

## TOURING THE ATLAS. ANTHROPOLOGICAL CASE STUDY IN THE MOUNTAINS OF MOROCCO.

Michaela Konopikova  
Institute of Ethnology, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

### Abstract

*The article deals with a phenomenon of tourism from a perspective of cultural anthropology. It aims to introduce the basic approaches and key figures of the field, who contributed to the wider recognition of anthropology of tourism. The subject of the study is a theoretic and empirical analysis of anthropology of tourism, which is interpreted on the basis of the data obtained in Morocco. The researcher gathered information, which allow her for an interpretation of the coping mechanisms engaged by the local population.*

**Keywords:** Anthropology of Tourism; Culture; Morocco

Introduction: The study draws from anthropology of tourism, which represents a dynamic and expanding trend in contemporary social and cultural anthropology. The author follows two main objectives: 1) outline the main concepts and theoretical approaches of anthropology of tourism; 2) describe and analyze tourism industry in a locality, where the researcher has conducted her field research – the High Atlas Mountains in Morocco. The community members are getting involved in tourism industry in order to improve their income. The fieldwork conducted in the locality throws some light to the processes present in the tourism industry, and investigates their impact on the society located in a developing country. These findings may be applicable to the practices emerging from contact between tourists and locals in similar settings.

**Body of paper:** The theoretic part of the study summarizes the contemporary state of anthropology of tourism with a special emphasis placed on the key concepts and its representatives. In this part I noted four main theoretic approaches to tourism:

- Tourism as a ritual of transition
- Tourism as a form of superstructure
- Tourism as a form of acculturation
- Tourism as a mode of postcolonial behaviour

The second part of the study comprises of an analysis of the tourism industry in Morocco. This chapter aims to describe the mountain's main tourist attractions, and also strategies the local populations developed to provide service to the incoming tourists.

The High Atlas Mountains and J'Bel Toubkal National Park in particular is a target of the mountain tourism, which entails mountaineering services provided by local young men working as trekking guides and muleteers. The tourism industry in High Atlas is more determined by the environmental conditions, which shape the whole sector.

#### **Conclusion:**

To sum up, the locals strive to get engaged in the tourism industry by the means of developing and improving the tourism infrastructure to make it an appealing destination, which is worth visiting.

**Table 1**

Theoretical approach	Field of study
Tourism as a ritual of transition	Trekking in the mountains, Climbing Jbel Toubkal
Tourism as a form of superstructure	
Tourism as a form of acculturation	Homestays
Tourism as a mode of postcolonial behaviour	Package holidays

**Biography: Michaela Konopíková** (born 17<sup>th</sup> November 1984), cultural anthropologist. She is a PhD. candidate at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. Her dissertation thesis deals with anthropology of tourism, globalization and transnational processes in the countries of Global South. In 2009, 2011, 2012 and 2014 she carried out a field research among the Berber tribes in the central part of High Atlas Mountains in Morocco.

#### References:

- Appadurai, Arjun (1991): *Global ethnoscaples: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology*. P. 191 – 210 in *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, ed. Richard G. Fox Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Botton, Alain de (2010): *The Art of Travel*. London: Vintage.
- Brunner, Edward (2005): *Culture on Tour. Ethnographies of Travel*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Chambers, Erve (2010): *Native Tours. The Anthropology of Travel and Tourism*. USA: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Dann, G. M. S. (1998) *The Dark Side of Tourism*. Etudes et Rapports Centre International de Recherches et d'Etudes Touristiques, Aix-en-Provence, serie L, 14, 1–31.
- Lanfant, Marie-Francoise (1989): "International Tourism Resists the Crisis." In: *Leisure and Miller, Andrew* (1984): *Imlil. A Moroccan Mountain Community in Change*. USA: Westview Press.
- Nash, Dennison (1996): *Anthropology of tourism*. Oxford: Elsevier Science Ltd.
- Norberg – Hodge, Helena (1991): *Ancient Futures. Learning from Ladakh*. USA: Sierra Club Books, 1991.
- Smith, Valene (1977/1989): *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, 2nd ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Turner, Victor (1977): *The Ritual Process*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Wang, Ning (2000): *Tourism and modernity. A sociological analysis*. Oxford: Elsevier Science Ltd.