Tourism research in the German Democratic Republic

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Abstract

So far, East German tourism research has been studied little by the history of science. Tourism science saw the light of day around 1930 in Berlin. During the Cold War, in the GDR it gained a notable quantitative extent that finally equalled the research in the 'capitalist' part of Germany. Initially, theoretical questions played a prominent role, but then – like in the West – tourism science became a strictly applied discipline. Part and parcel of the planned economy, its focus was on the parastatal social tourism: holiday making was seen as a means to improve the health of the 'workers and farmers' through 'recreation' and – unspoken – as a means to stabilize the political system. Thus, it became a centrepiece of consumer policy (like in Nazi times). Research successfully helped to steer and expand the 'recreational system'. However, demand grew faster than supply and, even worse, people remained cut off from the glittering West. Despite vast subsidies and very high travel intensity, discontentment with travel opportunities reached a level that essentially contributed to the collapse of the GDR in 1989. Tourism researchers warned from that growing tide of discontentment and left no stone unturned – in vain.

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Introduction: background

Tourism science is a young discipline. For the first time, the phenomenon of holiday traffic was made an object of scholarly reflections around 1900 by a handful of economists from Austria, Germany, Italy and Belgium.¹ In the 1920s the number of academic publications grew substantially. The lion's share came from crisis-ridden Germany, where experts regarded tourism as a sheet anchor in the face of

inflation and depression. In this context, in 1929, at the Berlin Commercial University, the first academic institute came into being (Cf. Spode, 2012 and 2009; Liebman-Parrinello, 2007; Panosso-Netto/Jäger, 2015; Irmscher, 2017): The Institute for Tourism Research (*Forschungsinstitut für den Fremdenverkehr*²) and its journal, the *Archive for Tourism*, gave birth to a new discipline. Its focus was on economy, geography and transportation, but

sociological and historical questions were also dealt with. The trailblazing institute was shut down after six years, but found successors in Vienna, and more importantly, in Switzerland. Here, in 1941, two academic institutes were founded: one with the focus on research in Bern, and the other with the focus on education in St. Gallen.³

Initially, the Swiss twin institutes had followed the Berlin model of a broad interdisciplinary approach and aimed at creating a 'completely new discipline' under the umbrella of sociology. After the war, however, the scope was reduced to applied research – in particular, to business economics. Serving the needs of the tourist industry helped this small discipline to become established, but resulted in its academic marginalization – tourism science no longer was involved in the discourses on tourism and left this field to cultural criticism and sociology.⁴ In the postwar period, the heartland of the so-called tourism science (*Fremdenverkehrs-wissenschaft*) remained German-speaking Central Europe. Its conceptual framework, such as the definitions of tourism, was (and to a certain extent still is) based on the spadework that was done in Berlin and particularly in Switzerland⁵ before and during the war. For decades the discipline – internationally organized in the AIEST⁶ – was dominated by the 'triumvirate' of Bern, St. Gallen and Vienna. In addition, research and/or education was conducted at a handful of other universities, in the Western hemisphere, notably in Munich and later also in Aix-en-Provence, as well as in Rome, and for several years in Heidelberg, Frankfurt and Salzburg; whereas in England and the US, something like tourism scholarship was virtually unknown. Only in the 1970s–80s the rule of the 'triumvirate' gradually came to an end, and the multilingualism of the scientific community that spoke German, French, English, Russian and so on was replaced by the hegemony of English (Cf. the list of journals in Pechlaner et al., 2004).⁷

Tourism research in the GDR

Soon after the war the former Allies had turned into foes and the Cold War set in, dividing Europe – and Germany – along the line of the Iron Curtain. The German Democratic Republic (GDR), founded in 1949, became a rather

tenuous outpost of the Soviet Empire. Closely knit with the bigger Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) by family ties, by the same history and language, East Germany bore a latent threat to the integrity of the Eastern Bloc (that finally – in 1989 – would become manifest). Doubtless, the young state belonged to German-speaking Central Europe, and thus to the cradle of tourism science. However, in the first decade of its existence, research was conducted only sporadically, and no institutional frame was installed. This has fundamentally changed since the late 1950s.

