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Reflections on business tourism in the context of the monograph study “Science tourism from a visual sociology perspective”

Submission: 3.06.2016; acceptance: 14.06.2016

Key words: tourism, division criteria, science, conferences

Abstract

This study presents some reflections on the monograph by Wojciech J. Cynarski [2015] entitled “Science Tourism from a visual sociology perspective”. This paper highlights the criteria for the different subdivisions of business tourism and I have used the monographic method to consider the issues under discussion. In addition to this, the uniqueness of the concept of conference and congress tourism was highlighted as an intellectual phenomenon, as well as a cultural and sociological one. This concept was investigated using the participant observation method and the diagnostic survey method, including the conference material analysis technique.

Of particular value in the study being reviewed is the large number of photographs. Given this approach readers do not only understand the author’s standpoint, but also, in a way, participate in the events being described and arrive at their own opinions by reading the opinions and conclusions of speech-makers and by examining the photos. As a generalisation one can conclude that the monograph being reviewed is a valuable addition to the tourism science publications market.



Introduction

Tourism is a sector of the economy, and thus, without any doubt, belongs to the sphere of business, with its various subdivisions. It is also a branch of science, although on account of its interdisciplinary composition, it is not an independent field of science [Gaworecki 2007: 35-36]. This has both advantages and disadvantages. A number of concepts, related to the many different fields of science emerge here but do not always capture the essence of the subject. At the same time such a wealth of concepts introduces numerous novelties, as tourism is not confined to a narrow specialisation, and an explanation of specific economic, social or even natural phenomena is easier with an interdisciplinary approach.

In tourism economy new definitions arising from the need to assign terms to market phenomena as they occur are continuously emerging. However they are not always substantively justified and too frequently poorly ordered, hence an attempt at classifying tourism “genera” has been introduced in this study by distinguishing different varieties, types, subtypes and forms of tourism. The motivation for this was provided by Prof. Cynarski’s monograph entitled “Science Tourism from a visual

sociology perspective". Without introducing these classifications it would be impossible to form an opinion on that study. The monographic method was employed in this study and its aim is to indicate the need to order the classification of business tourism in the context of the publication being reviewed and to draw attention to its particularly valuable qualities.

Classification of business tourism

In recent decades the growth of tourism has gathered considerable pace, so new concepts in both theory and practice have emerged without always being relevant and cohesive. Despite attempts by individual authors to define "business tourism", most of them adopt the criteria of the "business trip" [Davidson, Cope 2003: 46; Data Group 2002: 6; Gaworecki 2007: 35-36; Kurek 2007: 300; Medlik 1995: 16; Rogers 1998: 47; Sidorkiewicz 2011]. Under the relevant Polish laws, a business trip is the performance of tasks assigned by the employer (company or organisation) in a locality not being their registered offices, or away from the employee's usual place of residence [Labour Code 1974]. Swarbrooke and Horner [2001: 21] distinguish as many as fifteen business trip or event categories:

- conferences and meetings (organisations and companies),
- congresses,
- training,
- fairs and exhibitions,
- incentive travel
- promotional events,
- short-term work-related relocation (contract, secondment),
- lecturer or student exchange programmes
- commuting to work outside the residential area,
- individual business trips,
- diplomatic missions,
- tasks performed by the military away from their permanent base,
- delivery of goods to customers,
- charity assistance to Non-Government Organisations.

Halaczkiewicz [2007], in line with the Institute of Tourism in Warsaw, lists only the six objectives of tourist trips included in business tourism, which were determined in Poland for the requirements of statistical research: fairs and exhibitions, individual business, corporate business, transport and other business trips.

The literature occasionally lists the concept of science tourism, and when it is applied, its understanding varies. Piskozub [2007: 128] claims that science tourism is pursued by academics as well as secondary and primary school teachers. At the same time business and science tourism is termed "corporate tourism", i.e. tourism involving a specific professional community.

On the other hand Kurek [2007: 300], and Davidson and Belluah [2003: 43] understand corporate tourism to be a form of business travel consisting of the promotional activities of companies, i.e. inviting potential business partners, representatives of the media or politicians to participate for no charge in various events (cultural, recreational and entertainment) which may last between several hours and a full day. Apart from the understanding of tourism as a creative process (scientists) and not reproductive (teachers) it is hard to see qualified academics and primary/secondary school teachers as one professional group pursuing science tourism, particularly since this disregards the scientific staff of specific institute in the industry. In order to complement the various approaches to the sub-divisions of business tourism it is worthwhile to consider including business tourism along with commercial tourism [Sidorkiewicz 2011].

