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REVIEW

of post doctoral dissertation **“Pilgrim City Development Index in Community Management”** written by Stefan Nowak PhD, Faculty of Management in Sport and Tourism, The Jerzy Kukuczka Academy of Physical Education in Katowice.

Introduction

Pilgrimage tourism, like other forms of tourism, fits clearly into multifunctional urban development. Its smooth operation undoubtedly requires commitment, and at the same time, the mutual cooperation of the local communities, local government authorities and the representatives of sanctuaries. It can also bring tangible socio-economic benefits for the abovementioned groups. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the condition to increase tourist traffic in cities is sustainable development of tourism, which in urban centres boils down primarily to the quality of the preparation and sharing of values and tourist attractions, coordination, governance structure, the structure of tourism, harmony of the outcomes achieved with simultaneous achievement of: the satisfaction of tourists staying in the city, economic and social benefits for the residents of the city, improving the spatial conditions of the city - both compositional and environmental. Fulfilling all these conditions is a big challenge for local authorities. Specificity of the centres, in which the centres of religious worship are located, makes the stewards of the cities work closely with the authorities of the sanctuaries while outlining common objectives and consistently striving to achieve them. This dissertation is devoted to the problem of urban development, for which religious tourism is an opportunity.

1. Formal Evaluation of the post doctoral dissertation

Stefan Nowak, Ph.D. submitted the post doctoral dissertation dealing with community management in context of pilgrim city development. The topics of the thesis is highly relevant for studies on city development management, pilgrim travel organisation and pilgrim tourism services as well. There are important both on theoretical studies and practical implication. This topic represents innovative and modern approach of science development.

The thesis is well structured and well presented. It is divided on literature review, Author research methodology proposals, empirical research as well as results discussion. The Author review more than 220 literature references, most of them are written in English. The literature review is consistent with the theme and indicates a detailed and objective look at the research

problem. The structure of work contains four chapters those contents are related strictly to thesis aims.

In the first chapter, the author begins his dissertation with discussion of city management in context of tourism development. Author presents wide review of city management definitions as well as his own interpretations of this process. I highly estimate the consideration on tourism policy creation based on organizational approach, it is hard to describe because of not clear organizations functional duties so it is an author's good job.

In second chapter, author widely deals with tourism management in religious cities. He presents famous pilgrimage sites and places all over the world including Christian, Muslim and Hindu pilgrimage sites, that made this part complex. He indicates the nature of religious tourism, and distinguishes the diversity to usual tourism. Then he points on marketing of religious tourism with a careful analysis of some disagreement between religion and economics as well as between the material and the spiritual. In this part the author showed very deep literature review of the rare reference sources.

In third chapters the author tries to analyse development factors of pilgrim cities, it is a great attempt with wide explanation of pilgrim cities cooperation focusing on European Union collaboration projects. Then the role of tourism organisation in community management and as the role and capabilities of local governments in support of private tourism investments.

Fourth chapter is the author's proposal of the metrics that help in evaluation pilgrim cities development called Pilgrim City Development Index (PCDI). Before he introduced and presented the PCDI, the author had selected and described pilgrim cities for analysis, they are as follows: Lourdes, Fatima, Czestochowa, Santiago de Compostela, Levoca and Lichen. The author presents large number of data describing the pilgrim cities. The presented data are the base for PCDI calculation. The PCDI is presented very clearly with complexed approach containing all the pilgrim city areas those influence the development. I estimate this author methodological proposal as very innovative and important for science development and community management efficiency. The author verifies the PCDI, studying, comparing and evaluating development of chosen pilgrim cities.

From the formal point of view the thesis is very carefully and neatly written and organised without major shortcomings. There are no typing errors within the text that is written in clear and concise manner suitable with academic standards.