Overview: phases and institutions

Overlooking the development of the East German tourism science (see Bähre, 2003, ch. 3.2; Görlich, 2012, ch. 4.2; Wolter, 2009, ch. II.3; Irmischer, 2016) one might distinguish three stages:

- the preliminary phase in the 1950s
- the formation phase from the 1960s until the mid-1970s
- the phase of consolidation from the 1970s to reunification in 1990.

Like all dictatorships, the GDR, too, lacked functional differentiation: the boundaries between the ruling party, the state and parastatal institutions were blurred. Nevertheless, the institutions enjoyed different degrees of autonomy and, to a certain extent, took on a life of their own. This was also true with East German tourism research. It was carried out by a variety of institutions, academic and political. The latter comprised research institutes run by government departments as well as by the ruling Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) and by 'mass organizations'. The hubs of tourism scholarship were:

- Dresden, with the University of Transportation named after the railway pioneer Friedrich List
- Greifswald, with the geographical faculty of the Ernst Moritz Arndt University
- Leipzig, with the German Sports University and with the departmental research at the Institute for Market Research and at the Central Institute for Youth Research.

Comparable to the 'triumvirate' in the Alpine region, these three towns are sited in or near long-established tourist destinations:

Greifswald is not far from the beaches of the Baltic Sea; Leipzig is a traditional trade fair town; and Dresden is a famous tourist site near the Saxon Switzerland. In addition, there were quite a few other institutions dealing with research and/or education in tourism: with the focus on the hospitality industry, the Commercial University and the economic faculty of the University in Leipzig as well as the Commercial University and the Centre for Rationalization and Research in Berlin; further institutions to mention here are the Institute for Marxist-Leninist Sociology of the Academy of Social Sciences of the SED in Berlin, the Institute of Balneology in Bad Elster, a vocational tourism school in Karl-Marx-Stadt (that is, Chemnitz), the Pedagogical University and the Technical University in Dresden, the Academy of the Free German Trade Union Federation and the Academy of the Free German Youth, both near Berlin, the Institute for Sociology and Social Policy at the GDR Academy of Sciences in Berlin, the Academy for Law and Political Sciences in Potsdam, the Building Academy in Berlin, and finally the Department of Cultural Studies of the Berlin Humboldt University. This list is not even complete, and only the three 'hubs' Dresden, Greifswald and Leipzig are dealt with in this essay. Thus, at least during the last two decades of its existence, the German Democratic Republic possessed a vivid scene of research and education in tourism.

Tourism and tourism research as part of social policy

Most of the major institutes in this field had been founded in the formation phase of the 1960s against the background of rising mass tourism. When, after the war, the circle around the Communist functionary Walter Ulbricht had seized power and formed the SED, the regime's economic policy lopsidedly aimed at the increase in production combined with harsh austerity – resulting in a revolutionary insurgence in 1953 and a massive flight movement to West Germany. And so, willy-nilly consumption was also taken into account. Already the Seven-Year Plan from 1959 demanded to 'outpace' the West German level of production *and* consumption, but in particular, after the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and even more with the replacement of

Ulbricht by Erich Honecker in 1971, when the slogan of the 'unity of economic and social policy' was coined, the 'supply' with consumer goods and services gained higher, if not the highest, priority.

An essential feature of the East German consumer society was the democratization of tourism. The call for 'holiday trips for everybody' had come up in the interwar period in many European countries. The most spectacular efforts to breaking the 'bourgeois privilege' of tourism had been made by the Nazi regime: the Strength through Joy organization (*Kraft durch Freude*), a division of the German Labour Front, had sent millions of 'workers' on cheap all-inclusive tours – a huge propagandistic success.⁸ And so, in 1947, the East German Trade Union Federation, too, launched a travel department, the Holiday Service (*Feriendienst*). Soon it became the dominant tour operator in the country, temporarily even the biggest in the world. In 1955 the *Feriendienst* sold approximately one million tours, and hence – in relation to the number of inhabitants – had outmatched *Kraft durch Freude*. From then on, its capacities grew only moderately, but since the 1960s the big national combines, too, organized millions of vacation trips and both the camping movement and the individual holiday traffic increased massively. Finally, by 1989, the GDR indeed had 'outpaced' West Germany – namely, in respect to travel intensity.

