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Journeymen and lodges: The hidden culture of freemasonry in the world of tourism

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Abstract:

Freemasonry is a secret fraternal organisation that evolved from medieval guilds of craft masons in the 16th and 17th century Scotland and spread all over the world during the 18th century. The core organisational principles and secret signs received by members during their initiation are closely related to travel, which was likewise important to their medieval predecessors. It is, therefore, surprising that there is so little interest in the connections of freemasonry and tourism, both among academic scholars of tourism and freemasonic writers. This initial survey of the field shows that members of the fraternity are very mobile people, eager to visit both active freemasonic lodges and sites of historical masonic interest wherever they go. Some lodges allow visitors who are not members, but generally historical monuments and museum collections related to freemasonry may prove highly attractive to both freemasonic and lay tourists. The enigmatic symbolism and prevailing stereotype of masons being "secret world rulers" are certainly great attractors to the general public. In some countries (UK, France, Germany, USA) there are museums of freemasonry open to general public and in Washington DC there is a popular tourist route of the sites showing the masonic roots of the United States. Attempts at founding a similar museum in Poland (in Dobrzyca, not far from Poznań) were unsuccessful due to the opposition of the local government, clearly for ideological reasons, driven by prevailing stereotypes. Likewise, tourist guides seldom mention the role freemasons played in Polish history, with kings and presidents being members of the fraternity. The first Polish constitution was authored mostly by freemasons, as was the national anthem, whose protagonist is General Dąbrowski, an exceptionally active mason. In order to create and promote tourist attractions related to freemasonry, adequate historical research must be undertaken, so that the routes and sites proposed to either travelling freemasons or cultural tourists intrigued by the mysterious fraternity (including fans of Dan Brown's novels) are correctly identified and packaged in reliable information on their history. Such research was recently done on the masonic history of Poznań and some of its results may be used for constructing a masonic tourist route of the city and its surroundings.

Introduction

The roots of mass tourism in general, and cultural tourism in particular, are traditionally traced back to the Grand Tour phenomenon of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries [Buczowska 2011, p. 14, Rohrscheidt 2016, p. 66-67], claimed to have been "one of the most celebrated episodes in the history of tourism" [Towner 1996, p. 96]. Those early modern tours of Europe undertaken by young aristocrats for educational purposes may, however, be perceived as an outgrowth of the medieval and renaissance *peregrinatio academica*, which likewise involved visiting places of cultural interest, other than the universities themselves [Żołądź-Strzelczyk 1996]. Although there are fewer narrative sources from that earlier period, numerous surviving *alba amicorum* (*Stammbücher*) document the itineraries that students of both noble and middle class families followed,

the places they visited and the people they met [Schwarz 2002, Schnabel 2003, Schnabel and Bauer 2018]. One of the reasons of the emergence of the Grand Tour movement was “a particular social and cultural environment” that evolved in England at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries [Towner 1985, p. 299], but because it was studied in depth from the English perspective only, there may well be other reasons, so far unnoticed. The statistical data collected by Towner in his seminal paper show that the number of students among English “grand tourists” gradually decreased from 85% in 1604 to none at all in 1804 [Towner 1985, p. 307, 310-311], which may be indicative of a tendency to substitute the original extension of formal academic education with more leisurely treated social motivation for travelling abroad. Moreover, the Catholic universities of Italy, the most important Grand Tour destination, would not admit Protestants, so the majority of the visiting Englishmen could not continue their education there and eventually developed a different approach.

Universities were originally established and organised on the same rules as the medieval guilds of artisans, so both students and craftsmen after completing their apprenticeship were expected to travel widely and work with various masters before they were able to become masters of their particular craft themselves [Epstein 1991]. That middle phase in an artisan’s education is known as that of a wandering journeyman and even though etymologically the term is derived from the French *jour* (=day), as they were paid by the day for their work, the modern connotations of journey well reflect the requirement for travelling. It seems obvious that journeymen comprised a sizable group of what may be regarded as cultural tourists, visiting towns large and small all over Europe and partaking in festive events, so common to both burgher and chivalric cultures. They included religious feasts, state and municipal ceremonies, tournaments of knights, theatre performances, and many other activities which attracted participants and spectators from afar [Gies and Gies 1969, 2018, Zimmerman and Weissman 1989, Hanawalt and Reyerson 1994].

