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The First International Tourism Forum in Rzeszów and Panel Session “Cultural Dialogue in Tourism”

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REPORTS

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Abstract:

It is a short report from the 5th Innovations Forum and the 1st Carpathian States Tourism Forum held on 27-28 of May at the University of Rzeszów in Rzeszów. This is an account of an extraordinary congress (about a thousand participants), with the main emphasis, made within the framework of the Forum, on panel session: “Cultural Dialogue in Tourism”. This event of a great economic, political and scientific importance is described and reviewed here. It also quotes a text of one of the introductory papers, on the theory of tourism.

Introduction

One of the first organizations to undertake the issue of the development of tourism in the Carpathian Euroregion was the European Academy for Carpathian Euroregion (EACE) in Rzeszów, at the Uniwersytet Rzeszowski (University of Rzeszow). At first, the EACE was a Polish-German organization, a kind of discussion club. Since *Prof. Dr hab. Kazimierz Obodyński* became president, the EACE directed its profile of interests towards research of tourism. The first EACE International Conference was organized in 2005 [Cynarski 2005]. The outcome of activity of researchers gathered around Prof. Obodyński include collective monographs in English [e.g. Obodyński, Cynarski 2005; Cynarski, Obodyński, Nizioł 2007].

Thus the 5th Innovations Forum devoted entirely to tourism and the first Carpathian States Tourism Forum in Rzeszow did not take place by coincidence. The Polish Ministry of Sport and Tourism has appreciated the current achievements of researchers from the EACE and the Faculty of Physical Education (field of study “Tourism and Recreation”) at the University of Rzeszów (UR).

1st Carpathian States Tourism Forum

On 27-28 May 2014 in a new building of Microelectronics and Nanotechnology Centre UR within the Fifth Forum of Innovations, the 1st Carpathian States Tourism Forum took place. The activists of the Polish Tourist Organisation and representatives of the hotel industry had in mind the development of “meetings industry” i.e. congress and business tourism, as well as fairs and exhibitions. Strengthening business cooperation or research may not only be fostered by discussions in the sessions and in the corridors, but also a banquet at a five-star Bristol Hotel at Rzeszów Market Place.

The meeting was attended by representatives of many institutions and researchers from different specialities. The first plenary lecture was delivered by Dr Zoltan Somogyi, executive director of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). There were held 17 thematic sessions in total [*V Innovations Forum ...*]. Perhaps the most interesting session, dedicated to cultural dialogue, was held on the second day of the Forum.

Panel Session "Cultural Dialogue in Tourism"

The moderator of the session was Dr Magdalena Banaszekiewicz of the Institute for Intercultural Studies at the Jagiellonian University, the editor of the journal "Turystyka Kulturowa" (Cultural Tourism). The introductory paper was presented by *Dr hab.* Wojciech Cynarski, who welcomed the participants on behalf of the Faculty of Physical Education, University of Rzeszów. He mentioned briefly the fact that Prof. Dr Wil Munsters from Zuyd University (The Netherlands), who is a prominent specialist in the field of cultural tourism, was not able to come. The first invited speaker criticized the dominant theoretical approaches by proposing a concept of his own i.e. an anthropological system [Appendix].

Next Mr Damian Drąg, Branch Manager of F. Kotula Ethnographic Museum, branch of the Regional Museum in Rzeszów, showed a video and talked about the culture of Lemkos and Boykos, two Slavic ethnic groups living in the Bieszczady Mountains. The third panellist was Mr Stanislaw Sienko, Deputy Mayor of the City of Rzeszów. On behalf of the authorities of that city, he described a policy of encouraging the development of tourism. Next, *Dr hab. Prof. nadzw.* Elżbieta Puchnarewicz, Vice-Rector for Science of the Higher School of Tourism and Foreign Languages in Warsaw, presented a structured picture of the issue of "cultural dialogues" and their types and characteristics.

Dr Hanna Vehmas, University of Jyväskylä (Finland), presented the importance of sports tourism. These issues are fairly universal. The presence of Dr Vehmas and her speech caused the fact that the session in question did not close thematically solely around issues of the Podkarpacie Region or the Carpathian Euroregion. In turn, the last of the panellists: *Prof. Dr hab.* Wacław Wierzbieniec, Rector of the Bronislaw Markiewicz State Higher School of Technology and Economics, in Jarosław, reflected on historical aspects. He pointed to the fact of multi-ethnicity of these areas, especially in the period before World War II.

Dr Banaszekiewicz who at the "last minute" replaced *Dr hab.* Armin Mikos von Rohrscheidt, managed her lecture very well. The entire team of panellists proposed by W. J. Cynarski and approved by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, showed high erudition. A full house (including students of tourism and recreation) and the interest of the audience made the session important event and probably not the last one.

Summary

In view of the prevailing economic approaches to tourism, the session described made an emphasis on strictly scientific and cultural issues (heritage, dialogue) as well as axiological and humanistic ones, focusing on their cognitive and application value. It was, in the author's subjective feeling, one of the most interesting sessions of the entire Forum.

Participation of about a thousand people from many countries (not just the Carpathian Euroregion), representatives of tourism industry, the ministries of several countries, academics and politicians demonstrates the importance of that event. Cyclical Innovation Forum was devoted to tourism for the first time. Next tourism forums were also announced.

The panellists received letters of appreciation from the Polish Ministry of Sport and Tourism, signed by Katarzyna Sobierajska (Secretary of State), and Jan Bury (Member of Parliament). Not without significance are political and economic dimensions of this event, strengthening cooperation in the Carpathian region.

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Appendix – the introductory lecture

Dr hab. Wojciech J. Cynarski, Prof. UR
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(1st version - in Polish)

Dialog kulturowy w turystyce – wprowadzenie

Jaka teoria?