As already hinted, the formation of tourism research went hand in hand with this development. In the 1950s only scattered studies had been made, often dealing with the 'recreational effects' of vacationing – an assertion already essential to the legitimization of the bourgeois *wanderlust* in the nineteenth century and to the social tourism in the interwar period (as the name Strength through Joy expressed) but lacking sound empirical evidence (Cf. Spode, 2003). Nonetheless, it was taken for granted that vacationing serves the 'recreation' (*Erholung* or technically *Rekreation*) and so strengthens the health status of the workforce. All the more, since it was also assumed that it improved the political contentment and the patriotism of the citizens (Cf. *ibid.* and Görlich, 2012, especially p. 258f),

the holiday policy was to become a centrepiece of the social policy.

In 1963 the National Planning Commission of the GDR installed two think tanks, one to deal with the 'rational use of non-working time' (Keck, 1965),⁹ the other with tourism. It was the high time of cybernetics: On both sides of the Iron Curtain, the belief ruled in the ability to steer economy and society (Cf. Spode, 2008, ch. I). Only in the East, however, did this belief take the shape of an attempt at total control of production and consumption. In Western countries, tourism was more or less¹⁰ left to the private sphere and market forces. Socialist states, in contrast directly took responsibility for the vacation trips of their citizens: 'Recreation [is] a socio-political concern of the socialist state.'¹¹ Or, as a leading expert put it: in the GDR 'Capitalist tourism ... has been replaced by a recreational system which is largely maintained by trade unions, nationally owned enterprises and state institutions.' (Benthien, 1984, p. 59) Of course, this spurred the need for global planning data. In respect to the orientation towards the 'practice', the East German tourism science therefore did not differ from the research in Western countries. In fact, in both cases, tourism science meant applied science. However, there were also remarkable differences.

In contrast to many other countries, the GDR – despite its hunger for 'valuta' – never took serious actions to push inbound tourism on a larger scale.¹² Attempts in this direction sanded up. Instead, East German experts underscored the essential difference between tourism in socialism and capitalism, where it were merely a commodity, an investment serving the maximization of profit (Cf. Bähre, 2003, p. 159)¹³ – whereas in socialism, it served the people. Similarly, but without political undertone, a leading Western expert, too, stressed the structural distinctions between the tourist systems in the Eastern and the Western blocs (Hunziker, 1966; cf. the digest by Bähre, 2003, pp. 88ff). These differences also affected the professional composition of tourism scholarship. While in Western tourism science, business economists set the tone and geographers played second fiddle, it was the other way around in East Germany. Here, the

spatial structure of the new state stood in the focus of research (Cf. Görlich, 2012, pp. 226ff). Cut off from the traditional dream destinations of the Germans – the Mediterranean area, the Alps, the Rhine as well as the Silesian mountains, the North Sea and vast parts of the Harz – the GDR sought to develop its 'inherited' tourist regions, in the first place the Baltic Sea, the Mecklenburg lake district and the *mittelgebirge* in Thuringia and Saxony. In particular, Saxon Switzerland, or the Elbe Sandstone Mountains, were made an object of research.

In doing so, the East German tourism scientists partly tended to develop broader approaches than did their Western colleagues. While the head of the Vienna institute made the daring claim that the 'basic research is completed' (Paul Bernecker cited acc. Spode, 2012, fn. 27), East German research – at least in its formation phase – was more aware of the sociocultural complexity of its object, and so (unconsciously) followed more in the footsteps of the founding fathers of the discipline. Admittedly, these differences were of a gradual, not of a basic sort, all the more since East German researchers were in contact with their colleagues in Western Europe; some published in Western research journals or became a member of the AIEST. Tourism research in the GDR was not an isolated phenomenon, but more or less integrated in the transnational scientific community.

Dresden

In 1957 two studies were completed that dealt with the development of tourism in Saxon Switzerland (Hartsch, 1957; Günther, 1957). One was at the Leipzig University and the other at the University of Transportation in Dresden (HfV, *Hochschule für Verkehrswesen 'Friedrich List'*). At the latter the fundamentals for the further development of tourism research and education in the GDR were laid. In the following year at the HfV a lectureship on transportation economics, including tourism, was installed, and from this seed accrued a study centre and a study course which were transformed into the Institute for Transportation Geography (*Verkehrsgeographie*) and, in 1964, the chair of the Economics of Tourism (*Ökonomik des Fremdenverkehrs*). When, two years later, this

institute held its first international conference, it received great attention from the international scientific community.¹⁴ Later, tourism education at the HfV was rearranged several times, the last time being in 1988 when a degree in Economy of Tourism (*Ökonomie des Tourismus*), designed to run for eight semesters, was launched (See Drechsel, 1988; cf. also Wolter, 2009, pp. 105ff; Uebel, 1976, pp. 1ff).