While Towner saw the appearance of a certain “social and cultural environment” within the aristocratic class in England as the source of the Grand Tour phenomenon, it may be argued that the same “environmental pressure” had already existed earlier among burghers, but had more pragmatic purposes – mastering of arts and crafts as the future source of their livelihood. So they were expected to travel and learn – be it at universities or master craftsmen’s workshops – by their family and friends. Noblemen and landed gentry had other means of income so during the Middle Ages they had no need for learning, but with the coming of the Renaissance it became fashionable to get some education, so members of noble families also started to attend universities and travel from one to another. For most of them it was just “class pressure”, but some were certainly curious about distant lands and intellectual challenges. When such attitudes became widely established, the Grand Tour gradually detached itself from *peregrinatio academica* and evolved into what is now called tourism. Thus its genealogy may be traced back to the medieval system of artisanal training, later including universities or guilds of scholars pursuing the liberal arts (as opposed to the mechanical arts of craftsmen).

In most crafts journeymen found employment and lodgings in stationary workshops of individual masters, such as shoemakers or tailors, but there were also specific crafts which required mobility of the masters themselves and thus had to arrange for temporary accommodation or lodges for all those working on a common project. A prime example of that type of craft was that of masons or builders of great stone and brick constructions such as cathedrals or castles. Not only well organised team work was necessary at such enterprises, but masons, just like any other craft, had to protect their trade secrets and because of the mobility of their members of various ranks, they developed a system of secret signs elf as a member of the craft with an appropriate level of skills. Lodges evolved from places of accommodation provided by investors into institutions similar to colleges, where apprentices

and journeymen could meet masters and receive instructions, often in ritualised form to make it easier to memorise. Lodge lectures also included explanations of legends and traditions of the craft, as well as moral lessons derived from symbolic interpretations of the basic tools of the trade, such as the square and the compasses.

At some time during the sixteenth century some masonic lodges in Scotland started to admit intellectuals and members of nobility to their meetings [Stevenson 1988]. They helped the craftsmen financially, while themselves found a place where they could freely discuss matters related to religion or politics – otherwise quite dangerous and risky – because lodges enjoyed the rights to strict secrecy. By the end of the century, the practice became so common, that there were lodges without genuine craftsmen builders (or “operative masons”, as they were called) among their members, and all their activities and rituals were purely symbolic (therefore they were called “speculative masons”). Throughout the seventeenth century numerous new lodges of the speculative type were founded in Scotland and then in England, where their members started to be called freemasons. Eventually, in 1717, the Grand Lodge of England was constituted in London, a governing body which soon became recognised as the ruling body by most British and Irish lodges, as well as many foreign ones, as freemasonry started to spread all over Europe and the world, forming a mysterious fraternity, the largest and longest lasting secret society in world history [Cegielski 2007, Snoek and Bogdan 2014].

The purpose of this article is, first, to have a look at travelling habits of modern freemasons (as far as it is possible for an outsider) and the extent to which they may be perceived as yet another branch of the genealogical tree of modern tourism or as a potential target group for tourism industry. The second aim is to consider utilising freemasonic heritage as tourist attractions, both for freemasons and profanes, with a more detailed presentation of that heritage in Poznań and its surroundings. Problems with exploiting the potential of the heritage of freemasonry in Poland are also briefly discussed in order to show how ideological prejudice may block historical education of tourists – and not only tourists.

The travelling freemason

As descendants of craft masonry, modern speculative masons have continued many of the customs of their forerunners, usually in ritualised form. Travelling to places of masonic interest, learning about the craft’s history, visiting other lodges and participating in their activities are among those practiced from the earliest days of freemasonry. In the symbolic sense, any freemason is always on a journey of perfecting himself and hence one of the ways of recognising others as his brethren is asking: “Are you a travelling man?”, the positive answer to which is “Yes, I am travelling from the West to the East” [Mackey, Clegg, and Haywood 1966, p. 1046]. On the more mundane level of actual travels, the tradition of visiting other (also foreign) lodges by eminent freemasons or political and religious refugees is quite well documented and widely discussed in most historical studies and masonic biographical dictionaries. However, until recently there was hardly any historical research devoted exclusively or even primarily to that topic. The situation changed with Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire’s fascinating paper on the “culture of mobility” among freemasons in eighteenth century France [Beaurepaire 2006]. He stressed their feeling of belonging to a diaspora or – more precisely – a republic, in which they could turn their cosmopolitan ideas into practical travelling scheme, with thousands of foreigners visiting French lodges every year and local masons arranging accommodation to receive them. Correspondence networks were established to facilitate that form of tourism and a system of documenting one’s masonic affiliations was agreed on. Beaurepaire also indicates the connection of Grand Tours of young aristocrats with their visits to lodges of freemasonry, of which most of them were members.