Erik Cohen, współtwórca socjologii turystyki, ocenia dzisiejszą turystykę z perspektywy teorii zmiany społecznej i w duchu postmodernizmu, nazywając to ważne zjawisko kulturowe „postturystyką”. Osobiście uważam, że Cohen [2004, 2011] nie ma racji. Podobnie Dean MacCannell [1976], który rozwija swe koncepcje na gruncie marksizmu.

Każda teoria, która wynika z fałszywych przesłanek, jest błędna. A np. postmodernizm jest jedną z fałszywych ideologii, czyli nawet nie jest to nauka.

Jako właściwa jawi się niegubiąca osobowego, psychofizycznego człowieka antropologiczno-systemowa teoria turystyki [Obodyński, Cynarski 2006; Munsters 2008; Cynarski 2008, 2010, 2012], którą zatem polecam jako perspektywę dla badań.

Koncepcja systemowo-antropologiczna w teorii turystyki daje nam możliwość rozumienia różnych znaczeń i wymiarów podróży, takich jak poznawcze, samorealizacyjne, religijne, egzystencjalne, polityczne lub ekonomiczne.

Jaka metodologia badań?

Polecam zwłaszcza badania jakościowe i z równoległym zastosowaniem kilku metod, oraz książkę zredagowaną przez Richardsa i Munstersa [2010; Cynarski 2011].

Jakie aplikacje?

Dotychczasowe zastosowania wskazanej perspektywy znajdujemy na obszarach badań turystyki sportowej [Dóczy 2008/2009], turystyki aktywnej [Kapica, Szeremeta 2009], turystyki dziedzictwa kulturowego [Sieber, Cynarski 2010; Raimondo 2011], turystyki naukowej [Kosiewicz 2011], turystyki sztuk walki [Raimondo 2011; Cynarski 2012a], turystyki sentymentalnej, i innych.

Możliwe są następne badania dotyczące w szczególności terenu Euroregionu Karpat. Duże możliwości wynikają z istniejących już opracowań J. Ruta [cf. Rut, Rut 2010] (dot. terenu polskiego

Podkarpacia) i np. B. Mytskana *et al.* [2005] (dot. ukraińskiej części Podkarpacia). To dotyczy zarówno opracowania naukowego i wykorzystania turystycznego tych terenów.

(Zbyt) mały udział turystyki kulturowej w agroturystyce wynika z wyłącznego powiązania agroturystyki z rolnictwem [cf. Cynarski, Słopecki 2011]. A są to istotne obszary kulturowego spotkania i dialogu.

Dziękuję za uwagę i zachęcam do inspirujących dyskusji, choćby z różnych perspektyw metodologicznych.

(2nd version - in English)

Cultural Dialogue in Tourism – Introduction

What Theory?

Erik Cohen is co-founder of the sociology of tourism. He assesses tourism today from the perspective of the theory of social change and in the spirit of postmodernism, calling this important cultural phenomenon the “post-tourism”. Personally, I think Cohen [2004, 2011] is wrong. Similarly, Dean MacCannell [1976], who develops his concepts on the basis of Marxism. Any theory that results from the false premise is flawed. An example of postmodernism is one of the false ideology, which is not even a science.

As the right appears the **systemic-anthropological** theory of tourism [Obodyński, Cynarski 2006; Munsters 2008; Cynarski 2008, 2010, 2012], without losing the personal, psycho-physical man, which we therefore recommend as a perspective for research.

Systemic-anthropological conception in the theory of tourism gives us the possibility to understand various meanings and dimensions of travels such as the cognitive, self-realisational, religious, existential, political or economic ones.

What methodology for research?

I recommend the book edited by Richards and Munsters [2010; cf. Cynarski 2011], and especially qualitative research and the parallel use of several methods.

What Applications?

Previous - This perspective is already used in areas of research about sports tourism [Dóczy 2008/2009],

active tourism [Kapica, Szeremeta 2009], heritage tourism [Sieber, Cynarski 2010; Raimondo 2011], scientific tourism [Kosiewicz 2011], martial arts tourism [Raimondo 2011; Cynarski 2012a], and others.

There are more studies on a particular area of the Carpathian Euroregion. Big opportunities arising from existing studies by Rut [cf. Rut, Rut, 2010] (for Polish land Podkarpacie) and e.g. by Mytskan *et al.* [2005] (for the Ukrainian part of the Subcarpathian region). This applies both to the development of scientific and tourist use of the area.

(Too) small a part of cultural tourism in rural tourism stems from the exclusive relationship of agro-tourism with agriculture [cf. Cynarski, Słopecki 2011]. And these are important areas of cultural encounter and dialogue.

Thank you for your attention and encourage you to inspiring discussions, even from different methodological perspectives.

(Omitted here illustrative material presented during the session on the slides.)

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Pierwsze międzynarodowe Forum Turystyczne w Rzeszowie i Sesja Panelowa „Dialog kulturowy w turystyce”

Słowa kluczowe: socjologia turystyki, turystyka, dialog kulturowy, Euroregion Karpacki

Streszczenie

Jest to krótkie omówienie Piątego Forum Innowacji (poświęconego w całości tematyce turystycznej) i Pierwszego Forum Turystycznego Państw Karpackich, odbytego w dniach 27-28 maja na Uniwersytecie Rzeszowskim w Rzeszowie. Jest to więc komunikat o tym wyjątkowym kongresie (około tysiąca uczestników), z głównym akcentem na odbytą w ramach tego Forum sesję panelową: „Dialog kulturowy w turystyce”.

Ta impreza o dużym znaczeniu gospodarczym, politycznym i naukowym została tu opisana i zrecenzowana. Dodatkowo przytoczono tekst jednego z referatów wprowadzających, dotyczący teorii turystyki.