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ІСТОРІЯ ТА ГЕОГРАФІЯ ТУРИСТИЧНО-РЕКРЕАЦІЙНИХ ПОДОРОЖЕЙ І КУРОРТНОЇ СПРАВИ В УКРАЇНІ

Мета статті. Дослідження спрямоване на аналіз історичних етапів становлення та розвитку туризму, рекреаційних подорожей і курортної справи в Україні. У роботі ставиться завдання визначити вплив природно-географічних, соціально-економічних і культурних чинників на їхню еволюцію, а також окреслити сучасні тенденції та перспективи модернізації в контексті національних і глобальних викликів.

Методологія дослідження. Методологічною основою є історико-географічний підхід, що поєднує хронологічну періодизацію зі spatial-аналізом. Для реконструкції основних етапів розвитку туризму застосовано історико-порівняльний та систематизаційний методи, а для вивчення географії курортно-рекреаційних центрів – картографічні та статистичні матеріали. Контент-аналіз наукової літератури та архівних джерел дозволив виявити прогалини у попередніх дослідженнях і обґрунтувати нові підходи до трансформації галузі.

Наукова новизна. Стаття пропонує цілісне узагальнення історії туризму й рекреаційних подорожей в Україні – від давніх форм паломництва та лікувальних мандрівок до сучасної епохи масового туризму та оздоровчих практик. На відміну від фрагментарних попередніх досліджень, робота підкреслює взаємозв'язок історичних подій, економічних реформ і культурних тенденцій, наголошуючи на специфічній ролі географічного положення України на перетині європейських та азійських шляхів. Особлива увага приділена еволюції курортної справи – від стихійного використання мінеральних вод і лікувальних грязей до формування санаторно-курортних комплексів у системі державної охорони здоров'я, а згодом – у ринковій туристичній економіці.

Висновки. Історія туризму, рекреаційних подорожей і курортної справи в Україні відображає загальноєвропейські тенденції, водночас зберігаючи національну специфіку, зумовлену природними ресурсами та культурною спадщиною. Нині галузь стикається з подвійним викликом: подолання наслідків воєнних втрат і необхідність адаптації до глобальних туристичних стандартів. Визначальними напрямками подальшого розвитку є забезпечення сталого розвитку, модернізація інфраструктури, диверсифікація рекреаційних пропозицій і ребрендинг українських курортів на міжнародному ринку.

Ключові слова: історія туризму; рекреаційні подорожі; курортна справа; розвиток курортів; Україна; культурна спадщина; мінеральні води; санаторії; сталий туризм; модернізація туризму.

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HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF TOURIST AND RECREATIONAL TRAVELS AND RESORT INDUSTRY IN UKRAINE

The purpose of the article. The study aims to analyze the historical stages of the formation and development of tourism, recreational travel, and the spa industry in Ukraine. It seeks to identify the impact of natural–geographical, socio–economic, and cultural factors on their evolution, as well as to outline current trends and prospects for modernization in the context of national and global challenges.

The methodology of the research. The research is based on a historical–geographical approach that combines chronological periodization with spatial analysis. Historical–comparative and systematization methods were employed to reconstruct the main stages of tourism development, while cartographic and statistical data were used to examine the geography of resort and recreational centers. Content analysis of scientific literature and archival materials allowed for the identification of gaps in previous studies and for the substantiation of new perspectives on the sector's transformation.

Scientific novelty. The article provides a comprehensive overview of the history of tourism and recreational travel in Ukraine, extending from ancient forms of pilgrimage and therapeutic journeys to the modern era of mass tourism and wellness practices. Unlike fragmented earlier studies, this work emphasizes the interplay between

historical events, economic reforms, and cultural trends, highlighting the specific role of Ukraine's geographical position at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Particular attention is given to the evolution of the spa industry from the spontaneous use of mineral waters and therapeutic muds to the establishment of sanatorium-resort complexes integrated into state healthcare systems and, later, into a market-oriented tourism economy.

Conclusions. The history of tourist and recreational travel in Ukraine reflects general European trends while maintaining distinct national features determined by the country's natural resources and cultural heritage. Today, the sector faces the dual challenge of overcoming wartime losses and aligning with global tourism standards. Sustainable development, modernization of infrastructure, the diversification of recreational offerings, and the rebranding of Ukrainian resorts on the international market are crucial for future progress.

