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Oskar Lubiński
oskar.lubinski@us.edu.pl
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9195-4971
Institute of Culture Studies
Faculty of Arts and Educational Science
University of Silesia in Katowice

Cuban community projects and the entangled webs of economies of affect

Projekty rozwojowe na Kubie i splątane sieci ekonomii afektu

This article explores the significance of affective relationships developed between tourists and community projects in Cuba which become a strategy for fostering community development. I employ the notion of the economies of affect, according to which affect is an essential medium through which subjects form emotional ties that translate into economic resources (Richard, Rudnyckyj 2009). Building upon this argument, I demonstrate how the economies of affect result in the interplay between attachment, friendliness and implied expectations between hosts and guests. Moreover, the economies of affect play a significant role in engaging the community to participate in the project activities and establishing a meaningful cooperation between different actors in the neighbourhood.

Bloch's metaphor of tourists as "intimate strangers" (Bloch 2018) will allow me to build up on this argument and add to it the dimension of the rising popularity of experiential tourism expressed through the desire to form meaningful relations with the host communities and minimise the negative impacts of the industry (Salazar 2011). Tourists who engage with the local communities through volunteer work, political engagement and affective relations are essential in developing support networks in the pursuit of locally defined political goals. An approach toward the possibilities that open

through such engagements allows for avoiding the usual reduction of host communities as victims of the global flows of capital and exoticising narratives behind tourism (Bloch 2018). As I will argue, project leaders facilitate affective relationships between the tourists and local communities, so that these ties can mobilise other resources for community development. In the first part of the article, I demonstrate how giving the tourists an opportunity to experience the life of local communities and interact with their members becomes a primary strategy for the promotion of community projects. In the second part, I focus on the expected and actual impact of these relationships on the community, as well as the involvement of different actors in the economies of affects that go beyond host–guests relationships.

This article is based on twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2018 and 2023, centred around community projects in the marginalised areas of Havana. I focused primarily on Proyecto Comunitario Akokán los Pocitos,[1] headed by Michael and later Deborah, in Marianao district, and Proyecto Comunitario Familiar Vida in the Los Pinos district; both of them were experiencing growth and rising popularity while searching for ways to capitalise on their success. The period between 2018 and 2020 was pivotal for the community projects, as with their growing international renown and popularity, many started networking to cooperate on a bigger scale. Collaboration with the community projects formed an essential part of my research; I supported them in different initiatives, provided workshops and English classes etc. My position as a foreigner was seen as an opportunity to further promote the projects among tourists and consult certain ideas so as to ensure that the coming visitors responded well to them. I could experience the ways in which projects functioned both from the position of an outsider and as a person involved in them, developing affective ties with the communities on my own and trying to channel these emotions into productive work for the benefit of my research partners.

Tourism in Cuba – beyond necessary evil

As a tourist destination, Cuba combines the exotic appeal of the Caribbean climate and nature with a colonial and African heritage and the socialist nostalgia. All these elements have been reflected both in the state campaigns and in the offer of the private sector. Souvenirs, cultural programmes, restaurants and tours in American cars refer to the lush bourgeois culture before the revolution, while at the same time employing the global image of Ernesto Che Guevara and socialism (Babb 2011). Romanticised images

1 *Akokán* means "heart" in the Yoruba language. With the consent of my research partners I did not anonymise the names of the project leaders and the projects themselves. While the article provides theoretical and practical implications for tourism, I also intend to bring more visibility to the projects with it and hopefully encourage other visitors to learn from and provide assistance to these communities.

of Cubans, or the Caribbean and Latin American peoples in general, as warm, friendly and kind towards everyone become a starting point for engaging with local communities. The tourists' perceptions of Caribbean nations as hospitable, carefree and warm are reproduced in official state campaigns putting individuals in a position of "ambassadors of goodwill" (Scher 2011) for maintaining this reputation. All in all, what many tourists are on the lookout for is an "authentic" and genuine experience of mixing and having fun with Cubans, especially in places "off the beaten path", "unspoilt" by tourism.

