TOURISM IN INTEGRATION OF GEOGRAPHY AND SOCIETY

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Abstract. The natural-humanitarian characteristics of tourism allow it to overcome interdisciplinary barriers and have already linked most diverse spheres of science, business and market segments. Tourism represents a powerful nucleus of unity of geography and became the sphere of interest of many sciences thus promoting their connection. The branch of popular science that has emerged based on tourism is called the ‘citizen science’. This spontaneously emerging field of knowledge studies tourism in detail and even transforms geography in general. A challenging period of development of ordinary peoples’ ideas about the area is emerging. Tourism geography fills in the space between ‘citizen geography,’ on the one hand, and geographic science, country studies, and regional studies, on the other. The focus of land use and environmental management is the human impact on the geographic environment, while the focus of human geography (human geography / anthropogeography) is the impact of the geographic environment on humans. In tourism geography, the center is shifted towards the human perception of the geographic environment. Science once again has to recognize that knowledge is impregnated with individuality. Thus, tourism brings a subject and his or her emotional and other experiences into the course of science. Tourism, once again, drew attention to the deep original proximity of the geography and the arts.

Keywords: tourism geography, Internet, educational and vital-health resources, landscape concept, vernacular regions, human geography

Internet and mass tourism have engaged broad sections of the population in the processes of acquiring geographic knowledge. Because of tourism, at least a billion people in the world became "spontaneous" geographers to a certain extent. Even if tourism is carried out solely for the search of pleasure, it is still associated with gaining scientific knowledge and geographic experience. I.V. Zorin wrote, ‘The milieu of travel itself, new conditions of existence activate the cognitive abilities of a person’ [21, pp. 5-6].

Tourism has become the greatest geographic social movement of all time.

In a number of countries, volunteers collect geographic information on a regular basis. In the United States, a new term ‘citizen science,’ promoted by tourism has appeared [9, 11, 19]. Development of geo-services and the emergence of specialized web sites that host photos allowed not only to post pictures online, but also tie them to geographic coordinates. Links to photos (labels) create clusters of various configurations and density on geimages, forming collectively a visual ‘layer’ of a geoimage where significant territorial objects and their combinations, systems, and structures ‘develop’ to users [17, 18].
Various interpretations of space by individual people and groups of people were termed ‘vernacular’ (from the notion of local, popular, common) regions [8, 20]. For a long time, they were regarded as unscientific and geographers often perceived them as prejudice. But as noted by Nikolaenko [15], in addition to knowledge of professional geographers there has been also a diverse geographic knowledge of not-formally-trained people. They are relatively independent and coexist in reality. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages. It is not possible to reduce one relative to another. There is no reason to treat the popular geographic knowledge as a kind of second grade. A challenging period of development of ordinary peoples’ ideas about the area is emerging.

Tourism geography fills in the space between ‘citizen geography,’ on the one hand, and geographic science, country studies, and regional studies, on the other. In part, this space is filled in by journalism, but it also requires the scientific content. From the standpoint of tourism geography, the main content of this field is educational and health (vital) resources of the geographic environment.

The object of the study of tourism geography, we propose to regard the perception of the geographical realities of individual travelers or their communities. Perceived by them above all pleasure and impressions, that is, axiological (value) systems of the geographical environment. Among them are dominated the aesthetic, educational and health resources of the geographical environment. Therefore, they can be considered as the main subject of tourism geography. It investigates composition, structure and spatial differentiation of perception of the geographical environment people of different cultures in the various tourist regions.

Tourism geography is closely connected with recreology, i.e., the science of the processes and methods of recovery and restoration of human resources [22], and recreational geography, which studies restorative recreation in a certain area outside the normal place of living of a vacationer. We suggest that recreational geography deals with a static part. In this sense, its filed deals with resorts and spas, villa-cottage land use, holidays in the countryside, or weekend picnics. Tourism geography has a more dynamic character associated with active movement in space. The key word in recreology is general recreation (leisure) and the keyword of recreational geography is place. In tourism geography, the keyword is space. These relations are very mobile and overlapping.

There are differences between tourism geography and geography of tourism. The subject of geography of tourism is the territorial organization of tourism activities. Essentially, it is economic geography of the tourism-hotel complex, i.e., a socio-economic discipline. Tourism geography is a natural and humanitarian science.