Soon after the reunification in 1990, the HfV was closed down, but many departments were integrated into the Dresden Technical University. Among them, a chair for Tourism Economy (*Tourismuswirtschaft*), which now should closely cooperate with the St. Gallen institute – ironically enough, this cooperation was acclaimed as an ‘opening toward the German-speaking region’ (Cf. Kaspar et al., 1993, p. 63).

It goes without saying that East German tourism science had spoken German, not Russian. It owed its emergence mainly to the initiative of two scholars at the HfV: the economist Horst Uebel and the geographer Günter Jacob. The latter became director of the Institute for Transportation Geography (and later turned towards other topics) while Uebel was made head of the department of Tourism Economics (and worked in this field until his retirement in 1988). In 1967 he founded the journal *Contributions to Tourism Science*¹⁵, which signalled the establishment of that discipline in the GDR. A breakthrough on this way was a national conference on the ‘geography of tourism’ held in Dresden in 1965: summing up the state of research, Jacob made clear the GDR, like most other socialist countries, lagged behind Western standards; only Poland and Czechoslovakia had made considerable progress. Furthermore, Jacob complained that tourism research dealt too much with history; instead, its task should be political consulting ‘under socialist conditions’ (for example, by building up reliable tourism statistics) (Jacob, 1968a).¹⁶ Similarly, Horst Uebel demanded that research mainly should help to use the resources in tourism to their full capacity, all the more since for the future an increase in demand was more than likely (Uebel, 1967).

In this connection, the geographer Erwin Hartsch from the Dresden Technical University in 1968 criticized the damage to the environment in Saxony that would endanger the use as a tourist destination (Hartsch, 1968, here p. 34). A remarkable candidness.¹⁷ Admittedly, usually tourism science in the GDR was all but rebellious. Integrated in the planning and ruling system, it helped to expand and steer (social) tourism. Here, in face of limited economic and spatial resources, the ‘improvement in efficiency’ ascended toward the *leitmotif* in research¹⁸ and teaching¹⁹. It was entrenched in the regime’s prayer-wheel-like call for ‘effectiveness’, for the ‘economy of resources’ in order to increase productivity (which, in reality, more and more dropped back against Western and Asian standards). Given the key role of subsidized social tourism (and the limitation of travel beyond the borders), the structural difference between tourism in socialist and in capitalist countries was emphasized rightly by the East German experts. However, tourism ‘under socialist conditions’, too, was regarded as an industry – even literally: a productive force, comparable to the steel industry; while the latter produced steel, the former produced ‘regeneration’. According to Jacob, the tourism industry belonged to the ‘production complex’ which he – in the tradition of Marx – distinguished from the ‘superstructure’ and furthermore from the ‘nature complex’.²⁰ Ignoring the symbolic and emotional character of consumption in general, and of tourist consumption in particular (Cf. for example, Hennig, 1997), experts assumed an objective ‘need’ for vacationing, so that the ‘recreational agencies’ (*Erholungsträger*), like the Holiday Service, had to ensure the ‘supply’ for the citizens with ‘recreational facilities’ (*Erholungsplätze*) by maximizing the ‘effectiveness’. Armin Godau, professor for Economy of Tourism at the HfV, issued the motto: ‘to achieve optimum performance despite cost minimization’ (Godau, 1989, p. 23).

