

The Challenges for Responsible Recreation in the Protected Area of Triglav National Park: The Case of Mountain Bikers

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Triglav National Park is the largest protected area in Slovenia that is established for the conservation of an area's natural and cultural heritage. However, it is also destined for recreation that is subject to specific regulations in order to respect certain environmental guidelines. This ethnographic paper discusses strategies mountain bikers employ to negotiate the existing rules regarding the recreational use of the park's lands; in addition, the authors propose solutions to diminish their demands with the aim of ensuring quiet space for the park's wildlife.

Keywords: recreation management, recreation conflict, mountain biking, masculine heroism, wild animals, zoning of protected areas, Triglav National Park

Introduction

I, for instance, go to Rdeči Rob mountain [...] and in the sign-in book at Rdeči Rob you see that you were the first visitor at Rdeči Rob in fifteen days. At the moment, when you sit there on Rdeči Rob, the paraglider flies by twenty, thirty metres above you, and [...] at that moment you'll hear the great whistling of marmots because everything disappears in a moment [...]; one will whistle and the valley empties in a moment, the chamois will leave, everything withdraws, and simply, if anybody says this is not harmful, that is total nonsense for me.

This is a statement from an interview with a ranger in Triglav National Park (TNP).

Another ranger asserts:

Yes, disturbances certainly don't bring anything good for animal, because animals need, for

example, in the summer, autumn months, as much peace as possible to gather enough energy to survive through the winter, and if this is not the case, of course then there are problems. [...] Even in winter months [...], backcountry skiing which is also on the rise [...], then it is worse. Animals should use minimal energy in the winter months. And now, if they need to continually move away and run away from people [...] For instance, there are distinct areas where dwarf pine grows over the summer, there is forest that is impassable, but in the winter months, when all this is covered with snow, it is over-run [with skiers].

Regardless of the clear and sharp opposition between human and animal that is present in rangers' discourse, this ethnographic paper will not build on the wide range of anthropological inquiry concerning the conceptualisation of nature in human societies,

nor will it focus on nature/culture or animal/human dualisms (Descola, 1996; Guille-Escuret, 1998; Rappaport, 1979; Škedelj Renčelj, 2010). We are also leaving questions about animal behaviour aside, or (to put it in other words), we simply take rangers and environmentalists at their word (Kopnina, 2012) that animals need space and peace. We will instead present our observations concerning outdoor recreation in Triglav National Park (TNP) in the case of mountain biking and question its management by rangers and park officials.

Although there are numerous studies on management strategies for solving potential conflicts between different social groups in natural environments and for improving user experiences (for the case of the relationship between mountain bikers and hikers, also discussed in this article, Watson, Williams & Daigle, 1991; Chavez, Winter & Baas, 1993; Horn, 1994; Moore, 1994; Cessford, 1995; Ramthun, 1995; Hoger & Chavez, 1998; Carothers, Vaske, & Donnelly, 2001; Chiu & Kriwoken, 2003; Cessford, 2003; Tumes, 2007; Mann & Absher, 2008; Walker & Shafer, 2011; Wang & Chang, 2012), qualitative research of recreational groups' strategies for appropriating such environments is rare.

This paper, based on the on-going research on actors and conflicts in the TNP,¹ will present qualitative insights into mountain bikers' strategies for coping with the regulations within this particular protected area. Mountain bikers, driven by what we will term a 'heroism discourse' in the context of which they perform daring actions, will probably not stop appropriating the park's space. However, possible solutions may exist to neutralise the arguments they employ to use the park's lands in this manner, thus ensuring quiet space for the park's wildlife.

Methodology

In our study of the recreational activities being carried out in the park, we employed the ethnographic method (mainly semi-structured interviews and di-

rect observations of events) and carried out a discourse analysis of existing texts published about mountain biking in the TNP. Ethnographic fieldwork was carried out between July 2012 and April 2013. To gain insight into management issues regarding recreation and wildlife in the park, we have interviewed six of the existing twenty TNP rangers as well as five other TNP officials. We made thorough literal transcriptions in order to better understand interviewees' attitudes and emotions regarding recreation in protected areas, which enables citing the exact words they employ to directly convey their way of thinking and feeling. Consequently, we decided to essentially rely on their observations, because they are in regular contact with the territory, its wildlife, and visitors.

To understand mountain bikers' perspectives and ascertain their strategies, we first asked a ranger to help us analyse the tourist guides that are published by a specialised Slovenian publishing house, and which do not consider restrictions the TNP imposes on mountain biking within the park. The analysis of mountain bikers' positions, opinions and attitudes towards the regulations was made on the basis of their statements in mass media and diverse texts they have produced. We have also interviewed two representatives of the Commission for Backcountry Biking at the Slovenian Mountaineering Association and have carried out informal conversations with mountain bikers active in the vicinity of the park.

