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## Theoretical Advances in Tourism Economics

18–19 March 2005, Evora, Portugal

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Turan, Nadiri and Var, who opened the eleventh parallel session, presented a model for forecasting tourism demand for arrivals for North-Cyprus. Gok and Cakici demonstrated the importance of marketing research for four and five star hotels in Turkey. The twelfth and last session focused on pricing and value. Tasci, Gurbuz and Gartner examined the perceptions of Turkish hotel managers to discriminatory pricing. All agreed that there is a price differentiation between Turkish and Foreign tourists in Turkey. The two other presentations focused on the role of non-monetary costs in a model of leisure travel value (Duman, Kocak and Tutuncu) and on the impact of low cost carriers on tourism (Korul and Battal)

A special session was devoted to a speech by Juergen Gnoth, an associate editor for the *Annals of Tourism Research* on research publication process. Dr. Gnoth elaborated on the need to constantly upgrade the quality of tourism academic journals. It is the responsibility of the editors, reviewers and authors to aspire for higher recognition and positioning of our journals. When writing a paper, "converse" with other scholars who did work in your particular subject. Make sure you respond to issues they dealt with, but left some unanswered questions that require additional elaboration. Given the mounting publication pressure on faculty member, the number of submissions is increasing and more and more is needed for a paper to be successful in the rigorous review process.

A closing dinner was held at the Yucelen Hotel on the Gulf of Akyaka. Some participants had the pleasure of spontaneously joining a pre-wedding ceremony in the village and finally had the opportunity to feel like tourists, after of two days of talking about tourism. On the following day, many participants joined a tour to see local cultural and natural attractions in Dalyan.

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## **Theoretical Advances in Tourism Economics**

*18-19 March 2005, Evora, Portugal*

**METIN KOZAK**  
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The second of the Conference Series: *Advances in Tourism Economics* was held in Portugal, 18-19 March 2005. The conference was hosted by the Department of Economics, University of Evora, the second oldest university of the country. The objective of the conference was identified as to bring together prominent economists and other researchers to debate recent theoretical advances in the emerging field of tourism economics. By focusing on the theme of theoretical advances on tourism economics and management, the conference attendants were provided with the opportunity to gather, analyze and debate state of the art academic research on this recent applied of the economic science.

The conference commenced with an opening session in which both organizers and authorities of the host institution welcomed the participants. Generally

speaking, all speakers focused their attention on the importance of tourism on several cases, e.g. peace, preservation of nature and culture, and understanding of the human nature. The speakers then figured out the historical perspective of the conference venue, Evora, and linking its position to the development of tourism movements within the area. Giving an example from how Adam Smith, a well-known economist, started writing the *Wealth of Nations*, one speaker also emphasized the importance of tourism to stimulate any person to be productive while traveling.

Research papers were presented under a wide variety of themes to cater for delegates with various interests. Conference themes were related to the discussion of such important topics as tourism supply and demand, economic impact analysis of tourism, sustainability, innovation and competitiveness, policies of tourism and development, and consumer behavior. Although the theme of the conference was identified to focus upon primarily on advances in tourism economics, it is surprisingly observed that papers out of the field had also been accepted for presentation. Participants both from the academia and industry in 19 countries were represented in the conference to present a total of 72 papers contributed by over 150 authors / co-authors.

Of the four keynote speakers, Richard Miller, the Executive Vice-President of the WTTC, as the first one, proposed visions in the world tourism and travel industry for the next 10 years. Then, he recommended the authorities and practitioners to refocus their attention of politics on the improvement in information technology, language and service skills to advance the quality of tourism and travel products. He noted that, contrary to growing discussion on the importance of the Tourism Satellite System in the tourism industry and though an intriguing issue, such an analysis was not often possible due to the difficulty of using this system in a destination-based level, given the geographical distribution of places in a country.

Peter Nijkamp, Free University, The Netherlands, spoke about modern tourism referring to such interesting topics as social behavior, new trends in tourism, and social factors underlining factor motivations. He emphasized that 'we have so many fingerprints to justify that tourism is a social market in today's consumer perceptions, e.g. participating in conferences, meetings, trade fairs, having parties together with our relatives / friends, or cultural events or tours.' In a specific reference to 'visiting friends and relatives' type of tourism, he points out that this group of people come from a high-income country with the purpose of experiencing the feeling of socialization and entertainment; thereby, its contribution to an economy is more than that of other types of tourism activities.

Eugeni Aguilo of the University of Balearic Islands, Spain, was the third speaker of the keynote speech series. He began with noting the influence of the cost of products over the choice and preferences of tourist markets and developments in vertical integration resulting with the risk of the oligopoly of tour operators. Then, he spoke about the findings of his research on package holidays operated by four major tour operators controlling 72 percent of this market in the Balearic Islands. According to his research findings, the TUI's strategies deal with offering exclusive market with highest prices while Thomson Holidays offers lower prices. With this finding in mind, the greater is the market power, the greater is the tour operator's ability to fix higher prices.

Finally, Stephen Wanhill, Bournemouth University, UK, delivered his speech on "A Night at the Opera Festival: The Economics of Opera". Given examples of how an opera organization is successfully fulfilled, i.e. the Savonlinna Opera Festival in Finland, Wanhill drew attention to the importance of the cost-benefit analysis of opera festivals and performances, i.e. break-even points, occupancy rates etc. As a suggestion for future similar organizations, what needs to be is to implement effective revenue management strategies to improve the margin of safety, and easier and lower access costs to improve the audience mix.

As the most remarkable part of this event, the tour of Evora will be recalled as the memory of this small but culturally well-preserved town. With this tour, participants experienced the real part of Evora, nominated by UNESCO as the cultural heritage centre in 1987. The inscription criterion on the List of the UNESCO World Heritage (1985) clarifies its identity: "Evora is the finest example of a city of the golden age of Portugal after the destruction of Lisbon by the earthquake of 1755". In this context, Evora would be a very good example of a centre where culture tourism is perfectly developed without giving any damage to its natural and cultural environment. This could be nominated as a partner destination for those who would like to benchmark their regions in this respect.

As to suggestions for the conference organizing committee, one may regard that planning seven parallel sessions in one setting and five paper presentations in one session as the shortcomings of the conference as the one to be carefully considered for improvement in the future similar organizations. This would be what we could recommend the organizing committee to have paid much attention to make this event much more remarkable. Finally, one would also assume that those coming from abroad might have had higher expectations of experiencing more of the local food as well as of the local culture, i.e. serving more national/local food and displaying the national/local music, arts and traditions. Just to make a quick note, the next conference will be hosted by the University of Balearic Islands, Spain, 2006.

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## **BEST Education Network Think Tank V: Managing Risk and Crisis for Sustainable Tourism: Research and Innovation**

*16-19 June 2005, University of the West Indies, Jamaica*

**PETER TARLOW**

Each year an international consortium of scholars, tourism practitioners and educators committed to furthering the development and dissemination of knowledge in the field of sustainable tourism gather to discuss topics in the field of sustainable tourism. This yearly gathering of scholars is known by