



Tourists in the spatial structures of a big Polish city: Development of an uncontrolled patchwork or concentric spheres?



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Tourists are one of the influential factors changing spatial structure of the city.
- We examine tourist behaviour in the city and their motivations.
- We conduct experiment with GPS registration of tourist movement.
- Tourist behaviour reflects city socio-spatial structure.
- Model is created showing tourist spatial structure of the big Polish city.

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ABSTRACT

The popular thesis about the development of a postmodern city under the impact of tourist traffic emphasises the patchwork character of those processes. The research is intended to test its validity for one of the Polish Cities – Poznan.

The aims are: to recognise which of city areas are ignored by tourists and which are selected by them, to identify in what way spatial structures of the city develop in terms of urban tourism, to create a model mapping a polish city, using Poznań as an example, in terms of tourists' activity and possible scenarios of its development. Presented research shows concentration of tourists' attraction in the city, tourists' behaviour and their motivation. Places that build this tourist structure can be classified according to their functions and spatial arrangement. Authors distinguish "induction spots", "gates to the city", "anchor spots", "bridges", "undiscovered places".

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1. Introduction

Today urban attractions are often manufactured, and tourism is one of the key dimensions of urban development (Edwards & Gryffin, 2013b). Judd and Fainstein (1999) list three types of cities visited by tourists: those created from the ground up with tourists in view, e.g. Las Vegas, historic cities that possess a cultural identity and a historical past, e.g. Amsterdam, and those in which selected areas evolve towards tourist attractions, thus presenting a contrast with other, non-tourist parts, e.g. Atlanta.

There are relatively few cities, even at the global scale, filled with places created exclusively for leisure and amusement. In turn, the other two categories of cities that are tourist targets are very broad, and ever new urban places keep aspiring to them. Many cities seek their chance for growth in tourism. Taking this chance in a more or less random way, they draw up and implement strategies of tourism development.

Those processes also occur in the cities of Poland. The great potential of the historical and cultural assets they have accumulated, the dynamic economic development of the recent decades connected with the socio-economic changes in this part of Europe, and the relatively stable current economic situation of the country make Polish cities an ever stronger presence on the tourist market. There is no doubt that those processes have been reinforced by Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004 and its share in the Community budget, more intensive investment allowed by the EU assistance programmes, and by Polish cities playing host to

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international events of global significance (the 2008 Climate Summit, Poznań) or of a European impact (Euro 2012, Gdańsk, Poznań, Warsaw and Wrocław).

There have been huge changes in the spatial structures of many Polish cities, especially the largest ones. New investments in transport, shopping, cultural and amusement infrastructure as well as promotional action attract to them one of the dominant categories of city users – tourists. However, those changes are not always programmed, monitored and controlled by city authorities. For most of their representatives, the urban tourist is a sign of a correct direction of development and a hope for an inflow of cash to the city budget.

In this context it is justified to pose the following research questions:

- What is the pattern of tourism-related development of spatial structures in a big Polish city, taking Poznań as an example?
- Is there a concentration of tourist behaviour and a concentration and centralisation of tourism-related facilities in Poznań, or does tourist traffic spread evenly also onto the area outside the city centre? and
- What space of the city remains in the use of its residents?

The aim of those research questions is:

- To determine the extent to which a big Polish cities are starting to be used by tourists, and which of their areas are ignored and which are selected by them. The popular thesis about the development of a postmodern city under the impact of tourist traffic emphasises the patchwork character of those processes (Ashworth & Page, 2011). The research is intended to test its validity for Poznań, one of the East European cities.
- To identify in what way spatial structures of the city develop in terms of urban tourism.

The final effect of the analysis and discussion is the creation of a model mapping a Polish city, using Poznań as an example, in terms of tourists' activity and possible scenarios of its development.

As Ashworth and Page state (2011: 2), "Urban tourism is an extremely important, world-wide form of tourism: It has received a disproportionately small amount of attention from scholars of either tourism or of the city, particularly in linking theoretical research to Tourism Studies more generally. Consequently, despite its significance, urban tourism has remained only imprecisely defined and vaguely demarcated with little development of a systematic structure of understanding." The authors of this paper hope that the presented research will contribute to a further discussion about the presence of tourists in cities.