The notion of tourism as part of the ‘production complex’ was in line with the official ‘Marxism-Leninism’ but the ‘Dresden school’ also drew on the concepts of the Western ‘triumvirate’ (although not always mentioning the sources): Uebel circuitously defined tourism (*Fremdenverkehr*) ‘in the broadest sense’ as the ‘epitome

of the relations and phenomena arising from the sojourn of persons at an alien place (as a rule outside of the residence) as well as the traveling involved with that sojourn – provided that the stay is not the consequence of an employment contract at the alien place or results from a job-related settling' (Uebel, 1968a, pp. 239ff).²¹ In the same breath, however, Uebel developed a different, plainer explication of the term *Fremdenverkehr* (Uebel, *ibid*; cf. Bähre, 2003; Spode, 2016): Here – as his widely used delineation illustrates – it is identical with travelling or horizontal mobility (as one would say today), subdivided in 'job-related', 'recreational', and 'other' traffic. The recreational traffic consists of 'health traffic' (*Kurverkehr*) and 'tourism' (*Tourismus*), which again is subdivided in different sorts. *Tourismus*, in this sense, is not interchangeable with *Fremdenverkehr*, but a prominent 'part' of it; namely, the voluntary translocation for the purpose of recreation. This paradigm was in force until the end of the GDR.²² Since Uebel's classification (in opposite to the mainstream of the tourism science) primarily referred to the motives of travelling, it met with some sympathy from West German tourism sociologists (Cf. Nettekoven, 1972, pp. 36f). However, it remained a peculiarity of the East German research and teaching.

Greifswald

A second paradigm of the East German tourism science, in contrast, was of a transnational character. Its country of origin was the Soviet Union. Around 1970, a working group around Vladimir S. Preobrazenskij at the Moscow Institute of Geography of the Academy of Sciences had developed a notion called 'territorial recreational system' (TRS) as a tool to analyse and steer tourism. It found its way into the research and planning of many socialist countries (and was also discussed with Western geographers). The TRS was more of a functionalist than of a Marxist texture, distinguishing four subsystems: the recreation-seeking individual, the landscape or ecosystem, the infrastructures, and the recreational agencies (Preobrazenskij, 1984; cf. Görlich, 2012, pp. 227f; Bähre, 2003, pp. 167ff). In the GDR, it was particularly the geographer Bruno Benthien who made the TRS popular with tourism scientists and

experts. He had made his career at the Greifswald University where, in 1977, he founded a study group on 'recreational geography' (*Rekreatiogeographie*), which transformed the original TRS model into the somewhat simplified 'Greifswald model'.

Tourism education played a minor role in Greifswald. The main objective of the 'recreational geography' was 'to supply the wants for recreation by using the geographical structural effects' (Benthien, 1985, p. 96; see also the same 1984). Whatever 'structural effects' may have meant in this connection, Benthien stated clearly that all 'economic effects' had to subordinate the task of fostering the 'recreation' of the citizens. This approach matched well the situation in the GDR where tourism first and foremost was regarded as part of the social policy and not (like, for example, in Bulgaria or Spain) as a means of obtaining hard currencies from inbound travel. Admittedly, the question of whether vacationing really improves a person's health status was not made a topic of this research. Instead, the empirical studies along the line of the Greifswald model searched for developable 'capacities' and 'potentialities' (divided into 'social' and 'natural' ones) in order to meet the ever-growing demand for vacationing. In doing so, it helped to build up new tourist destinations, in particular, in Mecklenburg. Its focus was, of course, on top-down planning, and not on the analysis of the unplanned patterns of social self-organization (or 'noncompliance'²³) which resulted in a growing share of individual holiday travel and induced a flourishing black market in tourism.

Stating the precedence of supply over economic feasibility, the Greifswald model was entrenched in the by far too expensive subsidy policy during the Honecker era, which bankrupted the GDR in the end. Nonetheless, after Honecker's fall in October 1989, Bruno Benthien was appointed the first – and only – Minister of Tourism in German history.²⁴ While the TRS model in Russia has survived till this day, its East German variant was filed away after the reunification.

Leipzig

In the circle of East German tourism scientists, Greifswald and Dresden functioned as the

centres of 'classical' tourism research; that is, of tourism geography and economics including transportation, whereas Leipzig was more the realm of empirical social research that dealt *inter alia* with tourism. While the 'classical' scholarship in tourism was domiciled at universities, the social science branch chiefly was a matter of directly state-run institutions, and thus a sort of departmental research.

