

REPORTS

Tourism 2009, 19/1–2

Robert Wiluś

Łódź University

Institut of Urban Geography and Tourism

robwil@geo.uni.lodz.pl

THE 24TH FIELD SEMINAR *RESEARCH WORKSHOPS ON THE GEOGRAPHY OF TOURISM*, UNIEJÓW, 18-20TH SEPTEMBER 2008

The 24th field seminar *Research Workshops on the Geography of Tourism* took place September 18-20th at Uniejów, a town in the Łódź *Województwo* on the Warta River about 50 km west of Łódź, and currently (2008) one of the most attractive tourist destinations in the *Województwo*. This attractiveness has recently increased as in July 2008 one of the first thermal swimming pool complexes in Poland was opened there by exploiting its geothermal water resources. The seminar venue was the medieval castle of the Gniezno bishops. The main aims of the workshops have remained unchanged since their inception, focusing on the results of recent tourism studies unpublished at the time of the seminar. These were mostly conceptual, or preliminary research results to be included in PhD theses while a further aim was to present the conclusions of PhD theses completed earlier in that year. During the terminology session, the terms 'specialised tourism' *turystyka kwalifikowana* and 'active tourism' *turystyka aktywna* were presented and discussed.

The seminar was opened by Prof. Elżbieta Dziegieć who briefly referred back to the main aims, ideas and traditions of the workshops. After that, Józef Kaczmarek, the mayor of Uniejów presented the socio-economic situation of the town and *gmina*, the latest developments (a tourist-recreational centre based on geothermal water), as well as plans to build a large hotel and sports complex which will be used during the Euro 2012 football championships. The first session on the first day included three presentations: first Prof. Ivan Pirożnik (Minsk State University) discussed tourism attractiveness and how UNESCO heritage sites are used in Belarusian tourism, then Dr Bogdan Włodarczyk (University of Łódź – UŁ) presented his preliminary conceptual ideas on 'tourism landscape'. In the last presentation Dr Jolanta Latosińska & Dr Robert Wiluś (both UŁ) discussed the

preliminary results of field research into tourism development on the middle course of the Warta River in Łódź *Województwo*. This first session was presided over by Prof. Elżbieta Dziegieć (UŁ).

The second day began with a terminology session devoted to presenting definitions, scope and meanings of terms which are well-known and widely used in tourism research. The main aim is to try and introduce some order resulting in better communication among researchers representing different disciplines, as well as among those professionally involved in tourism who use the same terms in practice. This year the seminar organisers' intention was to present and discuss the scope of two terms: 'active tourism' and 'specialised tourism'. The first to speak was Prof. Elżbieta Dziegieć who reviewed and in a way summed up their definitions by pointing to their different scopes and meanings. Her presentation was at the same time an introduction to an open discussion of both terms.

The third session included three presentations. In the first, *Active Tourism among Tourism and Recreation Students of the University of Łódź*, Dr Joanna Kowalczyk-Anioł (and three third year students of the Tourism and Recreation Department, UŁ: Joanna Terka, Joanna Dronka and Marta Kulczycka) discussed the results of a survey concerning active ways of spending free time conducted among departmental students. In the second by Dr Krzysztof Szpara (University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów) was *Tourism Personnel in the Podkarpackie Województwo in 2008 – Tourist Couriers and Guides*. The speaker focused on the quality and development of tourism personnel from the Podkarpackie *Województwo* whose professional activity is concerned with active or specialised tourism. The presentation by Dr Sławoj Tanaś (UŁ), *Student Tourism in Polish Mountains: development and organization*, had a similar character as it concerned

students who are mountain guides. The third session was presided over by Prof. Stanisław Liszewski (UŁ).

The fourth session presided over by Prof. Jolanta Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz (UŁ) included presentations of the conclusions of this year's completed and defended PhD theses on tourism. Dr Sylwia Graja (Poznan University of Life Sciences) presented a part of her PhD thesis: *Ecological Awareness as a Basic Determinant of Tourism Space Development in a National Park: the example of the Warta Confluence National Park*. This was followed by Dr Krzysztof Parzych (Pomeranian University in Słupsk) with *Tourism among Liceum Students in Słupsk and Częstochowa*. The next two had been prepared at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin: *The Conditions for Tourism Development and the Diversification of Tourist Functions in the Łęczyńsko-Włodawskie Lake District* by Dr Renata Krukowska, and *The Tourist Potential and Development Opportunities of the Lubelski Region* by Andrzej Tucki, M.A.