Lastly, with the aim of identifying the mechanisms of direct negotiations employed by sport groups and the TNP, we have attended three workshops with representatives of different recreational activities organised by the TNP during the preparation of the TNP management plan (*Načrt upravljanja*, 2012). Observing the attitudes and behaviour of all parties involved in the debates provided valuable insights into the relations not only among the TNP management personnel and sport groups, but also among different sport groups, which are shaped by the disproportion of privileges concerning the use of the park's lands.

Triglav National Park and Recreation

Triglav National Park is the only Slovenian national park. It is one of the earliest parks established in Eu-

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rope, dating back to 1924, when it was founded as the Alpine Conservation Park. Its present borders were defined in 1981 by the Law on Triglav National Park. The park covers a predominantly uninhabited area in the south-eastern section of the Alps in the north-west of Slovenia, covering 880 square kilometres or 4% of the state's territory. Management of the TNP is the responsibility of the Triglav National Park Public Institution, which operates under the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment. The park aims to protect nature and conserve the cultural landscape, ensure sustainable development, promote opportunities for enjoyment, support research issues connected to the park, organise education activities and perform management tasks. It is also destined for recreation purposes, but it supports activities that are in compliance with the primary objective of the national park, i.e. nature protection.

Our research is especially current because adjustments of new TNP management plan were in progress at the time of writing this article. On the basis of the new TNP Act passed in 2010 ('Zakon o Triglavskem narodnem parku'), the plan's professional groundwork was prepared by the park's employees who presented the draft version (*Načrt upravljanja*, 2012) to the public (i.e. the municipalities with territory in the park, interest groups and inhabitants of the park) at numerous public forums and meetings in 2012 and 2013. The aim of these public presentations was to obtain additional comments and propositions from the public and adjust the management plan accordingly, insofar as the act would allow it.

The management plan also covers sports and recreation in the park. It envisages a set of regulations, such as time limitations for specific sports, the delimitation of specific areas for recreation, and proposes specific zones where certain activities would be forbidden. The employees have also organised meetings with different recreation groups to discuss the regulations set out in the plan and record the groups' suggestions regarding different uses of the protected area so as to possibly include them in the plan.

As one of the authors of the plan commented, the park decided for an interactive approach because sports:

[...] still appear where they are not allowed, because the park is divided into different areas, inside those areas there are even more special areas, and of course, we don't want that there. But we are putting an effort into the management plan, to fix it, try even harder [...] and to make a deal with people who practice those sports, where they can and where they cannot. And that's why there are still problems, firstly because they are not well informed, there is still not enough communication, or [they do it] on purpose. But it happens that they take advantage, that they go despite knowing it is forbidden. But slowly this will be settled.

Rangers claim that the number and diversity of sportspersons in the park is increasing to an enormous degree. One of the rangers even commented that sometimes he feels as if '[...] we are in an amusement park, not in Triglav National Park. It's just sports and nothing else.' However, the park has set a number of rules regarding the use of its territory by various types of recreational users. For example, mountaineering is allowed everywhere across the park, which means that one is allowed to walk wherever s/he wants. This permissiveness is rooted in the centuries old tradition of mountaineering in Slovenia (Šaver, 2005). Back-country skiing and ice climbing are regarded as part of mountaineering and are therefore also subject to more lenient regulation. However, not all outdoor sports have the same privilege and more recent ones are to a higher or lesser degree excluded from the park. For example, paragliders are allowed to take off and land in the park or to fly across the park's territory only within strictly delineated spots and corridors, which have yet to be defined by the TNP management plan. In addition, mountain biking is allowed on the roads of the TNP but is forbidden on walking paths or as a cross-country race.

In summary, the existing regulations represent different regimes of access and activity for different sports. There is a paradox of complete freedom, co-existing with quite strict rules and exclusions. As will be seen, this disproportion has a certain significant impact on the behaviour of sportsmen and the strate-

gies they employ. We will now examine one case for loosening the strict rules governing particular sport. In the case of mountain bikers, we will show how one group of sportsmen copes with biased rules.