Tourism in Cuba has been framed primarily as a "necessary evil", a temporary solution introduced during the profound economic crisis of the 1990s in order to recover the Cuban economy. Over the years, it has become a primary sector of the economy and a success story despite many of the ills that it brought, such as the treatment of Cubans as second-class citizens and policing them in tourists spaces (Alcázar Campos 2010), rampant rise of inequalities, as well as racial discrimination (de la Fuente 2001; Roland 2011). As much as Cuba is defined by all its attractions, it is also very much perceived through the lens of poverty and lack of access to a variety of everyday products. Tour guides and blogs seldom fail to suggest bringing sweets, hygiene products and other goods to be given away on the streets.

The "gifts" brought by tourists are inserted into networks of exchange created along the affective ties between tourists and Cubans. Ogden (2015) sees such exchanges as the manifestations of affective capital, expressions of care and tacit forms of establishing relations between hotel staff, guides, hosts of B&Bs and their guests. Many tourists actively engage in such interactions with Cubans, content with becoming an adoptive member of the family and sharing their time with their hosts. Economies of affect allow transforming the affective capital into money and other products that serve as tokens of the affect shared between foreign visitors and local communities. Ana Alcázar Campos (2011) exhaustively analyses host–guests relationships in different social settings where the tourist is both holding a dominant position and provides economic opportunities while also being seen as a threat to ideological purity. Valerio Simoni (2016) considers the issues arising from friendship between Cubans and tourists, such as the ways in which income inequalities produce necessities to redefine relationships on different levels. However, all of the above analyses focus primarily on tourism as such, rather than from the standpoint of community leaders employing tourism as a resource.

Tourism in the service of the community

One of the most important aspects of promoting community projects among foreign visitors (tourists, exchange students, researchers and others) was offering them an opportunity to get to personally know the project. Certain projects invited the visitors

to sit down in a bar, eat lunch or buy some of the products on sale, usually handmade souvenirs; others provided group visits to the project area. Sometimes either a government-owned tour agency or a university contacted the project leaders to schedule a group tour, in other cases tours were organised by the project leaders. In the first case, tour participants usually came from groups of exchange students or groups undertaking a specialised trip. Agency tours bore no remuneration, but the visiting groups brought some gifts. Tours organised by the project leaders themselves were paid for and usually brought groups that came on earlier recommendations. In most cases, such tours involved a walk around the neighbourhood, presenting its history, discussing the issues faced by the community and showcasing grassroots solutions, such as community gardens or communal spaces – temples, leisure areas, or even a community-built gym. As a rule, community leaders took the role of guides but involved other community members to present the spaces to which they tended.

Community projects attracted a specific type of tourism, mostly coming from academic backgrounds or groups with specific interests, such as NGOs or less formal groups interested in environmental or educational projects. Individual tourists interested in supporting the local communities could also visit the projects, but they were fewer than organised groups and in most cases they had already had a tour experience and wanted to volunteer for the project.

During one of such tours organised by Proyecto Akokán, a woman came out of a shack on the river bank asking what gifts the visitors brought her. She criticised the group for entertaining themselves with the poverty of the Cubans without helping anyone. The whole situation seemed uncomfortable both for the group and for Michael who guided it, so after a short exchange we left. Sometime later, in a conversation I had with Michael, he explained that the woman came from a neighbouring community outside of the project area, so she was not aware of the long-term benefits brought by the tourist presence. In his view, the tours were not aimed at exposing poverty in itself, and instead focused on the community resilience and its cultural richness.

Poverty tourism in recent years has become popular across the Global South countries, especially in informal settlements across different continents. Recent scholarship shows marginalised communities engaging with poverty tours on their own terms and using them as a platform to vocalise their needs and express themselves (Gutowska 2015). Volunteer tourism that combined holidays with voluntary work has received much criticism for naturalising structural differences between the Global North and South and equalising depoliticised acts of charity with community development and political engagement (Butcher, Smith 2010). However, volunteering was shown to facilitate the unmediated experience of relating to the community and creating intimate ties with its members (Conran 2011).