2. Study Results Evaluation

This dissertation is an extremely interesting and utilitarian elaboration, on an international scale. It thoroughly characterizes the substrate of research, ranging from the importance of pilgrimage tourism both in the world and in Poland, presenting most of the destinations of pilgrimages and pilgrims statistics. Considerations were supported by the discussion of the important role of cooperation between centres of pilgrimage tourism and the activities of local tourist organizations. Among the determinants of the development of places of pilgrimage, the author also pointed out the possibility of local government in supporting the private sector, which would provide better tourist services. It was also noted that a significant factor in the development of these centres is transport infrastructure. All these elements were reflected in the proposed by the author, a novel method of assessing areas of development centres -

Pilgrim City Development Index (PCDI), which under the premise will be a useful tool in managing pilgrimage cities. In my opinion, this method is thoroughly considered; covering most of the variables affecting the development of the real situation of pilgrimage centres and provides a set of reliable indicators, based on which decision-makers can make decisions on the direction and intensity of the city development. As it has already been written, this method is utilitarian in its nature and its application for other purposes will be very useful with the correct selection of input data and established strategic objectives. The considerations conducted in the dissertation, both theoretical and empirical, confirmed the hypothesis formulated by the author and allowed the realization of the set objectives. In addition, objectives and hypotheses have been clearly confirmed in the summary of work. This shows a good workshop of the author's scientific skills, the ability to review critically the literature in the field, both domestic and foreign, to analyse empirical data, use appropriate scientific methods as well as the ability to draw conclusions.

Reading this dissertation, however, raises some criticisms and doubts. Although the author is trying to work in his deliberations referring to several well-known centres of pilgrimage, the so- called "living organism", which was treated in the most detailed way, is Czestochowa. It is very understandable, because of the ability to gather accurate information. Therefore, the greatest deficiency is the lack of concrete proposals formulated about the development of the city of Czestochowa, addressed to the local authorities, built on the results of the PCDI method. Although in the summary, the author proposed some solutions in this field, but in my opinion, they have the character of loose comments. Characterized in section 3.3 (Chapter 3) the role and capabilities of local governments in promoting private sector investors would certainly be more interesting, if the considerations were supplemented by a few more empirical examples, based on the activities of local authorities of Czestochowa. Another area of discussion is certain "seasonality" of religious tourism in some centres, for example, in Czestochowa. This is due, of course, the celebration of holy days. I am not convinced whether in this case it will be possible to make an even distribution of the intensity of pilgrims throughout the year. Thus, the issue of "seasonality" of pilgrimages can be a problem in adjusting the organizational features of the city to visitors. In addition, because in the proposed method, the value of the indicator uniform level of frequency of visits of pilgrims (R_i) can be determined by experts only on the basis of their expertise and knowledge of the specificities of individual places of worship and influence, it can contribute to the distortion of the results. There is one more very important, yet subtle and controversial topic - the relationship of local government with the administrators of sanctuaries. The author only mentioned the need for cooperation between the two entities, but did not delve into this issue, which, however, from the point of view of development of the whole centre of pilgrimage (including Czestochowa), is quite significant.

3. Content Discussion

Reviewed work is quite interesting and innovative in city management field, however its contents are also the source for discussion. So I address the following questions to be discussed:

1. What are your suggestions for better pilgrim development management based on your study ?

2. You proposed the Pilgrim City Development Index, can it be introduced to the development analysis of other cities and how can it be used by city management bodies? What are the constraints of that application?
3. The study consists the chosen pilgrimage cities. In the theoretical part you study not only the Catholic pilgrim places but other religious as well. Is there a chance to introduce the results of your research to Muslim or other religious pilgrim places?

4. Conclusions

In my opinion, the Author of this post-doctoral dissertation, "*Pilgrim City Development Index in Community Management*" has demonstrated the ability to work independently and creatively in the specific field. The thesis meets the standards of habilitation theses. Taking into account the significance of the study and their practical aspects, interesting and innovative approach to practical problem solving as well as the author's other achievements both in scientific, practical and pedagogical areas I clearly recommend his thesis for the habilitation procedure and after its successful defence I recommend him to be awarded the title of Associate Professor in the study branch 3.3.15 Management.

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