

## Abstract

The history of the Vistula steam navigation begins with a very interesting period of pioneers of this communication - entrepreneurs: Konstanty Wolicki, Piotr Steinkeller and Eduard Guibert, who brought the first steamboats to the Vistula from England and France. The real development took place thanks to the Steam Navigation Company founded by Count Andrzej Zamoyski, in which many Polish landowners became shareholders. After its collapse and the expiry of the privilege of exclusivity, the era of Vistula competition began, in which the leading figure was Maurycy Fajans. Steamships were the first modern means of mass transport to appear on Polish lands. They contributed to the creation of new habits of spending free time among the inhabitants of the Vistula towns, providing them with an exciting water ride and transport to attractive recreational areas. The study of the history of the Vistula steam navigation is an interesting journey through the history of the development of capitalism on Polish lands, the involvement of the nobility in the project and the subsequent competition between private shipowners recruited from among the townspeople from the cities located on the river. It is also a meeting with very interesting means of transport and the history of improvements in their designs.

The issue described above was examined in more detail for the first time and described by Witold Arkuszewski, who in 1973 published book "Wiślane statki pasażerskie XIX i XX wieku". It is worth emphasizing at this point that the indicated topic did not received many other studies, and those that exist don't bring much new to the state of research and largely refer to the findings contained in the discussed item. Witold Arkuszewski based his research primarily on the query of the nineteenth-century press. Due to its pioneering nature, there were, however, many gaps, question marks and issues that were not entirely clear and resolved. This work tries to fill these gaps as much as possible and extend many threads so as to create a study based on a much richer source basis. It is also presenting Nineteenth-century Vistula passenger navigation from the perspective of the culture of free time, which has not been sufficiently researched so far. The section of the Vistula delimited by the borders of the Russian partition was adopted as the area of intended research. The focus was primarily on cities, including Warsaw, which was the seat of the most important shipping companies, as well as the center of cultural and social life in a given area. The adopted time interval is the years 1815-1915, i.e. the period from the establishment of the Kingdom of Poland to the outbreak of World War I,

during which most of the 19th-century Vistula steamboat fleet was destroyed.

The first chapter of the dissertation is to introduce the reader to the river and its specific section, where steamboats that are the subject of the study sailed. The first section presents the basic geographic characteristics of the Vistula River, as well as an outline of its relationships with man from the beginning of the presence of people on its shores. The role of the queen of Polish rivers in the history of the Polish state, the development of its cities and the economy is also shown. It is also the history of, among others Vistula rafting and raftsmen. The topic of the presence of the Vistula in culture was also raised, including in art and poetry. The second and third subsections take the reader on a kind of sightseeing trip, during which other noteworthy places and towns on the studied section of the river were introduced. First, the upper section is presented, from Sandomierz to Warsaw, and then the lower section, from Warsaw to Ciechocinek. This part makes it possible to draw a picture of what the Vistula steamboat operation area looked like and what a passenger traveling on board could encounter. Sources from the era were used here, such as "Geographical Dictionary of the Kingdom of Poland and other Slavic countries" or "Brzegi Wisły: from Warsaw to Ciechocinek (Steam Navigation Guide)". These materials have been supplemented with contemporary sightseeing publications and tourist guides and monographic items. The whole is illustrated with 19th-century engravings showing individual places on the banks of the Vistula and fragments of the "Topographic Charter of the Kingdom of Poland" from 1839, showing individual fragments of the river.

The second chapter of the work is the most extensive and presents the history of passenger steam navigation on the Vistula River in the Kingdom of Poland in the analyzed period. To some extent, it has the nature of a chronicle of events, which in chronological order shows the successive stages of the development of the aforementioned shipping. It shows the fate of individual shipowners, their mutual relations and the emergence of new technical solutions and passenger transport offers. The first subsection is to introduce the reader to the history of the invention of the steam ship, its first prototypes and the first successful passenger connections in the world and in Europe. The next subsection presents the beginnings of steam navigation in the Kingdom of Poland, presenting the history of the first units and people responsible for bringing them to the country. The next three sections are devoted to Count Andrzej Zamoyski's Steamship Company and deal with its beginnings, development and decline. The sixth subsection presents an extremely interesting period in the history of the Vistula steamers, related to the emergence of new shipowners and the competition between them. The last subsection tells about the first years of the new century and the declining belle

époque period, which was characterized by the development of "salon" steamers and tourism on the Vistula.

The task of the third chapter is to look at the Vistula and the passenger steam navigation that was taking place on it in terms of their impact on the culture of free time in the towns situated by the river. The first section outlines the reader an outline of the history of free time in the history of mankind, primarily showing how it was shaped in the nineteenth century. At this point, there is also a general description of recreation and entertainment that the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Poland devoted to at that time. Due to the fact that this is a subsection that is only an introduction to the relevant content, it focuses primarily on the Polish community. The second subsection deals with forms of recreation and entertainment directly related to the Vistula River. It is about Vistula baths, winter slides, rowing, "wianki" celebrations, or traditional trips to the riverside recreational areas. The last two sections present the Vistula steamboats as a way to spend free time and as a means of transport that contributed to the creation of new habits among the inhabitants of the Vistula villages. The reader has the opportunity to find out what the boarding of the ship looked like and the course of the journey from the point of view of the passenger, who could be met during the cruise, and what adventures to experience along the way.

At the end of the work, a list of steam ships sailing on the Vistula River within the borders of the Kingdom of Poland in the analyzed period was included, as well as a list of 300 illustrations used in the study. These are engravings, paintings and photographs collected by the author, mainly from the nineteenth-century press and museum collections. In the text, they play the role of valuable iconographic sources relating to specific described issues in a given fragment of the work.