The subject of land use and environmental management is the human impact on the geographic environment, while the focus of human geography (anthropogeography) is the impact of the geographic environment on humans. In tourism geography, the center is shifted towards the human perception of the geographic environment.

With tourism, the landscape concept takes on the human dimension and human geography enters into the sphere of landscape. ‘Tourism became an area where the purpose of labor is not to change the environment but its perception. The only area interested in preserving the integrity of the landscape, because only it can ensure the integrity of its development’ [22]. Scenic attributes, high aesthetic qualities, and the visual characteristics of the landscape are some of the main demands placed on them [3].
Tourism, once again, drew attention to the deep original proximity of the geography and the arts. B.B. Rodoman [16] viewed the construction of a tourist route as an art form. Later, Denis Cosgrove [5, 6] attempted to integrate art and geography in a unified theory of the geographic environment that incorporates personal, imaginative, and creative aspects of the human experience. Cosgrove defines landscape as "a way of seeing the outside world" and "visual ideology" [5, pp. 46-47].

The era of tourism, postmodernity, and the epistemological and philosophical quest has strengthened the emotional side of our perception of the ‘mesoworld’. Tourism brings a person with his or her sensual perception into landscape assessment and into the scientific discourse. Science once again has to recognize the fact that knowledge is impregnated with individual perceptions. Before, science demanded the release of the objective reality from the influence of personality of a subject who studies this science. Natural science was forced to consider a cosmic scale causing a subject to ‘disappear.’ The humanitarian science were forced to think in terms of the ideology of the state, where individuality was also lost. Thus tourism teaches relativism lessons to the whole science. It declares human knowledge personal, relational, and relative to different times, spaces, and people, and, in fact, declares it not even knowledge specifically, but understanding.

The theory of relativity and the principle of complementarity have rejected the unequivocal opposition of a subject and an object in the microcosm. The anthropic principle has brought a subject into the macrocosm of the universe. Tourism brings individual perceptions into the mesoworld around us, i.e., the world of geography. The meaning of knowledge has become the human-dimensional.

Tourism represents a powerful nucleus unifying geography and is the sphere of interest of many sciences promoting relationships between them and geography. A department of tourism integrates activities of other departments as no other geography department of a university can. This is possible because tourism most successfully and naturally integrates natural and social territorial systems, history and geography, and humans and various spatial units at different taxonomic levels.

As pointed professor Dieter Müller, there is a certain difference between institutional and intellectual situation of research on tourism. In the institutional respect, departments of tourism in Europe are within schools of geography at universities. In the rest of the world, their majority are concentrated within schools of business and economics. In North America, they are traditionally within specialty departments that study recreational activities [1, 14]. In Russia, about 600 higher education institutions provide training in various tourism sectors.

There has been a series of publications devoted to the justification of geography of tourism as an integral part of human geography [4, 12, 13]. Tourism can be regarded both as human-applied geography and a dynamic method for the study of the geographic environment.

Tourism has already linked together the most diverse spheres of business and market segments, for example, transportation and hospitality, construction and inventory of beautiful scenery. As a synthesizing branch, tourism contributes to the emergence of integrative approaches even in such an integral science as geography. One example is recreational geomorphology, which is developing in accordance with the general trend towards merging of the natural sciences and the humanities [2, 3].

The tourism geography does not protect its borders with the energy as the other sciences do. It gets the intellectual inspiration from all sorts of areas. The tourism geography employs scientists from other fields, as well as artists, photographers, filmmakers, and journalists. The particular strength of the science of tourism is
associated with publicism and journalism. Good-quality travel reviews of certain areas represent specifically their tourism geography. Publicism and journalism raise geography at the post-disciplinary level and are especially important in the age of advertising and image promotion. These are the direct methods of promoting science to the post-disciplinary knowledge. They reflect ‘the very best,’ its unique nature, winning performance, and the primary use. Precisely they form the image of the territory in the public consciousness.

Conclusions. The tourism geography overcomes rigid delimitation of science and strengthens its natural and humanitarian unity. The tourism geography fits well into the postmodern paradigm that welcomes dedifferentiation of disciplines and individualization of knowledge. In addition to humanitarian and cultural geography, tourism geography gives a vector of unity and integrity of the entire geography.

References


