that are peripheral to big agglomerations become in time destination for tourists because they constitute a tourist space attractive to residents of surrounding big cities. A number of contemporary authors, including A. Kowalczyk (2002), B. Włodarczyk (2009) emphasize the influence of the periphery theory on the evolution of views on the principals governing tourist space development. In the context of this dissertation the idea of tourist space is understood as a part of geographic space where tourist traffic takes place, and which may influence the social and economic development of the region. The fact that Krajna

is located at the periphery of large agglomerations appears to be particularly important. It seems that tourists often want to escape the hustle and bustle of big cities and experience peace and quiet unavailable in their place of living. Krajna lies on the periphery of several major agglomerations and thus, it fits into the periphery theory. Krajna has much to offer for tourists (pristine landscapes, culture and folklor, cuisine, architectural elements, cultural events) and its peripheral location could be used to enhance the development of tourism in the region.

Surveys show that tourists who visit Krajna find the region interesting and attractive. They are pleased with peace and quiet and claim that this is a good place to relax. Moreover, western part of Krajna is becoming increasingly popular among tourists from Germany, mainly for sentimental reasons. Also, the data collected show that three different forms of tourism can be identified in the region: leisure tourism (mainly at lakes), sight-seeing tourism (entire region), agritourism (agricultural areas). Also, Krajna has potential, if appropriate infrastructure is provided, of developing two more forms: holiday tourism (aimed at families who wish to leave city and spend holidays in a peaceful region close to nature) and heritage tourism (related to exploring regional culture, cuisine and handcraft). Furthermore, one can distinguish three types of tourism with regard to the length of stay. On the one hand there is long-term tourism (usually one week stay – tourists mainly from four voievodeships: Mazowieckie, Łódzkie, Śląskie and Dolnośląskie or from abroad – mainly from Germany) and short-term tourism (up to three days stay, usually on weekends – tourists from two voievodeships: Kujawsko-Pomorskie and Wielkopolskie). On the other hand, there are the so called one-day-visitors, who come to Krajna only to see and take part in cultural events. All three above-mentioned types of tourists are important for the development of the tourist space of Krajna.

Apart from the data obtained from surveys, the author gained full access to land and mortgage registers in the district courts of Piła, Złotów and Sępólno Krajeńskie, analysis of which allowed for the reconstruction of how the first holiday resorts were set. The research showed that approximately 85% of resorts were established in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century, when social tourism was well developed in Poland (for instance in communes: Więcbork, Kamień Krajeński, Sępólno Krajeńskie, Łobzenica and Zakrzewo). At present these resorts are privatized. The remaining 15% of tourist accommodation was established during the Second World War and was mainly visited by the Germans (including the Nazis) – for instance Złotów town, Płotki near Piła city and Luchowo (in Łobzenica commune).

The author of the dissertation holds high hopes that the data collected and analyzed there will be used to promote Krajna in Poland.

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