Fig. 1. Tourists visiting one of the community gardens of Proyecto Vida. Photo by O. Lubiński (2020).

Pro-poor tourism (Hall 2007) and the development of alternative forms of tourism aimed at directly benefitting communities rather than assuming the trickle-down effect of big investments has attracted significant attention in scholarship with serious consideration of attempts at achieving equitable growth and the controversies related to the issues of the commodification of culture etc. (Pradhan 2024; Ristiawan, Tiberghien 2021). In Cuba, the efforts to combine tourism and community development were primarily noticeable in Habana Vieja, where the profits from tourist venues led by Oficina de Historiador de la Ciudad[2] were partially dedicated to community development initiatives (Bowman 2015). Community projects apply similar strategies. They do not focus on one specific type of tourism (pro-poor, community or volunteer) and instead position tourists as potential allies who can support their projects through various means according to their interests and possibilities; in this way the tourists become intimate strangers (Bloch 2018).

During the tours, Michael always juxtaposed the local community's poverty and marginality with its cultural diversity and resilience. He made an effort to show the vernacular cultural expressions and creativity displayed in the way the informal settlement adapted to the scarcity of space and preserved the cultural and religious traditions

2 The Office of City Historian, which was responsible for the renovation of Old Havana and developing tourism infrastructure in the historical area.

of its inhabitants. The tours would also involve other community members – visitors stopped at local businesses or Afro-Cuban temples where their priests explained the significance of the buildings and belief systems, and they could even attend percussion classes with the local drum bands. At some point, Michael proposed that Martin, an Abakua[3] priest, could wholly take over the Afro-Cuban heritage as a guide, without Michael's involvement. Tours were not only supposed to finance the project; they were meant to serve as an opportunity for additional income for the community members and a way to create a bond between community members and tourists.

Michael envisioned the process of developing a reciprocal network of exchanges not only outside the community but also inside it – he assumed that seeing money coming from the tours, the local business owners and other community members would contribute a part of their profits to the functioning of the project. However, not all of them were interested in supporting the project. On numerous occasions, Michael felt that people abused his trust by asking for favours or money without doing the tasks they agreed to or came to the tour activities drunk. All this led him to focus his efforts primarily on working with those on whom he could rely. Part of the money was donated to an Abakua priest who collaborated with the project so that his wife could run a small café from their house, thus establishing a business with close ties to the project, one that was based on trust. The affective capital reflected in the feeling of trust established through a long-lasting relationship, therefore, played a crucial role in providing economic support and developing ties between local community members, including those with businesses and Proyecto Akokán.

Enamouring the tourists

According to Spencer (2010: 166), NGO-led tours to Cuba offered a "more nuanced understanding of Cuba and development" than traditional tourism despite the short duration of such trips. Showcasing the impact of community resilience and its connection to the survival strategies of Cubans presented a different view of Cuban socialism. Such tours aimed at forming more lasting relationships between Australian and Cuban organisations to provide funding for Cuban initiatives. However, in order to develop affective ties between the foreign visitors and the community project the tours needed to be accompanied by other strategies. For many of the visitors relationships with community members were an essential part of their experience (Rausenberger 2017).

3 Abakua is a syncretic Afro-Cuban religion with Nigerian roots that is exclusively male and structured as a secret society. It is popular in the area of Los Pocitos and plays a significant role in the community.

