BOOK REVIEW

Tourism in Borderlands—Multiaspect Study of Development.
Kazimierz Obodyński, Jerzy Kosiewicz, Wojciech J. Cynarski (Eds.)
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There are great books that change the way you feel about a topic and give you great insights into a topic in which you have an interest. This is not one of them. On the other hand, the book should be of interest and value to those interested in how tourism in Poland is progressing and want to see a recent sampling of the scholarship from Poles in the field of tourism. While most of the twenty-five articles are written in English, eight articles are written in Cyrillic script, presumably Russian. For those of us who do not read Cyrillic, the eight articles are impenetrable and this is a major strike against the book. Another drawback is that many of the articles are a bit hard to read because of awkward English or grammatical errors.

The book, like many now on the market, is an edited book that is the outcome of a conference. However, the conference was rather recently held in Poland (March 2007) on tourism in the Carpathian region, meaning that the data used are “fresh.” The book itself is divided into three distinct parts. The first part is composed of twelve articles about agritourism and health tourism in the border areas. The second part consists of eight articles on the protected areas in the Carpathian region. The third part consists of five articles that do not neatly fit into the other two categories and deal with issues such as tourism education, gender, and ethnography.

While it would be difficult to assess each of the articles in the book, there are some that stand out as especially noteworthy. For example, Kielbasiewicz-Drozdowska and Pluta’s article on women and their leisure time choices offers an insight into the sociology of Polish women and how they think about leisure. Kwiatkowski and his coauthors performs a SWOT analysis on a community in Poland that can give insight into how Poles perceive the capabilities of parts of their country for agritourism development and the impediments to such development. Półtorak and Warchoń, in their piece on the social and economic contexts in which tourism can develop in the Carpathian region, analyze the major impediments to tourism development in the Podkarpackie province. From these analyses, we can learn a great deal about how Poles think about the impediments to tourism development in their country.

The book is a very Polish affair. Of the 37 authors of its articles, 34 are affiliated with institutions in Poland. From this, we can assume that they are Polish. All of the remaining 3 authors have affiliations in Ukraine. Unsurprisingly, the

contents of the book deal almost exclusively with tourism in Poland. For those who are interested in a more general view of tourism in borderlands, as the title of the book would suggest, the contents are disappointing. However, for those interested in all aspects of tourism in Poland, the book should be interesting and useful.

One of the benefits of the book is that it gives the reader a good sampling of what scholars in Poland are capable of and what topics specific scholars in Poland are interested in. Many articles and authors are presented. Thus, if one wants to know more about how Polish academia engages the study of tourism, the book gives good insight into the approaches and topics favoured by Polish researchers. One additional benefit of the book is that the average article is only 7.2 pages long, meaning that the book is composed of quickly digested articles. This is a major benefit for those of us who look at such edited books as a source to pad our bibliographies in our research and to find people with whom we can cooperate in the future.

The book, then, is highly recommended for a certain type of researcher or student. The book is nothing that is a “must” for any library. However, for those who have an interest in Tourism research in Poland or are interested in specific aspects of tourism, as studied by Poles in Poland, this is a good book. An additional benefit of this book, to readers, is that for those trying to build research networks, there is evidence of the research potential and interests of many authors in Poland.

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