In the wake of the gradually growing importance of consumption during the late Ulbricht era, in 1962 the Ministry of Trade and Supply launched the Institute for Demand Research, in 1967 renamed Institute for Market Research (IfM, *Institut für Marktforschung*) (Cf. Cornelsen, 1985, pp. 8 and 12ff).²⁵ Since in the (official) socialist economy markets and free competition were abolished, market research had a different meaning and function than in Western economic systems: it was a tool of the regime's central planning and not of in-firm strategies. The IfM was to coordinate this research and to provide the National Planning Commission, and in particular, the Ministry of Trade and Supply, with data for its yearly 'supply plan' as well as with long-term demand forecasts. In the 1970s the institute was upgraded a big think tank, counting more than a hundred staff members. A major task was the detailed collection and analysis of household budgets. In these surveys on the spending behaviour, the expenditures for the 'recreation complex' (*Erholungswesen*) were made a prominent topic (Cf. Stompler, 1976, and see Wolter, 2009, especially annex 38, as well as Fuhrmann, 1996). In addition, separate inquiries about different features of vacationing behaviour (for example, on camping, a very popular form of summer vacation in the GDR) and the related expenditures, were conducted which in the 1970s were transformed into a biennial panel. From 1971 to 1987 the in-house journal *Market Research* alone published 17 articles dealing with tourism. One from 1981 was entitled 'Appreciation of tourism constantly increasing' (Albrecht, 1981). This was good news, but not all research results of the IfM fitted into the party line and were made public.

Also located in Leipzig was the Central Institute for Youth Research (ZIJ, *Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung*).²⁶ It was founded in 1966

and subordinated to the Office for Youth Questions at the Council of Ministers. The institute conducted surveys that dealt, among others, with the travel behaviour of young people; for example, panel studies (1968–80 and 1979–85) and extensive inquiries such as 'youth and tourism' (1983), 'youth tourism: expectancies of students' (1988) or 'life conditions and value orientations of students' (1989) (Cf. Wolter, 2009, p. 333; Schmidt, 1991, p. 122, and see the same 1990; Voß, 1999).²⁷ Two of these studies were carried out on behalf of the travel agency *Jugendtourist* of the Free German Youth, the national youth organization. Many of the findings were held under lock and key. Particularly the 1989 study of the ZIJ, accomplished shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall, revealed rather alarming tendencies. A researcher involved retrospectively summed up: 'The wish to see foreign parts on vacation had always been strong with adolescents in the GDR. However, during the 80s this wish increasingly intensified.' (Schmidt, 1991, p. 125).

The departmental research did not include the Leipzig German Sports University (DHfK, *Deutsche Hochschule für Körperkultur*) (Cf. Lehmann, 2007), which was *inter alia* also engaged in tourism research, education and pedagogy. Here, the weekend leisure time was in the focus. Yet, already in 1961, an international study group for Active Vacationing through Sports and Hiking (*Aktive Feriengestaltung durch Sport und Touristik*)²⁸ had been founded and in the following years, a greater sociological inquiry on 'active recreation' during the vacation was conducted (Cf. Buggel, 2007 and see Buggel, 1967).

Although not situated in the city of Leipzig, but in Berlin, in this connection needs to be mentioned the Institute for Marxist-Leninist Sociology (*Institut für marxistisch-leninistische Soziologie*) at the Academy of Social Sciences at the Central Committee of the SED. In the 1980s it conducted three surveys that included detailed questionnaires about travel behaviour. The studies – in particular, an extensive inquiry from 1987 on 'social structure and modes of life' – revealed a widespread feeling of discontentment and monotony with the GDR

citizens.²⁹ No wonder that these findings, too, were kept under wraps.

Social researchers had indicated a growing discontentment, both with the unattainability of destinations on the other side of the Wall and the service standard and capacities of domestic tourism. They also had shown that self-organized tourism made a notably and increasing share (probably more than 50 per cent), all the more since car ownership grew rapidly during the 1970s–80s (Cf. Dienel, 1997, and see already Uebel, 1968a). However, all these findings did not really affect the regime's policy. And just as little the 'classical' tourism research: fixated on top-down planning as it was, it remained focused on organized tourism and gave short shrift to individual vacationing and private hospitality – in particular, to the countless 'unofficials' (illicit guests). And, of course, it turned a blind eye to the well-known fact that the *nomenclatura* enjoyed abundant privileges.³⁰ Thus, in a nutshell: it was a rather futile work the state-run research institutes did – after all, they produced a quarry of sources for today's historians.