Taking into consideration the immense variation in the definition of business tourism, a consistent proposal for classifying the sub-divisions within business tourism, is presented below. As under the definition it is assumed to be a VARIETY of tourism, further sub-divided into TYPES, SUBTYPES and FORMS (Figure 1). Seven types of business tourism were distinguished in total, with individually specified forms, performing the role of detailing the superior unit in the classification. Congress tourism and conference tourism were differentiated given the varying levels of prestige attached to them. In the glossary a congress is defined as a national or international general meeting or assembly of scientific, political or diplomatic representatives, while a conference denotes a meeting of a community belonging to scientific, social or political organisations [Tokarski 1990].

In general one cannot distinguish between a congress and a conference based on the number of participants, as congresses of scientific associations may number only several dozen members, while the "Earth Summit" scientific conference" in Rio de Janeiro (1992) had 8,000 accredited journalists alone. What follows from this is that for statistical purposes, we need to distinguish four attendance levels at congresses and conferences: up to 100; 101 -300; 301-500; >500 participants. Moreover the term "conference" should be understood to be a "meeting or session of a particular body, usually representative of social, partisan or scientific organisations for the purpose of discussing preselected issues" [Tokarski 1980: 378-379]. This may in practice include "a national or international gathering of representatives from the fields of science, politics or diplomacy" [Tokarski 1980: 378-379], and conferences are then sub-divided into national and international ones.

Within the fair/show tourism sub-division those where details of commercial offers are included may be distinguished from exhibitions or shows where the

achievements of a given sector or branch of science are for example showcased. In these cases the concept of exhibition/show does not include art, ethnic content etc., as these should pertain to cultural tourism.

Corporate tourism was discussed in a previous part of this section and stakeholder tourism should be understood as individual travel by political administration or business representatives etc. Incentive tourism is financed by entrepreneurs and is a means of modern finance management and is a method of rewarding employees with prestigious trips [Gaworecki 2007: 35-36; Swarbrooke, Horner 2001: 21].

Exploration tourism should be understood as one of research (scientific) or search (scientific-commercial). Exploration can be conducted domestically or abroad (subtypes), and in all cases it may be related to scientific or economic goals (forms). In diagram No.1 commercial tourism was not included because the term “commerce” itself is associated with fairs and trading companies. There is not sufficient justification to view the purchases made by tourists from areas adjacent to borders as commercial tourism, as they do not trade when buying goods for themselves but become retail customers, and even when they are selling goods it is often done illegally. Commercial tourism is also not defined as business tourism in other studies either, but the inclusion of the latter within business trips/transactional visits [Sidorkiewicz 2011] is poorly justified, as the term “business” does not always pertain to financial or economic matters [Tokarski 1980: 378-379].

The assessment of the monograph entitled “Science tourism from a visual sociology perspective”

In light of the theory presented in the introduction, and associated with the criteria for sub-divisions within tourism, the title of Cynarski’s monograph [2015] can surely be deemed as appropriate, as it reflects the essence of the issues in question and fits within the group of applied terms (Figure 1). One ought to remember that science tourism, discussed in the monograph as a form of tourism belongs to the variety of conference tourism and to the type of business tourism. One can however, search for new martial arts among various peoples which would then constitute exploration tourism, and which would also belong within the scope of science tourism. It is also worth mentioning that business tourism in general generates great profits for tour operators and hoteliers, and at the same time affects the growth of the innovative economy and lifestyle of modern society.

From the perspective of the exchange of scientific ideas, written information contained in documents and publications does not suffice. What is required is the direct exchange of views between scientists who not only represent different points of view but also come from countries which are culturally different. Only direct personal contact offer the chance to achieve full consensus in scientific theory and practice. In addition to these opportunities, conference travel abroad is a new experience for scientists enabling them to broaden their cultural horizons. This then becomes a source of new approaches

(TYPES OF TOURISM) BUSINESS TOURISM		
TYPE	SUBTYPE	FORMS
CONGRESS	NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	Scientific Diplomatic Industry specific Educational
CONFERENCE	NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	Scientific Diplomatic Industry specific Educational
FAIR-EXHIBITION-SHOW	NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	Industry specific Educational
CORPORATE	NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	Diplomatic Public relations Others
STAKEHOLDER	NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	Diplomatic Public relations Others
INCENTIVE	NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	Environmental Cultural
EXPLORATION	NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	Scientific Commercial

Figure 1. Diagram of the sub-divisions of business tourism into types, subtypes and forms

[source: developed by the author]

to current axioms and also a source of encouragement for research innovation.