Using both masonic primary documents from the archives of French lodges and memoirs of numerous travelling freemasons, he uncovered and brought to light a hidden layer of the history of tourism. As Beaurepaire himself observes in his conclusions:

I have sought to reveal the complexity and the elaborate character of the management tools of mobility available to and deployed by members of the Masonic order who made up an important segment of the French, European, and colonial elites. The availability of certificates for traveling brothers or candidates for initiation, the "passports to Enlightenment" [...], deserve our attention, as do the maps of the lodges' locations [...]. It is clear that no study of the mobility of European elites can ignore this framing of space by networks of lodges and fraternal correspondence. A more detailed study of this mobility and its articulation in a culture of secular mobility will require the systematic study.[Beaurepaire 2006, p. 431]

Scholarly research on the tourist activity of modern freemasons is even more difficult because of the secrecy to which members and masters of the fraternity are obliged. Nevertheless, some conclusions may be discerned from the information contained in masonic publications accessible through libraries and on the Internet, as well as websites of lodges and some open forums where freemasons discuss topics of interest to them. Sociological studies of freemasonry started early in the previous century but were hardly numerous or extensive. An interesting recent attempt by J. Scott Kenney (who also summarises earlier research) drew on in-depth filmed interviews of 121 Canadian masons, analysing their attitudes in a sophisticated way from the phenomenological and ethnomethodological perspectives [Kenney 2016]. Although Kenney does not specifically address the topic of travel, it pops up in many statements by the interviewed freemasons themselves, as for example: "When I'm travelling and meet a brother, I feel an automatic contact, and instant rapport much more often than with others." [Kenney 2016, p. 147] or "I can travel anywhere now. The world is a smaller place. I'll never be alone anywhere I am." [Kenney 2016, p. 224]

The prime source of reliable information on the procedures used by contemporary freemasons when visiting other lodges is the *Masonic world guide*, subtitled *A guide to Grand Lodges of the world for the travelling freemason* [Henderson 1984]. Written by an Australian and published in the United Kingdom, it provides details of the requirements of various masonic bodies for visitors, as well as what they offer when a visit is allowed. In the short introductory essay Henderson explains that it used to be a right of every freemason, but since the end of the eighteenth century it became a privilege, often restricted to include some types of lodge meetings or acceptable on invitation of a lodge member only. The main condition (or limitation) for such a visit is the recognition of regularity between the visitor's mother lodge and the one being visited. During the three centuries of organised freemasonry a number of schisms took place and rival ruling bodies developed, so that not all lodges are recognised by the United Grand Lodge of England as "regular". A great number of lodges trace their origins and authority to the Grand Orient of France or other obediences, as those bodies are called, so that in any country there may exist various Grand Lodges (national ruling authorities) and mutual visits between lodges belonging to them are not allowed. Even if they are from the same obedience, it is the prerogative of the Master of the lodge to refuse to admit any visitor if he feels that he might disturb the harmony of the meeting. The prerequisites as delineated by Henderson include proper documentation from one's own lodge to be presented in advance to the authorities of the lodge intended to be visited, which sometimes needs to be supported by letters from the relevant Grand Lodge (thus little has changed in this respect since the eighteenth century requirement for certificates, as studied by Beaurepaire). It is also advised to get acquainted with the rituals of the lodge, as they may differ in a number of ways. Some lodges confer so-called courtesy degrees, so a freemason

may be advanced to the Master's degree or receive one of the higher degrees with fancy names in a foreign lodge. There is also a custom of decorating the visitor with the badge of the lodge, which then becomes part of the ceremonial dress of the receiver.

Henderson's guide proved so popular that it ran through several editions and eventually a new version was produced in two volumes [Henderson and Pope 1998-2000]. Apparently, its publication also boosted interest of freemasons in visiting other lodges, because at about the same time some American lodges started providing their members with "masonic passports", containing confirmed credentials of their holders and with space for collecting confirmations of their visits. The practice does not seem to have gained wider popularity and with advances in technology it gave way to mobile applications which serve as both guides and visit announcement tools. One of the more popular and publicly available programs of this type is *Amity*, with details of over 36,000 lodges and a visit check-in routine which is compatible with a number of widely used lodge management software systems [Amity 2018].