Mountain Bikers' Strategies

Mountain biking is an activity frequently performed in the same environment and on the same system of pathways as mountaineering, and the encroachment of biking onto previously walking-only trails is a global trend. For this reason, there is a significant potential for 'recreational conflict' (Jacob & Schreyer, 1980; Tumes, 2007). As Kirsty Tumes comments, 'Changes in recreation values along with how people recreate, together with a move away from traditional activities to ones employing new technologies that are mechanistic in nature, have led to competition and in some cases conflict between recreation activity groups over land and water resources' (2007, p. 45). Although some studies show that there are fewer conflicts between walkers and bikers than generally imagined (Chiu & Kriwoken, 2003) or that the number of conflicts decreases after face-to-face encounters on shared trails (Cessford, 2003), this intergroup relationship is an essential dimension of mountain bikers' attitude towards the protected area of the TNP.

However, the focus of this paper is not on the interactions between bikers and hikers as such, but on how this relation is instrumentalised for mountain bikers' strategic purposes. The status of mountaineering, an activity with fewer restrictions in the park and a long tradition in Slovenia, functions as a firm reference point for mountain bikers' and other sportspersons' claims on their right for recreational space in the park. Mountain bikers thus regularly compare and connect their illegal activity with this legal one.

Mountain bikers have not easily accepted not being allowed to use certain walking paths; consequently, they have launched a campaign against existing restrictions and rules. Although the decree that prohibits riding a bike in 'natural environments' is not limited to the TNP ('Uredba o prepovedi vožnje', 1995–2001), mountain bikers have often expressed their dissatisfaction with the decree precisely in this area (Drofenik, 2012). They are not satisfied with existing roads in the

park and want to go beyond such easy rides. Quite a few employees at the TNP are also well aware of the fact that mountain bikers are in many aspects right, because the existing regulations for mountain biking indeed are counter-productive:

Riding in natural environments is forbidden everywhere in Slovenia, that is one decree, and it is forbidden. [...] And that is the situation now, which doesn't make sense, and it is better to define where they will be allowed to drive, not like it is now, because now it is not allowed anywhere, neither on mountain roads nor mule tracks, anywhere in the natural environment; however, everybody does it.

In the case of the TNP, the mountain bikers' campaign against the strict rules probably started spontaneously when they were stopped by the TNP rangers and when minor conflicts between the two actors have arisen. As one of the rangers recalls, sometimes there was a lot of cursing, but in other cases bikers would argue against the restrictions, even claiming that a bicycle causes much less soil erosion than a grazing cow. However, things have gradually changed. The mountain bikers community has become increasingly aware of the limits of rangers' legal authority, and today, for example, many are well informed that a ranger cannot stop a moving vehicle and therefore is obliged to let a biker in motion to pass him/her by.

Part of the mountain bikers' negotiation is also based on mass media representations of mountain biking in the TNP. In a recently published issue of *Bike Magazin*, a bikers' community magazine, the author, describing one route in the TNP, states that 'unfortunately, the laws of the TNP don't allow us to use it, although there is REALLY no harm' (Ogrinec, 2012, p. 62). There are also two more statements, or we could say warnings, about TNP rangers examining the area. This was not the first such public negotiation with the TNP.

In 2007, these minor events evolved into an organised campaign. Although mountain bikers sometimes define their relationship with mountaineers as one of antagonism (which is actually often the case, because

the latter accuse the first of endangering walkers on the mountain paths), they have succeeded in joining the Mountaineering Association of Slovenia, the umbrella organisation of all mountaineering activities in Slovenia, under which they have established the Commission for Backcountry Biking. According to a well-informed representative of the commission, the rise of mountain biking in the Slovenian Alps can be linked to the publication of the first mountain bikers' guide in Slovenia by Marko Paternu (1997). After the massive and rapid growth of mountain biking in Slovenia in the 2000s, when it became clearly evident that every third mountaineer is also a mountain biker,² some representatives of the Mountaineering Association of Slovenia proposed the establishment of the Commission for Backcountry Biking to educate mountain biking tour guides and to draft rules for the proper behaviour of mountain bikers. Although such moves could be interpreted as the establishment of mechanisms for resolving problems prevalent in the growing mountain bikers' scene in Slovenia and as a means for educating mountain bikers, they should also be viewed as strategies of negotiation. Being part of the Mountaineering Association of Slovenia means occupying an established position in an organisation with a very long tradition and with enormous symbolic and social capital in Slovenia, an organisation that can gradually assure pivotal changes regarding regulations for mountain biking on the walking paths. Although our claims on certain strategic moves could seem bold, they are also supported by changes at the linguistic or discursive level: adopting the label 'backcountry' from moun-

taineering vocabulary embeds the activity within the mountaineering milieu. In addition, mountain bikers have started to cooperate with mountaineers in blazing mountain paths, which is another strategic step towards loosening strict rules.

