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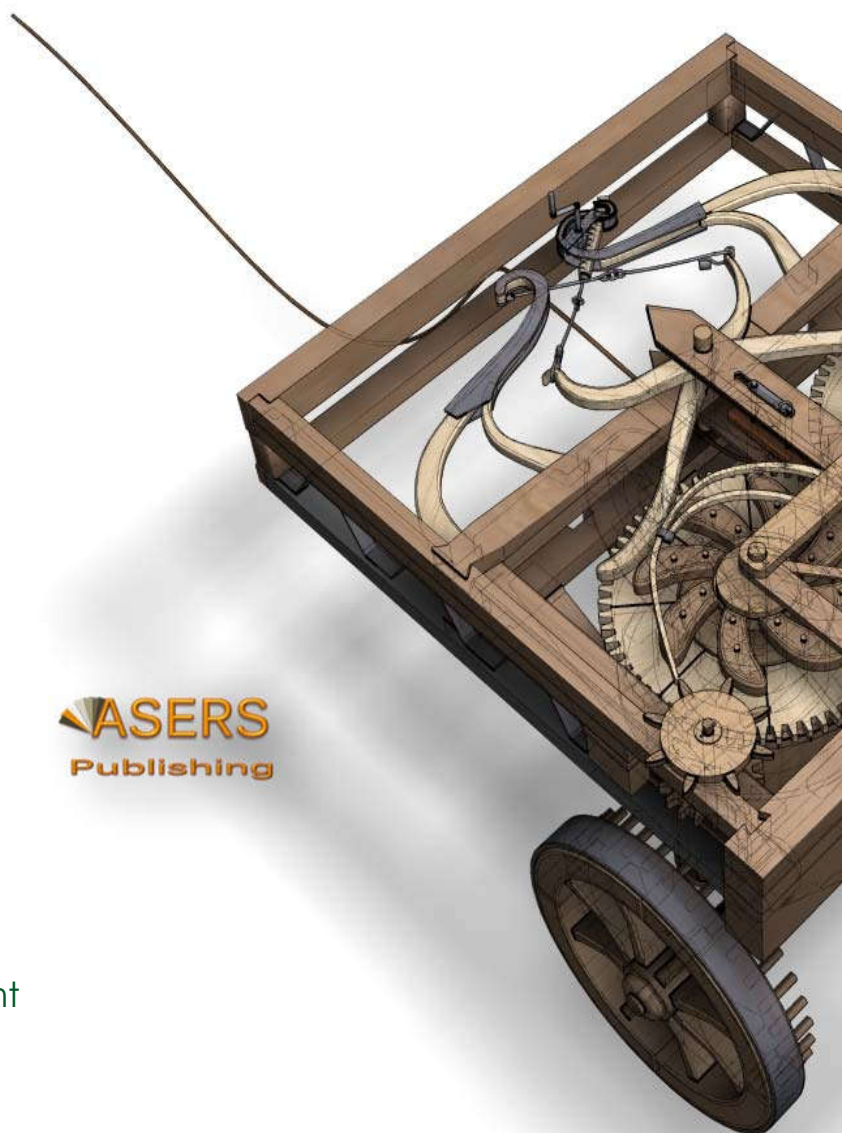
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Contents:

- 1 **Analysis of Tourism in the Slovak Republic in the Period after Accession to the European Monetary Union** 1157
Jana FILARSKÁ, Ivana KRAVČÁKOVÁ VOZÁROVÁ, Rastislav KOTULIČ
- 2 **The Effect of International Tourism on the Development of Global Social-Economic Processes** 1166
Igor Lvovich CHERKASOV, Maria Igorevna SEREDINA, Olga Ivanovna MISHUROV, Tatiana Alekseevna ADASHOVA, Olga Yevgenievna LEBEDEVA
- 3 **Distinction of Jordan as a Destination for Religious Tourism** 1171
Omar A.A. JAWABREH
- 4 **Educational Tourism: Adoption of Art Management Technologies in the Activity of Universities** 1183
Elena F. KOMANDYSHKO, Elena A. SEMENOVA
- 5 **The Influence of Creativity, Price Determination to Publicity and Their Impact to the Purchasing Power of Customers** 1189
Adjeng Mariana FEBRIANTI
- 6 **Methodological Approaches to the Assessment of Historical and Cultural Resources in Tourist Destinations** 1198
Aleksandr Alekseevich FEDULIN, Lyudmila Vladimirovna ZGONNIK, Olga Yevgenievna LEBEDEVA, Liliya Leonidovna DUKHOVNAYA, Sergey Viktorovich ILKEVICH
- 7 **Advantages and Disadvantages of the Participation of SMEs in Tourism Clusters** 1205
Katarina HAVIERNIKOVÁ, Anna LEMAŃSKA-MAJDZIK, Ladislav MURA
- 8 **Valorizing Heritage and Cultural Identity from Land of Barsa through Cultural Tourism** 1216
Sorina BOTIŞ
- 9 **The Relationships Between Financial Policy, Fiscal Policy, Visitor Exports and the Tourism Economy of Thailand** 1222
Sakkarin NONTHAPOT, Porowes SRICHAIO
- 10 **A Model for Mangrove Forest Management Based on Community Empowerment in Bantul Regency** 1232
Tiwuk Kusuma HASTUTI, Umi YULIATI
- 11 **Investigating the Reason why Tourists Revisit Thailand** 1238
Kanokwan CHANCHAROENCHAI, Wuthiya SARAITHONG