The success of those travel guides inspired an American freemason Danie Hanttula to write a new one along different lines [Hanttula 2017-2018]. In its two volumes (with the third one announced as forthcoming), he discusses places and events of masonic interest, historical sites and symbolic designs, which should be attractive to the travelling freemason. Most of them constitute what may be called national masonic heritage of the United States of America, including legends and traditions, providing a different type of journey that may also be offered to profane cultural tourists, but for freemasons it carries much more meaning. Their attitude was studied by the American ethnologist Lilith Mahmud, who visited a palace and land estate in the city of Sintra near Lisbon, accompanied by a group of female freemasons from Italy and Belgium. It had belonged to a Portuguese aristocrat but now is a tourist attraction belonging to the city council. Conducting a participant observation, Mahmud had the following reflections:

Without formal signs or directions to follow, a visitor might simply have wandered around the space, casually coming across one or another of its many spectacular features. For the sisters, however, this journey was not simply a tourist excursion. For them, it represented a spiritual process, and they were determined to walk it as an initiation path. It was very important, therefore, to walk it in the "correct" order prescribed by ritual. After arriving at each marker, such as a tower, a pond, or a fountain, the sisters would pause to look for clues pointing to the next destination. With several paths leading through the forest, the choice of direction was far from obvious to the untrained eye. The sisters, however, could see and recognize artistic depictions of ritual symbols. A small figure of a pelican carved into a stone fountain, for instance, served as an indication of our place along the path and of what lay ahead. "The pelican is a symbol of the 33rd degree, you know?" someone informed me. It was by following such clues that the sisters were able to experience an initiation path in what might otherwise have been simply a tourist destination. Their ability to reread and reconfigure the space effectively conjured an initiation path, which only existed if walked as such. [Mahmud 2012, p. 432]

This rare example of independent research on the masonic approach to tourism shows how the heritage of freemasonry may be turned into a tourist attraction and yet retain its spiritual and initiatory meaning to members of the fraternity.

Freemasonry as a tourist attraction and national heritage

The masonic movement has always been looked upon with suspicion because of their secrecy and exclusiveness. The enigmatic symbols they use add another dimension to the mystery and thus numerous conspiracy theories were invented, involving freemasons as a group of evil rulers of the world or as Satan worshippers. They were accused of having been the hidden force behind the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution, as well as some other political upheavals [Cegielski 2015]. While anti-masonic propaganda is as old as the fraternity itself, its impact was much greater in traditionally Roman Catholic countries – such as Poland – because members of the Church are explicitly forbidden to join any form of masonry under the threat of excommunication [Wójtowicz 2014]. Freemasonic activity was also banned in countries ruled by fascists or communists, which increased popular curiosity about its nature. In recent years the immense success of Dan Brown's novels and movies based on them – especially *The lost symbol* – revived the interest among the general public. If it is coupled with sound scholarly research on the history of freemasonry, which in recent decades replaced the biased traditionalist approach of masonic historians themselves [Snoek and Bogdan 2014], then the educational significance of that heritage may be truly appreciated by tourists, both freemasons and profanes.

In many countries freemasonry is considered to be part of national heritage. Scotland and England are obviously the prime example, not only as the birthplace of the movement, but also because prominent members of the Royal Family were – and are – freemasons (the father and grandfather of Queen Elisabeth II were active brethren, while her cousin Edward, Duke of Kent, has been the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England since 1967). In the United States, on the other hand, freemasonry is often linked to the very roots of the new nation, as the Declaration of Independence of 1776 was drafted by masons and twenty one of fifty six signers were members of the craft, including the first president George Washington and the influential leader Benjamin Franklin. Even the Grand Seal (best known from the one-dollar bill) is believed to have been based on masonic ideas, although recent research denies that.

Grand Lodges and governments in those countries where freemasonry was historically important often work together in creating and supporting educational and scholarly institutions like museums. The foremost among them is the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London, closely followed by Musée de la Franc-Maçonnerie in Paris, Musée Belge de la Franc-Maçonnerie in Brussels and Deutsches Freimaurer Museum in Bayreuth. In the United States the most important central institutions (besides the museums in individual states) include the House of the Temple in Washington D.C., George Washington Masonic Memorial in Alexandria (Virginia) and Scottish Rite Museum and Library in Lexington (Massachusetts). All of them are addressed to both profane tourists and freemasons, so that for the latter a visit may be an initiatory experience leading along a properly planned route through the “forest of symbols”, as Mahmud put it [Mahmud 2012]. Most of such museum offer guided tours, which certainly differ depending on the status of the group of tourists (whether they are freemasons or not). Also some lodge buildings, usually closed to the public, start to allow visit of profane tourists with a guide explaining the nature of freemasonry and the symbolism present in particular chambers.