Keywords: tourism history; recreational travel; resort industry; spa development; Ukraine; cultural heritage; mineral waters; sanatoriums; sustainable tourism; tourism modernization.

The Problem Statement. Tourist and recreational activities, along with the spa industry in Ukraine, have deep historical roots and have developed under the influence of a complex interplay of natural-geographical, historical, and sociocultural factors. Despite considerable scholarly interest in individual aspects of the history and geography of tourism, systematic research on the evolution of tourist and recreational travel and the spa industry within both national and global contexts remains insufficiently developed. Existing studies tend to address specific time periods or regional characteristics in a fragmented manner, without considering a comprehensive periodization of development or the interrelation of historical events, economic transformations and cultural trends.

The analysis of historical and geographical aspects acquires additional relevance in the contemporary context, as Ukraine's tourist and recreational sector is shaped by globalization processes, digital transformation, climate change, and wartime challenges. The loss of part of the country's tourist resources – particularly due to the temporary occupation of Crimea and parts of Donbas – necessitates a rethinking of the spatial organization of tourist flows and the strategies for developing spa infrastructure. Consequently, there is a pressing need for a comprehensive academic study of the history and geography of tourist and recreational travel and the spa industry in Ukraine, one that will not only reconstruct the stages of this sector's formation but also identify promising directions for its modernization and integration into the global tourism landscape.

The Analysis of Sources and Recent Researches. The development of tourism, its historical evolution, as well as its challenges and prospects have been studied by such Ukrainian scholars as O. Beidyk, O. Liubitseva, M. Malska, V. Fedorchenko, and V. Kyfiak. Among the most notable works on the history of tourism are the contributions of V. Fedorchenko and T. Diorova, *History of Tourism in Ukraine*, and those of L. Ustyomenko and I. Afanasyev, *History of Tourism*, among others. These studies primarily focus on the history of tourism and the examination of the role of travel, addressing the emergence and development of journeys from ancient times to the present day. However, the historical study of tourism and recreational travel, along with the spa industry in Ukraine, remains comparatively underexplored.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the historical stages of the formation and development of tourism and recreational activities, as well as the spa industry in Ukraine; to identify the influence of natural-geographical, socio-economic, and cultural factors on their evolution; and to determine current trends and prospects for the sector's advancement in the context of domestic and global challenges.

The Results of the Research. Tourist and recreational activities, along with the resort industry in Ukraine, have deep historical roots, spanning from ancient journeys and pilgrimages to the modern leisure, wellness, and cultural tourism industry. Ukraine's geographical position at the crossroads of European and Asian transport and cultural routes, combined with its rich natural and recreational potential and diverse historical and cultural heritage, has determined the formation of multi-profile tourist centers and resort areas. The history of their development in Ukraine is closely intertwined with the socio-political processes, economic reforms, and cultural trends that have unfolded at various stages of the nation's evolution.

Many scholars divide the entire history of tourism development into four main stages. According to L. Ustyomenko and I. Afanasiev, the following stages are distinguished:

The first stage lasted from ancient times until 1841.

The second stage spanned from 1841 to 1914.

The third stage covered the period from 1914 to 1945.

The fourth stage extends from 1945 to the present day, characterized by the era of mass tourism and the globalization of the tourism industry.

First Stage: The Origins of Tourism (from Antiquity to 1841)

The initial stage of tourism development encompasses a long historical period – from the earliest journeys of prehistoric humans to the beginning of the 19th century. Travel during this era was predominantly spontaneous, compelled by necessity, or served utilitarian purposes, and was not organized in the modern sense of the term «tourism». In prehistoric societies, travel was driven by the need for survival: searching for new hunting and fishing grounds, gathering areas, or more favorable climatic conditions. The settlement of people near bodies of water influenced migration routes and facilitated the exploration of new lands.

With the development of civilizations, travel acquired new motivations:

Economic – trade and the exchange of goods;

Cultural – education and the exchange of knowledge;

Religious – pilgrimages to sacred sites.

In ancient cultures such as Egypt, Greece, Rome, and China, the first elements of tourist behavior emerged: the construction of roads, the establishment of inns, the use of guides, and even the keeping of travel diaries. Notable examples include the journeys of ancient Greek philosophers, Roman patricians, and, later, medieval monks.

