

Editorial

The subject of Geotourism is getting an ever widening connotation. It is now getting perceived as encompassing mining heritage related tourism, too. It can be perhaps seen best demonstrated in a recent publication (Conlin, Jolliffe 2010) on mining heritage or through the papers presented at the GEOTOUR 2010 International Conference in Gelnica (Slovakia). Some of the most interesting presentations at this Conference were selected for inclusion in this number of the Acta Geoturistica. The revised versions of the papers cover a wide spectrum of topics.

A site that starts to draw tourists has to be protected and properly managed. The site has to be developed into an attraction and has to give customer experience. A way, how to calibrate a site and how to prevent its overuse is given in Timčák, et al. (2010). The value of a site determines also the level of protection it needs. The paper of Rybár (2010) describes valuing systems that help to quantify its natural and anthropic value. The visible natural and man-made objects have also invisible albeit perceptible properties, that may affect their perception by tourists. This may have a geopathogene or geocomfort aspect. The paper of Webster and Timčák (2010) explores possible influence of these factors on tourist destination preferences.

Geoparks by now are well established destinations and their presence may increase the tourist flow significantly. Cimermanová (2010) describes geoparks of different standing in Slovakia and their role in tourism. Mining and geological heritage tourism present a special niche in travel destinations. Their proper identification and visualisation can help to make them a real tourist attraction (Rybár et al. 2010). The use of historical mining and geological maps in this process is of crucial importance (Hronček, Weiss 2010). Areas that are important as natural sites are enjoying protection. From time to time Nature parks and Protected areas find their way to commemorative or collector coins (Slavkovský 2010) and such artefacts transform the in situ experience into an abstracted, artistic form that can be taken home and that projects the values of such a Park to anyone who gets in touch with such an artefact.

Geotourism usually uses natural geospheric phenomena as well as the processes made by organisms belonging to biosphere and thus is self regulating. In mining heritage tourism the challenge is to bring life to a heritage site so that the visitors have a perception of historic or present day reality tied to a locality. Here “real life” and virtual reality could go side by side. The present issue brings an inspiring view on important issues related to these areas.

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Book review

Conlin M.V., Jolliffe L. (Eds): Mining heritage and Tourism, Routledge Advances in Tourism, 2010.

It is a laudable event that Routledge published this book which contains 20 papers on various aspects of geotourism from all corners of the globe. It deals with the problem – what happens when mining leaves a particular site. The papers usually represent studies in one of the following areas: Interpreting mining heritage, Transforming mines into heritage attraction, Traditional mining attraction destinations, Globalization and the future of mining attraction destination. Finally the editors assess what are the lessons learned – what are the categories of mining related attractions and into what type of attractions can the mining sites be transformed. Thus it is also a guidebook for those, who want to learn how to convert a disadvantage of having a decommissioned mine in the area into an advantage of having a mining related tourist attraction in the same area. From the point of view of a Slovakian reader it is nice to have a paper there that deals with geotourism in Slovakia.