Equally important are theme trails around the cities with particularly rich masonic history, where old buildings, sculptures, burial sites, emblems and – most notably – gardens are visited in a prescribed succession and their meaning is interpreted by qualified guides. In London several routes connected with various aspects of masonic history (including Jack the Ripper affair) are offered, alongside masonic visits to Rome organised by the same company [Neville 2018]. Likewise Dublin, historically very important for freemasons, has a tour arranged by an agency specialising in cultural tourism [Ireland 2018]. In the USA

similar masonic theme trails are available at least in the cities most notable for masonic history, that is Washington D.C. [TAPintoTravel 2018] and Charleston [McDonald Burbidge 2014]. The former is organised by a professional travel agency, while the latter – by local masonic activists, which also shows the wide range of opportunities for that type of tourism. For some towns, such as Boston, Massachusetts, trail descriptions for self-guided tours have been prepared by local Grand Lodges and are freely available in electronic format [Massachusetts 2018].

In Poland freemasonry had a long and exciting history [Załęski 1908, Małachowski-Łempicki 1929, Hass 1980, 1982, Prinke 2017], but – as already mentioned above – due to the general attitude of the Roman Catholic Church and anti-masonic propaganda, the topic is approached with reservation by local and state authorities, and perceived as politically incorrect [Wójtowicz 2014, Cegielski 2015]. The role of freemasonry at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries may be compared to that in the USA, because the foundational document of modern Poland – the 3rd of May Constitution of 1791 – was prepared and supported mostly by masons, who were also responsible for the plans to build the Temple of Divine Providence in 1792, designed by a freemason Jakub Kubicki to reflect masonic principles. This information was intentionally ignored by the state authorities and the media when the Temple was eventually built in 2002-2011 as a Catholic church, according to a completely new architectonic design. The last king of Poland – Stanisław August Poniatowski (1732-1798) – was a promotor of the Constitution and an active freemason, member of several lodges in Warsaw, one of which bore his name. His nephew and one of the great national heroes of Poland – Prince Józef Poniatowski (1763-1813) – was likewise a very prominent mason and when he fell in the Battle of Leipzig in 1813, a special mourning gathering was held by members of the Grand Orient of Poland. Many other celebrated historical figures who were freemasons could also be listed here, but none can compare with general Jan Henryk Dąbrowski (1755-1818), who fought for Polish independence in Napoleonic times and is the protagonist of the Polish national anthem. When Poles sing it at various occasions – national holidays gatherings, sports events or workers' strikes – they hardly realise that the refrain "March, march, Dąbrowski, from the Italian land to Poland" glorifies a prominent freemason, member and honorary member of several lodges in Poznań and Warsaw. Moreover, the author of the anthem lyrics, Józef Wybicki (1747-1822), was most probably also a freemason, even though an unquestionable proof has not been found yet [Rezler 2000-2001]. When Poland regained its independence in 1918, after 123 years under foreign rule, a freemason – Gabriel Narutowicz (1865-1922) – was elected its first president and killed after only five days in office, by an anti-masonic nationalist.

Masonic tourism assets in Wielkopolska and Poznań

With such – and many more – crucial moments of Polish history being closely connected to freemasonry, one would expect its traditions to be cherished as national heritage, with much original research, exhibitions, museums and tourist trails in every major city – or at least in one centrally administered institution. There were indeed such plans, even at the end of the period of communism, when various restrictions were softened. From 1988 until 1995 the palace in Dobrzyca was made a branch of the National Museum in Poznań, with the intention to establish a museum and research centre of freemasonry there. It even had an emblematic logo designed, with masonic symbols. The palace was a perfect place for such an undertaking, as it was built at the end of the eighteenth century for the estate owner Augustyn Gorzeński (1743-1816), one of the most prominent freemasons of his age [Kowalkowski 1996]. Designed on the plan of the masonic square by Stanisław Zawadzki, the building is unique on European scale [Ostrowska-Kęłowska 1969, p. 270-272]. There was enough motivation and excitement about it, both among scholars and masonic lodges,