2. Tourists' influence on urban change: theoretical background

Ashworth (1989) formulated four key approaches to an analysis of urban tourism: a facility approach, an urban ecological approach, a user approach, and a policy approach. Twenty years later, Ashworth and Page (2011) list 12 sub-themes of potential interest to researchers studying a city as an area of tourist activity. In this way they emphasise the wide spectrum of possible conceptual and research fields. Given the scope of this paper, the key theoretical and empirical reflections in the literature on the subject are connected with the *tourist – city's spatial structures – resident* triad. Many scholars stress tourist-related changes in urban morphology when they talk about the appearance of non-places (Auge, 1995), tourist bubbles (Judd, 1999), successive arrangement and

simultaneous arrangement types of spatial order (Boerwinkel, 1995), segregated spaces (high use-depth syntax) and integrated spaces (shallow use-depth syntax) (Hillier, 2005; Hillier & Hanson, 1984), counter-structures (Gospodini, 2001), or livable and creative places (Wagner & Caves, 2012). The authors examining urban tourism in terms of changes in a city's spatial structures emphasise that the tourist plays one of the key roles in the city, deciding, whether directly or indirectly, about those changes. Gospodini (2001) observes that from the point of view of smaller European towns, a more favourable type of development of urban structures is that based on the simultaneous arrangement of attractive spaces, resulting in high use-densities. This is connected with an offer of many different choices in experiencing spaces characterised by shallow syntactic depth.

An important role of the tourist in a city has been mentioned by scholars representing the research trend employing the conception of "city users" or "city visitors" (Judd, 1999, 2003; Martinotti, 1996). Today tourists have become the most important category among "city users". Their share in city life steadily growing, they have practically appropriated some areas, pushing indigenous residents out of them. In a number of cases there have appeared "tourist bubbles", or amusement enclaves for visitors. In the conception of "city users", tourist activity and changes in the spatial structures of a city are in a clear coincidence or ever correlation with each other. Scholars have found that more intensive tourist traffic makes selected, usually central, parts of the city bloom, but it is also associated with the fall of its other quarters, for example old neighbourhood districts.

The feedback within the *tourist – city's spatial structures – resident* triad can be reinforced by mega- or special events organised in a city (Getz, 2007; Roche, 1992, 2000). Especially grand occasions of a global impact (mega-events) or of a continental/regional significance (special events) are usually held in cities, attracting individual and group tourists (Roche, 2000). The great ease of movement characteristic of our times, the sense of mobility, and the popularity of a life style connected with tourism cause cyclic events (e.g. the Olympic Games, the World Football Cup, the European Football Cup) and one-time occasions (the wedding of a royal couple) to attract interested crowds from all over the world (Solberg & Preuss, 2006). While taking part in a mega- or special event, visitors assume the role of a couple-of-days tourist. In the case of a lot of events of this type, their start is preceded by many months, if not years, of investment work. Often the investment leads to permanent changes not only in the spatial structure of a city, but also in its social fabric. Not infrequently old public spaces and residential areas are liquidated and transformed into building sites for a new investment serving a mega-event (Newman, 1999; Prayag, Hosany, Nunkoo, & Alders, 2013).

Theoretical reflections about the transformation of urban spaces under the impact of tourist traffic can also be found in works by the Polish social geographer Liszewski (1995, 1999). He notes that there has developed an urban tourist space in modern cities in which one can distinguish:

- a tourist penetration space, or the most traditional type of urban space, e.g. historic and ecclesiastical facilities, historic centres, cemeteries, zoological and botanical gardens;
- a tourist assimilation space, or spaces of contact with the local population and learning its customs, living conditions, and everyday life; places of at least partial integration;
- a tourist exploration space, or places not discovered by tourists yet, showing the city's climate and uniqueness;
- a tourist colonisation space, or city areas featuring permanent tourist development; and

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