The earliest manifestations of tourist activity on the territory of present-day Ukraine date back to antiquity. In the Northern Black Sea region, where Greek colonies such as Olbia, Tyra, Chersonesus, Panticapaeum, and Theodosia existed, journeys for therapeutic, commercial, and cultural purposes were already being undertaken as early as the 4th century BCE. During the period of Kyivan Rus, travel was closely connected with pilgrimages to Constantinople and Jerusalem. Pilgrimages to sacred sites – most notably the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra and the Pochaiv Lavra were organized, and these locations are considered among the earliest centers of spiritual tourism. Pilgrimage acquired particular significance, as the faithful undertook journeys to holy places, stimulating the development of infrastructure: shelters, refectories, bathing facilities, and libraries emerged. By the 17th century, the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra already possessed facilities that today are associated with tourist services, including a refectory, a pharmacy, and guest accommodations. Religious orders assumed responsibility for organizing pilgrimages, ensuring the safety and care of pilgrims.

At this stage, travel did not yet have a mass character; it was primarily an elite or necessity-driven phenomenon. Nevertheless, the foundations of future tourism were already being laid: routes were established, means of transportation improved, and the first services for travelers began to appear. Travel was motivated by diverse purposes – educational, therapeutic, religious, and exploratory – although tourism had not yet emerged as a distinct sector. Its elements manifested in various areas of social life without forming a unified industry. Tourism of this period fulfilled important societal functions: educational, economic, sociocultural, recreational and formative.

The earliest known written references to recreational and tourist activities in Ukraine also date back to Ancient Greece. In the Northern Black Sea region, city-colonies were founded, the largest of which were Tyra (present-day Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi), Olbia (near Parutyne in Mykolaiv region), Chersonesus (now within the modern boundaries of Sevastopol), Panticapaeum (present-day Kerch), Theodosia, and Yevpatoria, where the therapeutic waters and muds of the Crimean lakes and estuaries were used. The first recorded mentions of mineral water deposits in Western Ukraine such as those in Morshyn, Nemyriv, Polyana, Syniak, and Liubień Wielki – date back to the 16th century. On the territory of Ukraine that was part of the Russian Empire, the first state initiatives for the exploration of mineral springs and their use for therapeutic purposes were undertaken in 1717 (Shkola, 2007, p. 92).

In 1796, Professor P. Kitaibel of the Hungarian University was the first to study the chemical composition of the mineral waters of Zakarpattia. In 1803, the Lypetsk resort began operating, offering mineral water both for bathing and for therapeutic drinking. In 1804, physician M. Shagin published his doctoral dissertation *On the Mineral Water in the City of Kamianets-Podilskyi* at the University of Vienna, Austria (Kravets & Riabiev, 2017, p. 100).

In Odesa, Crimea, and the Podillia region, mineral waters and therapeutic muds were discovered and utilized. By the late 18th century, the development of Crimea's coastal areas for sea bathing had begun.

Second Stage: The Formation of Organized Tourism (1841–1914). Beginning in the mid-19th century, tourism emerged as a distinct socio-economic phenomenon. Across Europe, the first travel companies and agencies appeared, while a tourist infrastructure comprising hotels, restaurants, and travel bureaus began to take shape. The expansion of railways, steamship services, the hotel industry, and postal

communication made travel more convenient, faster, and safer. Tourism gradually evolved from an elite pastime into a more accessible form of leisure for the middle classes.

With advances in medicine and the natural sciences, interest in natural therapeutic resources grew significantly. During this period, in the Ukrainian territories that were part of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, the first resort settlements were established based on mineral springs and curative mud deposits. Notable centers included Truskavets, Morshyn, Slavske, and Odesa. Bathhouses, sanatoria, and climatic stations proliferated.

In the second half of the 18th century, Ukraine witnessed a rapid expansion of resort development. Construction projects included hydrotherapy facilities, hotels, and guest houses; the resort industry became increasingly commercialized, while research and exploration of new deposits continued (Ustymenko, 2005, p. 105; Shkola, 2007, p. 123).

In the 18th and 19th centuries, interest in the natural landscapes of the Carpathians and Crimea grew, fostering the emergence of the first recreational practices among the aristocracy and intelligentsia. This period marked the early development of the resort industry. In 1827, the first mud therapy resorts were established in Yevpatoria, followed by those in Saky, Truskavets, Morshyn, and Khmilnyk. The sanatoria of the Odesa coastline and Livadiia also gained prominence.