The next, opened by Dr Janusz Ustupski (Pedagogical University in Kraków), concerned the influence of tourist infrastructure on ski slopes in Podhale. After which Dr Robert Pawlusiński (Jagiellonian University, Kraków) discussed development plans for tourism management in the Babia Góra region. Finally, Łukasz Quirini-Popławski M.A. (Jagiellonian University, Kraków) presented tourism issues in the Eastern Carpathians: 1945-91. The session was led by Prof. Andrzej Świeca (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin).

The fifth and the last session of the second day was led by Dr Teresa Brzezińska-Wójcik (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University) and comprised two presentations. The first, *Changing Trends in the Spatial Distribution of Tourist Accommodation in Lower Silesia*, was given by Dr Jacek Potocki (Academy of Economics, Jelenia Góra) and the second by Bohuslava Gregorova (Matej Bela University, Banska Bystrica in Slovakia) on *Selected issues in the Perception of Banska Bystrica as a Tourist City*.

After the presentations, a short walking excursion around Uniejów was organized. The participants visited the Bishops' Castle (the conference venue), the intakes of thermal waters, the collegiate church and the part of the town around the main square. The excursion was led by Dr Robert Wiluś (UŁ).

There were three sessions on the third day and the first contained three presentations. Dr Alina Zajadacz (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) presented elements of a tourism development strategy for the Leszczyński region 2007-13, next Katarzyna Śliwa M.A. (Jagiellonian University, Kraków) talked about forms of partnership in *gminas* where tourism is

developing with areas under protection, and the session was closed by Tadeusz Grabowski M.A. (Roztoczański National Park) who described tourist development in the park and its use. The session was presided over by Dr Bogdan Włodarczyk (UŁ).

The seventh session was opened by Justyna Mokras-Grabowska M.A. (Higher School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Łódź) who presented the preliminary conclusions from her PhD thesis *Exploiting Folk Culture in Tourism and its Commercialization*, followed by Łukasz Musiaka M.A. (UŁ) presenting the ideas behind his thesis *The Role of Northern Polish Mediaeval Castles in the Tourist Development of Small Towns*, and finally Mariusz Miedziński M.A. (Pomeranian University in Słupsk) on the spatial distribution of the tourist function in Kołobrzeg, and especially its concentration in the area of Kołobrzeg Old Town. The session was led by Dr Jacek Potocki (Academy of Economics, Jelenia Góra).

There were two further presentations in the eighth and last session. Marzena Makowska-Iskierka M.A. (UŁ) presented some parts of her PhD thesis on the classification and typology of tourist destinations in the Łódź urban fringe zone in the context of their urbanization, followed by Mateusz Rogowski M.A. (University of Wrocław) who discussed an innovative method of evaluating tourist attractiveness based on mountain tourist trails in Lower Silesia. The last session of the 24th seminar was presided over by Prof. Elżbieta Dziegieć who summed up the whole seminar and thanked everyone for their active participation.

The 24th seminar *Research Workshops on the Geography of Tourism* hosted 47 participants from 13 academic centres in Poland: seven Polish universities (University of Łódź, Jagiellonian University, University of Wrocław, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, University of Szczecin); two foreign universities (Matej Bela University, Banska Bystrica, Slovakia, and the State University of Minsk); two academies of economics (in Poznań and Jelenia Góra), two pedagogical universities (Pomeranian University in Słupsk and Pedagogical University in Krakow); Poznań University of Life Sciences; and two private universities (Higher School of Tourism and Hotel Management in Łódź and University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów). Moreover, one national park – the Roztoczański – was re-presented. All in all, the seminar included 25 presentations divided among eight sessions. Prof. Elżbieta Dziegieć supervised the seminar and Robert Wiluś was the seminar secretary.