An opportunity for developing such ties presented itself partly due to logistics. Groups usually wanted to eat something after the tour, so Michael would bring them to a local diner. However, he and Deborah were not happy with the food quality or the diversity in the menu. When the restaurant closed for the holidays, Deborah decided to open Café Oddara[4] in their family home. The business focused on the tour groups. Aware of the needs of the tourists, Deborah decided not to simply offer meals but an entire culinary *experiencia solidaria* – a solidary experience. It combined the opportunity to immerse oneself in Cuban cuisine with supporting a community project. The informal setting of the café in the small living room of the house only added to the appeal and created an "authentic" vibe. As Deborah herself explained:

> People liked our offer because it was something informal and we maintain a buffet table with different types of plates, respecting different tastes, the variety of tastes and of people who are vegan, vegetarian, have gluten or nut allergies. We respect that. Learning all of this, we also got to the point of preparing dishes [that are] very healthy and very colourful at the same time, because we really like aesthetic dishes. That when you see them, they make you fall in love with them and invite you to eat [from the interview with Michael i Deborah, December 6, 2018].

In general, prior to the tour, Michael would present the restaurant's offer and inquire about dietary preferences and allergies. The menu itself stood out from a typical restaurant, as Deborah made use of less popular recipes from the Afro-Cuban cuisine as a way of maintaining or recovering lost culinary traditions. She used locally sourced fruit and vegetables, mixing colours and textures to create unique and aesthetically pleasing compositions. Each meal was accompanied by an explanation of its ingredients as well as a comment on where they were sourced. This approach is in keeping with the observation that tasting local cuisines and exploring the culinary heritage of different cultures is essential to the pursuit of experiencing life "like a local" (see Wieczorkiewicz 2012).

The setting enhanced the communal aspect of a colourful meal shared in the presence of community members – a family home where the guests would sit on benches or simply on the floor, or circle from the kitchen to the living room. They could see the cooking process and discuss each meal with the chef. All this contributed to the feeling of cosiness and attractiveness. Deborah often emphasised that this informal character of meals made a very positive impact on the customers because they felt at home, in a family.

4 *Oddara* means "alright" in the Yoruba language. It references the Proyecto Akokán motto: "Cuando actuas de Akokán, todo es Oddara" (When you act from the heart, everything will be alright).

All in all, the success of Café Oddara was ensured thanks to responding to the tourist imaginaries, such as informal, communal spaces or colourful dishes. The culinary experience catered to what Tom Selwyn (1996) defined as "hot authenticity", which emphasises emotional connections with host communities rather than the cool authenticity centred around facts, knowledge etc. Tastes, smells, sounds and touch in combination with engaging in relations with the locals contribute to creating unique experiences (Wieczorkiewicz 2012).

Leaving a mark on the neighbourhood – projecting an image of the community

Attracting tourists and foreign visitors through tours arranged by Proyecto Akokán served to develop a system for voluntary work. Michael prioritised what he called academic tourism, that is student groups, usually accompanied by professors, both from Cuba and abroad. He believed that this kind of tourism was more likely to attract potential volunteers and limited the potential negative impact of tourism on the community. He did try to expand and offer Airbnb experiences – specialised tours offered by the Airbnb service – but without much success.

Volunteering served as a form of gatekeeping and testing the intentions of different visitors: it was supposed to help them establish themselves in the communities and provide something in return. When I expressed interest in conducting research to prepare my thesis, both Michael and Natalia expected me to support their projects. Michael invited me to do workshops on Polish culture for children, but we finally agreed on English classes. I offered the same kind of classes for Natalia, but she also saw me as someone able to provide an assessment for the project activities and provide them with an outside perspective. The presence of students and other visitors was envisioned as a reciprocal exchange so as to ensure mutual benefits.

Volunteering was accessible to both local and international students. Cuban university students could obtain the obligatory academic credit through community work. On top of that, the project offered scholarships for those who focused their thesis on Proyecto Akokán or the los Pocitos community. Once again, this strategy involved helping students develop a more lasting relationship with the project and letting them get to know the neighbourhood better. Such help, however, needed to be meaningful and beneficial for the project, so Michael and other people involved in the project strove to define their needs and frame what the possible help could consist of. One student, during the work on her thesis, took on the responsibility of maintaining the project's social media.