newly re-established after 1989 [Kostołowski 1995-1996, Karalus 1995-1996]. In 1996 it was established as an independent Museum of Enlightenment and Freemasonry and work on the reconstruction of the palace and the large garden commenced, as they were in ruined condition. The museum council was formed, with a number of eminent scholars, headed by Tadeusz Cegielski, professor of history at the University of Warsaw, a leading historian of freemasonry and Grand Master of the revived National Grand Lodge of Poland. There was also much interest in the initiative among tourism specialists and scholars, which bore fruit in an MA thesis written at the Faculty of Tourism and Recreation in Poznań, supervised by Danuta Żywiecka [Maćkowiak 1997]. Thus it seemed that it was just a matter of time for the museum to open but then the political situation changed and in 2004 the local parliament of Wielkopolska decided that Cegielski should be removed from his post, because he was a freemason. The motion was submitted by the ultra-conservative Catholic party, the League of Polish Families, and supported by right-wing media, as well as Jan Skuratowicz, professor of art history and active conservative politician from Poznań, who supervised the reconstruction works. Although Cegielski went to court and won the case, he eventually resigned under political and ideological pressure. In 2006, at the instigation of Skuratowicz and after protests of local inhabitants against “bringing freemasons to Dobrzyca”, the regional authorities decided that the museum in Dobrzyca would not be dedicated to freemasonry but will change into the Museum of Landed Gentry, because “Augustyn Gorzeński had no masonic connections”, as claimed by Elżbieta Barys, the deputy who originally presented the proposal in the name of the League of Polish Families and then the Law and Justice party (to which she had moved in the meantime, together with Skuratowicz). Often appearing on the popular and controversial Radio Maryja, Barys also argued that establishing a museum of freemasonry would mean spending public money on “masonic propaganda”. A number of eminent experts protested against that change and obviously false and absurd arguments – including Róża Kąsinowska, professor of art history and author of the only scholarly monograph of Dobrzyca [Kąsinowska 2007], who also pointed out that there were several similar museums of landed gentry in the same area. Also tourism experts and scholars – such as Piotr Zmyślony from the Chair of Tourism at the Poznań University of Economics – expressed opinions that the controversial and mysterious nature of freemasonry was much more interesting from the marketing point of view and a museum devoted to it could attract many tourists from Poland and abroad. In spite of all those – and many more – voices in support for the museum of freemasonry, the decision remained in force. The only positive result of the public discussion was that the next head of the museum council, Marek Zieliński (again an active politician, but from the liberal party Civic Platform) enforced his proposal that there would be a small freemasonry section at the exhibition in the museum [Pasterz 2007-2008, Bojarski 2008a, 2008b, Cylka 2008].

Without a museum of freemasonry, the objects of masonic interest scattered in many other collections are occasionally brought together for temporary exhibitions. Some museum have more of them but keep them in their storehouses, arranging temporary displays only sporadically. In recent years such exhibitions took place in Toruń, Bydgoszcz, Inowrocław and Koszalin, with the most exquisite one and on grandest scale at the National Museum in Warsaw at the turn of 2014 and 2015, organised by Tadeusz Cegielski and with an excellent printed catalogue [Cegielski and Załęski 2014]. As always, it was represented as controversial in the media and brought attacks from the conservative press [Górny 2014].

The palace in Dobrzyca remains the major monument of masonic architecture and garden design in Poland, and could be the highlight of a tourist trail based on the theme of freemasonry. Another similar building in the Wielkopolska region is the palace in Włoszakowice, built in 1749-1752 for prince Aleksander Józef Sułkowski (1695-1762), designed on the plan of a triangle and situated on a pentagonal island, it is a most curious and symbolic structure and should certainly be included in any masonic trip of Poland. Another

stop for such a trip might be the palace in Ciążeń, formerly the residence of the bishops of Poznań and now a conference centre of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. For several decades it housed the masonic collection of the University Library, the largest of its kind in continental Europe and second only to that of the Grand Lodge of England in London, attracting masonic scholars from all over the world. Although the books were moved back to Poznań, the place is exceptionally charming, with a truly enchanting view of the Warta Landscape Park and comfortable accommodation offer.

Aristocratic residences of prominent freemasons of the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries located near Poznań do not have obvious masonic symbolism in their architectural design, but the role their owners played certainly justifies including them among the sites of masonic heritage. The most important would be the palaces in Pawłowice and Konarzewo, the estates of, respectively, the Mielżyński and Działyński families, and the magnificent castle of Kórnik, also belonging to the latter. Both families had also large houses in the Old Market in Poznań, with that of the Counts Działyński (originally built in 1773-1776 for Władysław Gurowski, 1715-1790), displaying obvious masonic elements in its outside decorations.

The two places that cannot be left out at any rate are obviously the estates of general Jan Henryk Dąbrowski, the masonic hero of the Polish national anthem, in Winna Góra, as well as that of Józef Wybicki, the author of its lyrics, in Manieczki, with his empty grave in the nearby Brodnica (his remains were moved to Poznań in 1923). Although both residences in their present form were built later, replacing the ones from their period, in the former there is an exhibition devoted to Dąbrowski, as a branch of the museum in Dobrzyca – but with no mention of his prominent masonic affiliations. In Manieczki there was a museum of Józef Wybicki between 1978 and 2006, but then the building was returned to the descendants of former owners and a number of commemorative elements have been removed. Nevertheless, the spirit of both places is what counts for both freemasonic and patriotic tourists.