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Dan Seligșteanu

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Laura Ungureanu

Spiru Haret University, Romania

- 12 **E-learning System Acceptance Factors for Training: A study of Employees Perception in Tourism Industry** 1250
Leila MORADI, Yazrina YAHYA, Ibrahim MOHAMED, Komeil RAISIAN
- 13 **Strengths Weakness Opportunities and Threats Analysis of Aquatic Tourism in Nigeria** 1259
Ademuyiwa Hafiz OLADELE, Oghenetejiri DIGUN-AWETO
- 14 **Booking Curves as a Instrument of Increasing of Independent Hotel Enterprise Efficiency. Case of Russia** 1268
Leonid A. POPOV, Anton V. ROMANYUK, Ekaterina A. BLINOVA, Roman R. GAREEV
- 15 **The Role of Folk Culture in the Promoting Tourism. A Case of Folklore of Otanaha Fort in Gorontalo Province** 1279
Moh. Karmin BARUADI, Sunarty ERAKU, Syahrizal Koem
- 16 **To Identify the Importance of a Mobile Application for Indonesia's Hidden Beauty** 1284
Jude Joseph Lamung MARTINEZ, Roozbeh Babolian HENDIJANI
- 17 **Comparative Analysis of International and Legal Documents on Tourism and Counteraction to the Threat of International Terrorism** 1290
Boris N. ALEYNIKOV, Railya R. SHAPIROVA, Marsel A. KADYROV, Andrey A. PONOMAREV
- 18 **Criteria and Provisions for Efficient Implementation of Macro-Projects of International Sport Event Tourism** 1307
Inha O. TEMNYK

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Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism is an interdisciplinary research journal, aimed to publish articles and original research papers that should contribute to the development of both experimental and theoretical nature in the field of Environmental Management and Tourism Sciences.

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The Role of Folk Culture in the Promoting Tourism. A Case of Folklore of Otanaha Fort in Gorontalo Province

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Abstract:

Gorontalo City embodies highly valuable tourism potentials to reveal. The city offers not only physical attractions for the tourists to please their eyes but also values of the objects that live along with the highlighted events within the historical timeline. Among the historical objects is Otanaha Fort, a tourist spot in Gorontalo, named after the place's feature of historical legend. Many believe that stories and legends behind the naming of a place or an object are highly related to the socio-cultural life of the ancient society. With that in mind, a study is essential to carry out and to reveal the historical events that lie behind tourism objects with the aims of enriching insights of local people. Such an effort is undertaken as a support of local contents acquisition to be capable of extending the information of a tourism object for the locals. The study aims to carry out the historical overview of Otanaha Fort as a supporting element of cultural tourism in Gorontalo. The researchers employed field survey and interview to obtain the data and folklore analysis to approach the research object. The result shows that the folklore of Otanaha Fort is a manifestation of features of social events of Gorontalo in the ancient times that depict the record of past events. The historical facts are further packaged in the form of imaginative fable for people to enjoy as an act of historical preservation. The evidence of the historical facts is observable by data tracking within the naming process of the objects, site or tombstone of influential figures of the story, preservation of address of traditional titles related to the figures, and distinct building techniques observable in the fort' architecture.

Keywords: culture; folklore; Otanaha; tourism; promoting

JEL Classification: Z32; Z33; Z11

Introduction

Tourism sector contributes 14.13% on the province's Gross Regional Domestic Product in 2011 (Regional Mid-term Development Plan of Gorontalo Province 2012-2017 2011). Gorontalo City is full of hidden tourism gems to be brought to the surface. The potencies of tourism income in Gorontalo can be classified into natural tourism, historical tourism, marine tourism, cultural tourism, and religious tourism; all integrate into a form of tourism area, if managed properly, it acts as a support in terms of empowering local people as key actors in the tourism business. The idea of expanding tourism potential is supported by Gorontalo government, one of which is by participating in domestic and international tourism promotion events. However, the result is far from optimal, due to lack of

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