The idea to focus on academic groups came from when Michael brought groups of students interested in archaeology from international courses to the neighbourhood

and was inspired to start the community project. He used his position in the academic circles to pursue agreements with agencies for international tourism and student exchange and bring students to the area and operate formally as volunteers. This work would usually consist of simple activities such as conducting workshops for school children under the supervision of school and project employees or working the land at permaculture plots. Similarly to guided tours, however, the system for voluntary work was challenging when it came to its outcomes. Although Michael preferred a long-term stay and involvement, certain groups would only come and work with the community for one afternoon. Sometimes, however, they would arrive unprepared and with little idea of what to do, leaving project members disappointed and demanding such visits to be better organised in the future. Nonetheless, even the slight possibility of receiving repeated visits and longer involvement motivated allowing for one-time activities.

Fig. 2. Volunteers working with children in *aula comunitaria*. Photo by O. Lubiński (2019).

Changing the attitudes of the community

Through engaging community members and showing the benefits to the community, Michael and Deborah envisioned a change in the attitudes of locals. Michael was convinced that the more the project mediated between tourists and the community, the more its attitude changed:

> One day when I entered, they told me: "Hey, don't bring tourists, better bring some concrete to build with". I don't know, someone asked for money from *yumas*.[5] "Ay *yuma* give me money, a photo, one dollar, whatever". This does not happen anymore. It doesn't. Now people don't tell me to bring cement nor ask for money. Maybe sometimes, but it's not regular. It's like that community changed from the mentality of asking for money to the mentality "these people are helping us". Because there's a Project that gives classes to children, you understand. And we will help them. Look, these tours are beneficial to us, let's not make them feel bad, you understand. It's not like Habana Vieja where you walk three blocks, and someone says "Hey can you give me three dollars". I don't know. You walk there and this doesn't happen or at least is not that common [from the interview with Michael i Deborah, December 6, 2018].

This change in the attitude of the community members was framed as taking responsibility for the well-being of the visitors and achieving more long-term goals and benefits for the entire community in lieu of occasional personal gains. Community members were seen as recognising their responsibility for receiving the tourists well, so that more of them could come. This approach aimed at changing people's mentalities in order to promote a different approach towards tourism, the economy, and the general environment. Community projects promoted a certain perception of marginalised neighbourhoods that would allow them to continue working and gather support from a variety of sources: tourists and local or international institutions. In this process, they also sought for the local communities to recognise that the projects benefited the community and reinforce the narrative presented by the project. Open approach and friendliness towards tourists were supposed to guarantee better returns in the long run.

The presence of foreigners may have impacted certain behaviours, but not always as expected. At some point, I noticed that even though my research partners felt relaxed when I visited them in the informal settlement, sometimes they would joke among themselves that they should behave better in front of a foreigner. During one of the local religious celebrations, the host of the house at first wanted me to go away and started asking who I was, distrustful of an unfamiliar face, so people who brought me to the place needed to calm him down. The presence of foreigners can also be met with distrust, especially in the cases when strangers enter private spaces without permission. Although certain community members were happy to embrace tourists' presence, others saw it as an intrusion.

The indirect questions for sharing or giving something to someone occurred more frequently – while nobody in the neighbourhood ever asked me specifically for money, I was approached by several people to pass them some credit on the phone or bring certain products. Also, having learnt of somebody's problems or personal

5 *Yuma* is a despective word that refers to a foreign tourist, usually from the USA, but not exclusively.

tastes, I shared medicines and other gifts such as sweets out of my own accord. The prolonged presence of volunteers or researchers inevitably leads to the development of relations where both sides have uneven access to goods and money, raising the question of how these relations can be engaged from a moral standpoint (Simoni 2016). After all, as much as the project was developing an affective capital with the tourists, other community members were developing relationships as well and negotiating their positions. At the same time, the people who would ask me for some material help would also welcome me into their house, offering lunch or at least some coffee. More than adjusting to the attitudes promoted or believed to be promoted by the project, community members were defining relations with the foreigners on their own terms, developing connections independently from the project; connections that responded to their needs and imaginaries. While Proyecto Akokán facilitated such contacts, it neither had control over them nor shaped the behaviours of the individuals who engaged in them.