The first therapeutic facility on the Odesa coast to employ mud therapy and hydrotherapy technologies was opened in 1833 on the shores of the Kuyalnyk Estuary (Topchiiev, 1994, p. 180).

Later, similar therapeutic establishments were opened in 1843 on the shores of the Khadjibey Estuary (village of Usatove), in 1853 on the Sukhoi Estuary, and in 1867 in the village of KholodnaBalka (Khadjibey Estuary). By the late 19th century, the therapeutic muds of the Shabolat (Budak) Estuary also began to be used for treatment. In 1876, the Odesa Balneological Society was established, fostering the development of resorts on the estuaries and increasing their popularity. In 1892, at the initiative of the Society, a new mud therapy facility was built on the Kuyalnyk Estuary, which remains in operation to this day (Nefedova & Yavorska, 2009, p. 105).

Third Stage: Formation of the Tourism Industry (1914–1945). The period between the two World Wars was challenging for the development of tourism, yet it was also of exceptional importance in shaping the tourism industry. Despite economic crises, wars, and geopolitical instability, tourism gradually entered a phase of industrialization.

The main characteristics of this stage include:

Institutionalization of tourism: the establishment of state tourism agencies, international organizations, and the organization of exhibitions and forums.

Legal recognition: the official introduction of paid leave for workers, enabling millions of people to travel.

Technological changes: the advancement of aviation and automobile transport expanded the geography of travel and increased mobility.

Formation of the tourism services market: the emergence of standardized tour packages and new types of travel (sea cruises, ski tours, health tourism).

During this period, tourism had already become a component of the economies of certain countries, though it had not yet reached the scale of a mass phenomenon. Growth was particularly dynamic in European countries and the United States. In the USSR, tourism acquired a specific form – as an instrument of ideological education. Following the establishment of Soviet rule, tourism was nationalized, with its primary purpose becoming ideological work among the population. Excursions were regarded as a means of political education. Resorts were declared state property, and a sanatorium-resort service system was created.

The development of railway transport gave a powerful impetus to both domestic and international tourism. This era saw the emergence of hotels, tourist clubs, and the first organized excursion routes. Galicia, Crimea, the coasts of the Black and Azov Seas, and the Carpathians became important recreational centers. Crimean resorts such as Yalta, Alushta, and Gurzuf gained popularity among the European elite. A network of trade union sanatoriums, holiday houses, recreational bases, and children's camps was established. Resorts in Crimea, Transcarpathia, Prykarpattia, and Podillia, as well as along the Black and Azov Sea coasts, experienced especially active development. Tourism at that time took on a collectivist and organized form – through tourist bureaus, «tourist bases» and «tourist trains».

In 1925, the first sanatorium for peasants began operating in the former imperial palace in Livadia, and in Gurzuf, the All-Union Pioneers Sanatorium Camp «Artek» was established (Ustyomenko & Afanasiev, 2005, p. 94).

Since the 1930s, Ukraine witnessed an intensive development of its resort industry – by 1932, the country's health resorts accommodated approximately 1.4 million visitors (Loboda, 2011, p. 122).

In parallel, Western Ukraine – then part of Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia was developing its own resort infrastructure (Truskavets, Morshyn, Cherche) in accordance with European standards.

The Fourth Stage (from 1945 to the present day). The Second World War inflicted severe damage on tourism in Ukraine: infrastructure was destroyed, and a significant portion of the workforce was lost. Recovery began in the 1950th, when the number of tourists increased severalfold and the network of holiday resorts doubled. New resorts were built in the Carpathians, while health facilities in Crimea were expanded. This period marked the emergence of a mass tourism trend: travel became accessible to broad segments of the population, including through trade union holiday vouchers. A robust network of sanatorium and resort facilities was established in Crimea, the Carpathians, and along the Black Sea and Sea of Azov coasts.

From the 1960th, alongside the expansion of resorts, the medical services of health facilities were developed and improved. Each resort's primary therapeutic profile was defined, and specialization of sanatorium departments was introduced, enabling targeted and efficient use of local resort resources (Derzhavne nekomertsine pidpriemstvo «Ukrainskyi naukovy-doslidnyi instytut reabilitatsii ta kurortolohii Ministerstva okhorony zdorovia Ukrainy». Ofitsiinyi vebсайт).