Concluding summary

Despite its German origins, tourism research was almost nonexistent in the early GDR. But from around 1960 this changed. Given the moderate size of the country, tourism scholarship gained a notable quantitative extent. In terms of the manpower involved and the output produced, it could have outmatched the correspondent research in the Federal Republic (which counted more than three times as many inhabitants).³¹ East German tourism science was part of the transnational scientific community, and thus its methods did not basically diverge from those of the Alpine 'triumvirate'.³² In its formation phase, theoretical questions played a greater role, but then – like the Western research before – it became a strictly applied discipline that lacked self-referentiality and asked 'how' and not 'why' as pure science does: In the GDR, too, tourism science was a 'practical art'³³ producing planning data and prognoses.³⁴

Here, a basic assumption – not uncommon to Western thought as well – lay in the notion of the tourist demand as a sort of an

anthropological constant based on the 'need for recreation'. Tourism, however, is a sociocultural phenomenon fuelled by a variety of motives; as a leisure activity, its characteristic is just the 'lack of an obvious purpose'.³⁵ Eager to simply enhance the 'efficiency' of the tourist industry, the regime (and with it, the tourism science) proved unable to cope with the growing and differentiating demands of tourists.

Also similar to the West, there was no integral 'tourismology', but a field of research composed of subdisciplines or branches: for the main part of economy, geography and transportation science, and for the second part, of social sciences. This composition already had characterized the beginnings of tourism research around 1930. Admittedly, there were some differences to Western research: First, the geographic branch was of higher importance.³⁶ Second, at least in Dresden, the collaboration between the branches was closer and took an interdisciplinary, if not transdisciplinary, character. Third, due to the socialist 'economy of shortage', research in marketing (which played a key role in Western tourism science) was virtually missing. Finally, both the economic and the geographic branch utilized theoretical frames that were not established in other countries, viz. Uebel's definitions and the Greifswald model. In both cases, the motives and functions of tourism were put under the umbrella term of 'recreation', which helped to underscore the importance of tourism and tourism science, but restricted the scope of research.

The crucial difference to Western tourism research, however, lay in the East German scholarship's role in the ruling system. Like other sciences, it stood under the thumb of the Party. A basic critical viewpoint, such as some Western sociologists, or later, the Bern institute developed, was unthinkable. (And, in case empirical studies revealed unpleasant facts, they simply were ignored by the *politburo*.) Instead, tourism science was to push the 'recreational system', which first and foremost meant social tourism. At first sight, the democratization of going on holiday was a success story. In its final stages, the German Democratic Republic led the world with the

travel intensity. However, the ultimate cause of this costly policy was not the production of 'recreation' – as officially asserted – but the production of political consent and thus the assurance of power. In this respect, it proved to be a failure.

Endnotes:

¹ Cf. Dann/Liebman-Parrinello, 2009. All translations in this article by Hasso Spode. We are indebted to Dominic Schache for a final stylistic check.

² Around 1900 the technical term *Fremdenverkehr* (literally: 'traffic of strangers') became popular with experts and was transformed into other languages (for example, *movimento dei forestieri*); while at the same time in French *tourisme* was coined, which in the 1960s–70s more or less replaced *Fremdenverkehr* and its translations.

³ Leading figures were the director of the Swiss Tourist Association, Walter Hunziker, and the economist Kurt Krapf. Of course Hunziker was not the 'founder of academic tourism studies', as stated in *Anatolia* 26(2015), p. 501, but the economist Robert Glücksmann who twelve years afore established the institute in Berlin.

⁴ Keeping aloof from the economic-driven university institutes since 1961 the Study Circle for Tourism, located in Starnberg near Munich, pushed tourism social science, and especially in France, the sociology of leisure came up, which later also dealt with tourism; cf. Dann/Liebman-Parrinello, 2009.

⁵ The textbook by Hunziker/Krapf from 1942 functioned as the 'bible' of the *Fremdenverkehrswissenschaft*.

⁶ The International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism was founded in 1951 on the initiative of Hunziker and Krapf.