Construction of the community centre

Creating meaningful relationships with foreign visitors can open up new opportunities for the projects, sometimes even granting them access to external funding and means to internationalise their work. However, even such attainments come with their own challenges that can affect community relationships and require project leaders to employ their relationships with different actors before achieving success. This final section presents the story of constructing the community centre for the Proyecto Akokán.

Fig. 3. Murals prepared in cooperation with volunteers were supposed to inspire better contact with the community and make its members appreciate their surroundings. Photo by O. Lubiński (2019).

Behara, one of the students who stayed in Cuba for a part of her senior year at university, quickly became an important figure for Proyecto Akokán. After meeting Michael, she was immediately interested in the project and chose the neighbourhood to prepare her graduate thesis. After finishing her studies, she wanted to return to Havana. She managed to secure a 10,000 USD grant from a US NGO providing funding for undergraduate students for community-centred initiatives. The initial plan was to build a community centre for the project on a piece of land granted by the municipality.

The construction of the centre proved impossible due to a variety of reasons that stemmed from the constraints of funding and the difficulties faced in Cuba. The project needed to be carried out in the summer of 2018, but the difficulties in obtaining construction materials and necessary permits delayed all the works. During my initial stay in April 2018, Michael was preparing for Behara's return and trying to secure a building permit from the municipality, which proved impossible on the basis of its lack of inclusion in the yearly construction plan. At the time Michael was constantly looking for solutions, considering even the sale of his house in exchange for a bigger one closer to the informal settlement with enough land to construct the community centre.

Upon arriving in Havana in November 2018, I learnt that these initial plans had failed. Michael and Behara adapted the budget to spend it on a variety of smaller actions across the neighbourhood. They managed to repaint and furnish the local health centre and clean up one of the garbage dumps in the area. Their main success was repurposing an unused room in the stadium into *aula comunitaria* and the seat of the project. The room was granted thanks to the good relations with the local representative of Cuba's legislative body, Poder Popular, who supported the project and used his influence to provide them support. The funding allowed for its renovation, providing access to electricity, adding windows and building a special workshop table. These works were accompanied by different events such as workshops for children and a festival in the informal settlement.

Not all was a success. A year after the project Michael complained that some of the money could have been handled better. In his view, some of the contractors abused Behara and demanded more money than initially agreed, which even led to conflicts. At the same time, because they were not able to secure the community space with a fence (also due to the lack of building materials and necessary permits) some of the plants planted for the community garden were stolen, and the huge table for workshops had to be stored in the nearby Abakua temple, with whose priest the project closely collaborated, for the time being as it did not fit in the *aula comunitaria* nor could have been left without supervision anywhere else.

All in all, the grant allowed for creating the seat of the project and establishing its presence in the neighbourhood. Through a variety of workshops that accompanied the works, connections with local authorities who wanted to support the project were

established; thus the unused spaces could be adapted for the community project and have remained in use ever since. However, the entire initiative was not without its failings, many of which stemmed from the inadaptability of certain constraints of the funding to the local context – the short period for utilising the budget made it difficult to obtain building materials, let alone documents necessary to carry out such a construction.

Nonetheless, Behara remained a close supporter of the project even after the conclusion of the grant and came back to Havana to live there. Although being able to access this type of funding was something that Michael sought actively and hoped for by forging lasting relations with graduate students from abroad, forms of help that most of the volunteers carried out in the area were on a smaller scale. The funding opportunities offered to students made it all the more worthwhile.