The masonic activities of the historical figures mentioned above concentrated in the city of Poznań itself, where similar tangible and intangible heritage of buildings and sites can be found and a “masonic walk of Poznań” could be delineated. Recent historical research [Prinke 2017] extended earlier knowledge of the old lodges, their members and locations, so that they may all be identified. The earliest lodge, which was the first known Polish masonic unit (not counting one organised by foreign diplomats in Warsaw), held its meetings as early as 1739 at Wroniecka street, but the exact house could not be ascertained. Its activities were probably irregular and it is not sure whether the first lodge formally recognised by foreign obediences in 1780, “Constancy Crowned”, was its continuation or a new creation. It certainly operated at least a few years earlier and its members met at the Old Market 68, in the house which no longer exists, as it was pulled down to provide space for a new street (now Paderewskiego). In 1783 two more lodges were installed in Poznań by the already existing Polish obedience, the National Grand Orient, and they were named “White Eagle” and “School of Wisdom”, with the latter working in the German language and meeting at Wodna 24 (or 22). Both lodges rented a house at the Old Market 41 in 1786 and hence the emblem of “White Eagle”, which still survives and belonged to the chemist’s shop located there since 1793, when masonic activity temporarily ceased after the second partition of Poland. Under Prussian rule the German lodge “Frederick William under Elating Unity” met briefly (1806-1807) at Wilhelmowska 177 (now Al. Marcinkowskiego 5) and when Napoleon’s army with Polish legions arrived in Poznań, the locale was taken over by the lodge “Brothers Frenchmen and Poles United”, with Jan Henryk Dąbrowski, Augustyn Gorzeński, and many other notable members. Following the custom of the so-called lodges of adoption, where wives of freemasons could meet, one had already operated with “Constancy Crowned” and was named “Beneficence”, with Justyna Działyńska as its mistress. In 1810 a similar lodge

“Garden of Eden” was created for the French-Polish lodge and Barbara Dąbrowska, the general’s wife, became its mistress.

Attempts at establishing a new German lodge were started in 1811 but it was only in 1815 when it was formally recognised as “Piast under Three Sarmatian Columns”, which met at the Old Market 99 and general Dąbrowski became its honorary member. With the fall of Napoleon the Prussian rule returned to Poznań and the French-Polish lodge changed its name to “Constancy” and had to leave the house at Wilhelmowska street. Their German brethren, however, allowed the Poles to use their premises. The relations between both lodges were so good that they decided to invest together in a new lodge building, which was raised in 1817-1819 at Grobla 25. The architectural design was by Christian Elias Wernicke, the head architect of Poznań and the Master of the “Piast” lodge. When finished, it was believed to have been the most exquisite lodge building in Europe. Fortunately, it survived World War II in relatively good condition and was carefully restored in the early 1950s, now housing the Ethnographic Museum [Ostrowska-Kęłowska 2009 (1982), p. 185-190]. After that successful cooperation, both lodges merged in 1820, forming a new one called “Temple of Unity”, which survived until 1938, when all masonic organisations were forbidden by a decree of the president of Poland.

A very brief existence of the subversive lodge of National Masonry in 1819-1820 should also be noted. Their aim was to start a revolution and regain independence for Poland, and they met likewise at Grobla street (exact house uncertain), in the flat of Ludwik Sczaniecki (1789-1854), one of its leaders. In Poznań there were also active three so-called paramasonic organisations, that is ones which have similar lodge structures and vows of secrecy, but their rituals and symbols are derived from sources other than the building craft traditions. All three of those lodges were the earliest of their respective organisations in Poland and included in chronological order: Cosmos Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (from 1876, located at what is now Al. Marcinkowskiego 27), Amicitia XIII lodge of the Jewish fraternal order B’nai B’rith (from 1885, at Stawna 5), and Schlaraffia Posnania (from 1889, at Mielżyńskiego 21). All those groups, just like freemasonry proper, were forced by the presidential decree to end their activities in 1938.

Although some of the houses where freemasons used to meet no longer exist and others bear no visible signs of their former function, it would nevertheless be advisable to construct a walking tour of those places, especially as all of them are either in the Old Market as quite close to it, so in the very heart of the “tourist bubble”. The most impressive is obviously the old lodge building at Grobla, but the Działyński and Mielżyński palaces mentioned earlier should also be included, as well as the Town Hall, where portraits of some of the Poznań Lodge Masters are on display. Such a “masonic walk of Poznań” might be offered separately or together with the “masonic tour of Wielkopolska”, as delineated above. In either case, experts on masonic history and freemasons themselves should be consulted and alternative versions for the initiated brethren and for profanes should be constructed.