In the second half of the 20th century, the sanatorium and resort system in Ukraine operated as an integral part of the state healthcare system, primarily oriented toward meeting the social needs of the population. Its services remained relatively accessible due to funding from the social insurance fund and other state sources. At the same time, the sector faced a range of structural constraints, including outdated physical infrastructure, limited capacity, and insufficient modernization of equipment. These factors restricted access for a broad segment of the population, despite the high professionalism of medical staff and the proven effectiveness of therapeutic and preventive methods (Derzhavne nekomertsine pidpriemstvo «Ukrainskyi naukovy-doslidnyi instytut reabilitatsii ta kurortolohii Ministerstva okhorony zdorovia Ukrainy». Ofitsiinyi vebсайт).

During the 1970th and 1980th, a robust, scientifically grounded intellectual and material diagnostic-treatment base was established for sanatorium and resort institutions (Beidyk, 2001, 280 p.).

During the period of rapid expansion of mass tourism in the 1960th – 1980th, a significant proportion of resorts, particularly climatic ones, were frequented by unorganized vacationers who predominantly rented private accommodations. This practice fostered the development of a persistent tradition of mass recreation and stimulated the growth of a local accommodation services market based on the private sector.

Following the declaration of independence, Ukraine identified tourism as a priority sector of the national economy. Private travel companies emerged, and the market opened to foreign investment. Key challenges included the need to modernize infrastructure, improve service quality, protect the environment, and preserve cultural heritage.

The transformation period was marked by the privatization of resort infrastructure, the expansion of the private sector, the growing importance of international tourism, and the emergence of new forms of leisure. In 2000, Ukraine adopted the Law «On Resorts», which defined the legal, organizational, and social foundations of the country's resort industry (Pro kurorty. Zakon № 2026-III. Chynna redaktsiia).

In 2003, by order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Concept for the Development of the Sanatorium and Resort Sector was approved, defining the strategic goals and objectives of state policy in the field of resort operations. That same year, there were 45 resorts of national and international significance and 13 resorts of local importance, comprising 544 sanatoriums and health resorts with a total single-time capacity exceeding 150,000 beds (Derzhavna sluzhba statystyky Ukrainy, 2003).

After 2014, the loss of part of the tourism resources of Crimea and the Donbas led to a reorientation of tourist flows towards the Carpathians, Podillia, and the coastlines of Odesa and Kherson regions.

Geography of tourist and recreational centers and resorts in Ukraine:

Mountain regions – the Carpathians (including Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, and Chernivtsi regions, with ski resorts such as Bukovel, Slavske, and Dragobrat) and the Crimean Mountains (until 2014) attract visitors with opportunities for skiing, hiking, and health improvement in a pristine climate.

Seaside areas – the Black and Azov Seas, with sandy beaches, a warm climate, and therapeutic lagoons (Kuyalnyk, Shabo, Syvash).

Mineral waters and therapeutic muds – more than 400 deposits, including Truskavets, Morshyn, Svaliava, Myrhorod, Sataniv, and Shayan.

Forest–steppe and Polissia – favorable for ecotourism, hunting, fishing, and wellness programs.

At the present stage, tourism and the resort industry in Ukraine are focused on diversifying their offerings, integrating digital technologies into destination marketing, developing medical and wellness tourism, and creating new branded routes. Considerable attention is devoted to preserving natural and cultural heritage in line with the concept of sustainable development.

Today, Ukraine’s tourist and recreational sector is influenced by both domestic challenges (Russian military aggression) and global ones (post-pandemic shifts in demand, climate change, digitalization). At the same time, the importance of domestic tourism, alternative forms of leisure, and health and psychological recovery is growing against the backdrop of stressful social factors. In the future, the restoration and rebranding of Ukrainian resorts, the activation of local tourism, and the support of communities with recreational potential will play a crucial role.

Conclusions. The history of tourism, recreational travel, and spa development in Ukraine reflects broader European trends while simultaneously possessing unique features shaped by natural-geographical, historical, and socio-cultural factors. The country’s geographical diversity enables the development of a wide range of tourism types, while centuries-old traditions of hospitality provide Ukrainian resorts with competitive advantages in the international market. Thus, the spa industry in Ukraine has evolved from the spontaneous use of natural resources to the formation of a system integrating medicine, tourism, and recreation. Its current prospects depend on infrastructure modernization, promotion in the global market, and the preservation of unique natural resources.

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