Conclusions

Affect in a variety of forms – care, love and sometimes contempt – becomes a valuable resource for the development of the relations between community projects and foreign visitors. These "intimate strangers" (Bloch 2018) can bring empowerment both to the community projects and community members in a variety of ways. Not only can they bring material and financial contributions to the projects, but their connections also allow them to access international funding that would otherwise be unavailable. Being able to work alongside Cubans and develop close relationships is essential for these experiences (Rausenberger 2017) and allows for the development of more intimate connections between tourists and local communities. Thanks to these connections, some of the visitors will seek venues for providing community support outside of their short stay or even get involved directly.

However, these relationships come with a set of expectations. Tourists visiting the projects carry the potential to become enamoured with and support it. As such, people involved in the project invest considerable energy into each visit even though not all of them bring effects. Sometimes the visitors, even when it is agreed they will do some work to support the project, treat the visit as another stop on their journey without much thought or effort put into it. Those who actually stay to become long-term volunteers or support the project in other ways are few and far between, but they can still have a significant impact thanks to the opportunities they have.

The effects tourism has on such communities rarely correspond with what is initially planned or envisioned by any of the social actors. Community projects, while essential to bringing tourism to marginalised areas, do not have exclusive control over the attitudes of the community and the way its members connect with the visitors. Community projects create their narratives and mediate relationships between the community and its guests but community members shape them in their own ways and according

to their own needs. At the same time, as demonstrated by the US trade embargo and other policies that reduced the number of foreign visitors to Cuba – and the situation only got worse during the COVID-19 pandemic – the economy based on tourism raises inevitable questions about whether such strategies are viable in the long run.

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Summary

This article explores the significance of tourism for community projects and its effects on marginalised communities. It considers how developing affective relationships between tourists and community members becomes an essential resource for community development and for carrying out various initiatives. I analyse the strategies employed by the community projects to develop such close relationships and feelings of intimacy between their visitors and community members. Although these activities tend to bring positive effects, the emotions and affects are intertwined with tacit expectations that may remain unfulfilled and lead to disappointment or even conflicts. I also point out that even though leaders of the community projects facilitate the affective relationships between local communities and visiting tourists, they are unable to control these relationships as they develop, since they do it according to their own rules. Moreover, the economies of affect are not limited to tourist–community projects, but are entangled in complex networks in which different social actors are involved, including community members and local authorities. The article is based on twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2018 and 2023 centred around community projects in the marginalised areas of Havana.

Keywords: Cuba, community projects, affective economies, tourism

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł podejmuje temat znaczenia turystyki dla projektów rozwojowych i wpływu tejże na społeczności zmarginalizowane. Tekst prezentuje w jaki sposób budowanie afektywnych relacji pomiędzy turystami a członkami społeczności lokalnych staje się kluczowym zasobem dla rozwoju społeczności i organizacji różnych inicjatyw. W analizie skupiam się na różnorodnych strategiach stosowanych przez projekt, nakierowanych na budowanie wzajemnego zaufania i poczucia bliskości pomiędzy turystami a społecznością. Choć działania te mogą generować pozytywne efekty, to często emocje i afekt wiążą się z oczekiwaniami, które na ogół nie są dopowiedziane, a ostatecznie mogą pozostać niespełnione. Materiał wskazuje, że relacje tego typu, choć mogą być mediowane przez liderów projektów rozwojowych, to wymykają się próbom kontroli z ich strony i rządzą własnymi prawami. Ponadto ekonomie afektu nie ograniczają się wyłącznie do relacji turyści – projekty rozwojowe, a raczej stanowią część rozległych sieci zależności pomiędzy liderami projektów, lokalną społecznością, przedstawicielami władz i innymi aktorami społecznymi. Artykuł oparty jest na materiale etnograficznym zebranym podczas dwunastu miesięcy pracy terenowej w latach 2018–2023, skupionej na projektach rozwojowych w zmarginalizowanych dzielnicach Hawany.

Słowa kluczowe: Kuba, projekty rozwojowe, ekonomie afektywne, turystyka

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