With the benefit of historical knowledge, and by observing current events on the international political, economic and scientific scenes, the issue of rudimentary scientific errors can be addressed. These stem directly from scientists' lack of direct knowledge of conditions in other countries, which are linked to significant diversity in the understanding of commonly - known phenomena. The current crisis in the European Union concerning refugees from the Middle East and Asia Minor is an example of this. The actions of politicians in relation to this crisis testify to their poor knowledge of other nations' cultures and a lack of historical or religious awareness as well as sociological ignorance. Given this background the support of people and bodies nurturing science is also missing. This is surely a sign for congress and conference tourism to become even more popular, since it develops new values and lends itself well to the dissemination of knowledge.

It appears that the view expressed above is sufficient reason to recognise Cynarski's monograph as an important event in the scientific publications market. In the context of the cited literature, conference and congress tourism as it is described here, should definitely be classified as business tourism, yet its specific features are sufficient reason for only using the term "science tourism" in the title. Approaching this issue from the perspective of visual sociology" is also of great value. It is certainly the case that even the best selected words will not describe the essence of the subject as well as is achieved by the inclusion in this paper of numerous photos: of individual scientists and scientific bodies, of objects of environmental and cultural importance, which are characteristic of the countries where specific scientific conferences have been held.

Scientists' conference travel of, as described here, is financed by scientific institutions, so there can be no doubt that it is business tourism, yet it follows from the photos included in this publication that conference participants do become truly involved in exploring the culture of the countries they are visiting, and thus they are also pursuing cultural tourism.

Both the verbal and photographic contents of the monograph, not only constitute knowledge, but also become a source of inspiration for young scientists to explore other countries and cultures. They can thus develop respect their uniqueness, which they need to take into account when they are searching for scientific universalism. The sociological and anthropological-cultural approach adopted in this monograph makes a substantial contribution to the description of conference tourism from the point of view not only of martial arts but also of sport, ethics, cultural studies, economics, management and marketing.

In the book under review a scientific paradigm

is presented and complemented with examples of the proceedings of specific conferences, mainly in the field of sports sociology, physical culture and martial arts research. It should be emphasised that the careful reader will benefit more from this than from reading about or viewing sporting achievements on TV, as what surfaces here is the sociological perspective, as signalled in the title, and the reader will discover the philosophical and ethical issues forming the background to culture, as it is widely-understood.

Moreover the monograph fulfils the role of a historical documentary, by describing the activity of several institutions and scientific organisations. It also commemorates Professor Kazimierz Obodynski, who is not only the co-organizer of conference success, but also the co-photographer of the majority of photos used in the monograph. The technical quality of this study, which is not top quality, and the lack of good descriptions for some of the photos may be listed as weaknesses in this work, but its greatest strength is its release onto the scientific publications market.

Summary

The monograph which is reviewed here, is an important document for developing the theory and practice of martial arts, as well as a scientific approach to business tourism. International events associated with the proceedings of scientific conferences on the theory of physical education and on sports pedagogy, especially in martial arts, were discussed. Of particular value is the presentation of this content from a visual sociology perspective. The particularly important cultural role of the venues where conferences are held was outlined in this work. The references to the subjects of conferences lead the reader to profound reflections of a philosophical-ethical, cultural, sociological and professional nature.

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Rozważania nad turystyką biznesową w kontekście monografii „Turystyka naukowa w perspektywie socjologii wizualnej”

Słowa kluczowe: turystyka, kryteria podziału, biznes, nauka, konferencje

Abstrakt

W niniejszym opracowaniu przedstawiono rozważania nad monografią Wojciecha J. Cynarskiego [2015] pt. „Turystyka naukowa w perspektywie socjologii wizualnej”. Zwrócono tu uwagę na kryteria podziału turystyki biznesowej, a w omawianym zakresie opracowania wykorzystano metodę monograficzną. Poza tym podkreślono wyjątkowość ujęcia turystyki konferencyjnej i kongresowej, jako zjawiska intelektualnego, naukowego, a zarazem kulturowego i socjologicznego badanego metodą obserwacji uczestniczącej oraz metodą sondażu diagnostycznego, a w tym techniką analizy materiałów konferencyjnych.

Szczególnym walorem ocenianego opracowania jest bogaty materiał fotograficzny. Dzięki takiemu podejściu czytelnik nie jest skazany tylko na poznawanie punktu widzenia autora tej książki, lecz czytając opinie i wnioski referentów oraz patrząc na fotografie może niejako sam uczestniczyć w opisywanych wydarzeniach i wyrabiać sobie własną opinię. Generalizując należy stwierdzić, że oceniana monografia jest cenną pozycją na rynku publikacyjnym nauk o turystyce.