Conclusions

The origins of modern mass tourism may be traced through the Grand Tour movement back to *peregrinatio academica*, which in turn was an offshoot of the wandering journeymen tradition of medieval craft guilds. One of those guilds – that of masons and architects – gave rise to one of the oldest and most intriguing international organisations, namely freemasonry. There are an estimated six million freemasons in the world today, who continue the traditions of mobility and visiting places of masonic heritage, so they constitute an interesting target group for promoters of cultural tourism. In many countries the history of freemasonry is treated as part of their national heritage, as shown by the examples of the UK and the USA,

but could easily be extended to such countries as France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and many others. In Poland freemasonry is treated with suspicion and references to its history in the media are intentionally neglected, even though some of the crucial moments of Polish history and numerous otherwise celebrated figures (including general Dąbrowski, the protagonist of the national anthem) were closely connected with the masonic craft. Except for occasional exhibitions, there is no central research institution devoted to freemasonry and all attempts to create one were blocked for ideological reasons. The most promising was the plan to establish a museum of freemasonry in the palace of Dobrzyca, but in spite of great support from scholars and masons alike, the initiative was abandoned under the pressure of conservative politicians and Catholic media. The area around Poznań has many places of masonic interest, while in the city itself the sites of historical lodges and the beautiful lodge building, which served freemasons for nearly a hundred and twenty years, comprise the assets which could be turned into a very attractive offer of cultural tourism for both masons and profanes. Unfortunately, ideological prejudice, dominant religious narrative and established historical policy enforced their conviction that that part of Polish national heritage should be kept hidden from potential tourists.

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Czeladnicy i loże: Ukryta kultura wolnomularstwa w świecie turystyki

Słowa kluczowe: wolnomularstwo, turystyka, Poznań, Wielkopolska

Abstrakt:

Wolnomularstwo to tajne bractwo, które wyłoniło się ze średniowiecznych cechów rzemiosł murarskich w szesnasto- i siedemnastowiecznej Szkocji, a w ciągu XVIII w. rozprzestrzeniło się na całym świecie. Kluczowe zasady organizacyjne i tajemne znaki otrzymywane przez członków podczas wtajemniczenia są blisko związane z podróżowaniem, ważnym również dla ich średniowiecznych poprzedników. Dziwi zatem tak małe zainteresowanie związkami wolnomularstwa i turystyki, zarówno wśród akademickich badaczy turystyki, jak i autorów masońskich. Wstępny przegląd problematyki pokazuje, że członkowie bractwa są niezwykle mobilnymi ludźmi, zainteresowanymi odwiedzaniem działających łóż masońskich i historycznych miejsc związanych z dziejami wolnomularstwa. Tylko niektóre loże pozwalają na wizyty turystów nie będących masonami, ale ogólnie dostępne zabytki i muzea wolnomularskie mogą okazać się bardzo atrakcyjne tak dla samych masonów, jak i zwykłych turystów. Enigmatyczna symbolika i dominujące stereotypy ukazujące masonów jako „tajnych władców świata” to bez wątpienia potężne atraktory dla szerokich kręgów odbiorców. W niektórych krajach (Wielka Brytania, Francja, Niemcy, USA) istnieją muzea wolnomularstwa dostępne dla wszystkich, a w Waszyngtonie działa masoński szlak turystyczny, wiodący do miejsc ukazujących wolnomularskie korzenie Stanów Zjednoczonych. Próby utworzenia podobnego muzeum w Polsce (w Dobrzycy, niedaleko Poznania) nie powiodły się ze względu na opór władz samorządowych, w oczywisty sposób kierujących się ideologią i panującymi nadal fałszywymi stereotypami. Podobnie przewodnicy turystyczni rzadko wspominają o roli jaką wolnomularze odegrali w dziejach Polski, a byli wśród nich królowie i prezydenci. Pierwsza polska konstytucja (3 Maja) została napisana głównie przez masonów, podobnie jak hymn narodowy, którego bohaterem jest generał Dąbrowski, niezwykle aktywny wolnomularz najwyższej rangi. Aby tworzyć i promować atrakcje turystyczne związane z wolnomularstwem trzeba najpierw przeprowadzić odpowiednie badania historyczne, tak by szlaki i obiekty proponowane do odwiedzenia podróżującym masonom i turystom kulturowym zaintrygowanym tajemniczym bractwem (w tym również fanom powieści Dana Browna) zostały właściwie zidentyfikowane i opakowane w wiarygodne informacje o ich przeszłości. Takie badania zostały ostatnio przeprowadzone w zakresie dziejów masonerii w Poznaniu, a część z ich rezultatów można wykorzystać do skonstruowania wolnomularskiego szlaku w mieście i jego okolicach.