⁷ For a criticism of the 'ethnocentrism' in tourism research in which Anglophone native speakers, often devoid of foreign language ability, set the tone see Dann/Liebman-Parrinello, 2009, pp. 3ff.

⁸ On German tourism history generally see Hachtmann, 2007; Spode, 2003; on the GDR see Görlich, 2012; Wolter, 2009; as well as Fuhrmann, 1996; Irmischer, 1996; for the theoretical discussion see Spode, 1996b; Irmischer, 2011.

⁹ In actual fact, 'rational recreation' was an old bourgeois ideal.

¹⁰ Shortly after the war in some Western countries (not so much in the FRG), social tourism flourished, but gradually lost momentum; as a rule, the state only took care of holiday laws, tariff agreements and so on.

¹¹ Filler, 1980; and see for example, Großmann, 1985.

¹² Admittedly, there were exemptions, such as the *Interhotels*. The reasons for this reluctance are still unclear; one might think of the priority of domestic tourism but also of fears of contacts.

¹³ This position was (and is) popular with Western critiques as well, see for example, the interview with the former director of the Bern institute Jost Krippendorf in *Voyage: Studies on Travel & Tourism* 1(1997), pp. 61ff.

¹⁴ Seven out of 19 speakers came from abroad (among them two of the 'gurus', Paul Bernecker and Walter Hunziker), calc. acc. *Beiträge zur Fremdenverkehrswissenschaft* 1(1967)1–3.

¹⁵ The *Beiträge zur Fremdenverkehrswissenschaft* were as to say the East German equivalent to the older *Jahrbuch für Fremdenverkehr* from Munich.

¹⁶ However, the GDR never installed a nationwide statistic of overnight stays.

¹⁷ When later the writer Monika Maron penned her accusation against the pollution in the GDR (*Flugasche* [Fly Ash], Frankfurt 1981) she had to publish it in West Germany and left the country.

¹⁸ See, for example, the dissertation at the HfV by Großmann/Naumann, 1973 and again Großmann, 1988; cf. Spode, 1996b, p 15.

¹⁹ In the degree program of the HfV 'in particular the aspects of effectiveness are underscored': Drechsel, 1988, p. 175.

²⁰ 'Tourism geography thus primarily is the geography of resorts and destinations': Jacob, 1968b, here p. 51. This followed a definition by Adolf Grünthal, Glücksmann's assistant, from 1934; cf. fn. 21.

²¹ Uebel had simply rephrased the 'classical' definition by Hunziker/Krapf from 1942 which was, slightly modified, adopted by the AIEST and read: 'Tourism is the epitome of the relations and phenomena arising from the sojourn of non-residents. provided that their stay does not lead to residence for the sake of a permanent or temporary main earning activity'. Cf. Spode, 2009, 2012 and 2016.

²² An identical diagram from 1989 only replaced the word *Fremdenverkehr* by *Tourismus* (and the original *Tourismus* by 'tourism in a narrower sense'), acc. Bähre, 2003, p. 174.

²³ On the analytical concept of *Eigensinn* in this connection see especially Görlich, 2012.

²⁴ He was not member of the SED but of a 'satellite party', the Liberal-Democrats.

²⁵ Transformed into a commercial firm, the IfM still exists.

²⁶ Cf. the somewhat apologetic portrayal by Friedrich et al., 1999.

²⁷ The 1983 study is available under info1.gesis.org/dbksearch/file.asp?file=ZA6198_cod.pdf.

²⁸ In the GDR the term *Touristik*, coined around 1900, kept its initial sense of hiking and climbing while in the other German-speaking countries it took the meaning of tourism industry.

²⁹ Cf. briefly Wolter, 2009, p. 334, with further literature.

³⁰ ... ranging from holidays in Cuba to mobile homes that cost more than an average jobholder took home in seven years.

³¹ Sound data, admittedly, are still pending.

³² Many publications were garnished with Marxist-Leninist phraseology, but this did not affect the empirical content seriously.

³³ On the term *Kunstlehre* see Spode, 1998.

³⁴ Apart from the mainstream GDR tourism science, in the late 1980s a (re)discovery of historical-cultural approaches set in; cf. Bagger, 1988.

³⁵ See already Knebel, 1958; cf. Spode, 2016.

³⁶ In the West only in 1977 tourism geography achieved its first chair (University of Trier).

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