

Conference report.

V International Tourism Congress – The Image and Sustainability of Tourist Destinations, Peniche, Portugal, 23-25 November 2011 – Conference Report

Graham Busby, University of Plymouth

Late November, west coast of Portugal; apart from the 22nd, the weather was incredible, akin to an Indian summer in England. Just the right note for this, the fifth, annual tourism congress held at the ESTM faculty inside the historic walls of Peniche. It's been quite some time since this reviewer felt so warmly welcomed by Teresa Mouga, Director, Francisco Dias, and others of the organising committee.

Plate 1 Keynote presentation by Professor Chris Cooper



Source: Author photo

Eight keynote speakers (Chris Cooper, Graham Walters, Graham Miller, Graham Busby, Miguel Moital, Ramón Rufin, Paulo Almeida, and José Torres) fronted the two days of research papers. It was surprising to find individuals from so many distant locations. Amanda Barney, University of Washington, Seattle, discussed the concept of geotourism – a different interpretation to one I heard nine years ago in Dubrovnik; she suggested that with communities in Newfoundland, they had been asked to create their own destination image. “Geotourism mapping is a planning tool

that allows indigenous persons to shape the structure, form, and function of their home as a tourist destination in concert with developers”, she said. It was an interesting paper.

Contrast this with the paper delivered by Mehmet Ergul, San Francisco State University, entitled ‘Investigating Transactional Philanthropy In The Hospitality Industry’. He argued that it is possible to “quantify the added value of the ‘Hotels that Help’ program to the establishment from the viewpoint of the guest”. Increased guest loyalty and an improved social image of the property, in the local community, are results.

Plate 2: Rocks at Peniche with Berlenga Islands on the horizon



Source: Author photo

As anybody who knows Professor Brian Wheeler would expect, his paper entitled ‘Ducking The Issues: The Canard Continues’ offered many visual delights.

Brian is an exponent of incrementalism, that is, whilst the theme tends to remain the same, the slides are adapted and added to; what a festschrift could be made by putting together his presentations from down the years. From Warsaw University, came Beata Fornal-Pieniak, and a paper entitled ‘Landscape Quality As Background Of Sustainable Tourism Development In Ciezkowicko-Roznowski Landscape Park (Poland)’; yes, it was rather interesting although I believe use of the term bonitation

loses something in translation – it was intended to refer to landscape evaluation. Crossing the globe, Jackie Lei Tin Ong, University of Queensland, presented a captivating paper on the development of Pattaya, Thailand, over time. She said that while “a number of sustainability initiatives have led to improvement of the ‘visual’ environment...the concept of sustainability needs to be expanded beyond visual cleanliness...”.

All in all, something like one hundred and twenty papers were presented. The conference finished with a very full day tour, taking in UNESCO World Heritage Sites Alcobaca Monastery and Obidos walled town, besides Sitio, overlooking Nazare, and the Quinta do Sanguinhal.

Plate 3: The castle at Obidos, late afternoon,
25th November 2011.



Source: Author photo

Conference website (including images from previous years) –

<http://www.citurismo.ipleiria.pt/>