In light of this situation, our question regarding media pressure and strategic alliances established by mountain bikers is what were and what should be the reaction of the TNP regarding such activities. A comparison with similar cases, including the media campaign of kayakers on the Yellowstone National Park to open up certain territories for their activities, analysed by Michael J. Yochim (2005), convinces us that there is a very strong possibility that mountain bikers will continue using several forms of pressure to convince TNP officials to loosen the park's rules, to make the rules for bikers similar to those for mountaineers, thus allowing bikers to enter the park's core. We think that TNP officials could learn from their Yellowstone National Park colleagues, who have for decades confronted various campaigns of kayakers.

What about the official stance of the TNP? When an article about mountain biking in the TNP was published in the supplement of the widely read Slovenian magazine *Stop* (Guzej, 2005), there was no reaction from the TNP. This is even more surprising considering that the author describes a highly problematic ride in the central area of the park, and that he writes about ignoring and fighting with a TNP ranger whom he and his friends met on the way, as well as about the general stupidity of TNP rules. The author concludes his article with the following words (Guzej, 2005, p. 10):

Lastly, the inventory of completed work: 3000 vertical meters at 70 kilometres long route. The route whose charm also lies in the fact that it is strictly forbidden. As conscious citizens, we agree that the laws are made to be followed. But if they are stupid, they need to be persistently broken and proven to be impractical so that they can be changed. Who (with enough power and influence) will finally show enough courage to give the initiative to at least mitigate the decree banning cycling in the natural environment?!

²This statistical data was obtained in a survey conducted among mountaineers and presented to us during the interview with a representative of the Commission for Backcountry Biking. However, a review of global trends in mountain biking, done by Burgin and Hardiman (2012a, p. 925–926), shows that this sport is escalating worldwide. For Europe, they give the following data: 'In 2001, 6.3 million people in the UK, more than 10% of the population, participated in mountain biking/off-road cycling more than once annually, and approximately 6% participated regularly [...] Mountain biking is also popular in Germany (38.9% of 7.2 million recreational cyclists), and there are an estimated 800,000 mountain bikers in Switzerland and Austria.'

An indicative case of a certain ignorance on the part of TNP authorities towards such provocations is also represented by the recently published mountain biker's guide through the Soča River Valley (Leban, 2009). It is also a complicated case since the author of the guide invited the TNP to collaborate in the process of its formation. The author even proposed that the director of the TNP write a preface with an ecological message. However, although one of the rangers, acquainted with the Soča River Valley part of the park, critically commented on and objected to several trails proposed by the author, the latter nevertheless published those same trails in the book. The same ranger then succeeded in convincing the park's director not to write the ecological preface to the book. However, although the director did not write the preface, the TNP did not react in any way to this publication with contestable content. Since they did not voice any objections, the guide was also translated into English.

The publication of such a book is, of course, highly problematic. As one of the rangers reports, when he finds a biker who is making an illegal trip but shows him a book in which all the instructions for such trips are published, he cannot just penalise him/her. Once a certain trail is published in a book, it is difficult for the TNP to dispute its use by the book's readers. This case can also serve as an example of how tourism is instrumentalised for negotiating the park's rules. As one of mountain biking enthusiasts from the vicinity of the TNP explained during one conversation, the rules could be beaten precisely by the power of tourism. If, for example, one starts a mountain biking festival that manages to attract a few thousand participants in a few years (and that is not in any way surprising to this informant, given the popularity of mountain biking in Europe and the world) then the tourism impacts will 'force' the TNP to mitigate the restrictions. Such scenarios demonstrate both the influence of the tourism industry and the self-confidence of interest groups 'globally' connected by the internet (Burgin & Hardiman, 2012a, p. 931):

The power of advocacy groups, either formal (e.g. specific sports associations) or informal (e.g. web fora), has become increasingly stron-

ger and more sophisticated, aided by the reach of the internet. Their demands are also likely to be supported by the tourism and retailing industries, which recognise the commercial potential of this large, affluent demographic.

Today, of course, the internet is the most effective communication tool among recreational sportsmen as well as a negotiation tool with the park and the general public. However, according to a TNP official, the park currently does not even have enough staff, proper legal knowledge or satisfactorily defined regulations to effectively react to those violations of the rules that are publicly presented on the internet and in other publications:

There is a bad mood when we see something like that, that somebody publishes a guide to pathless terrain and so on, without asking us anything. Now, I have to say that [...] we don't have anybody employed to deal just with this area, you somehow can't, you don't have time to put energy into this, because you should collect all the data first: who put it on the internet, who is promoting this, who does it, where did it happen, photographs that document that it really happened. You need all this evidence to sanction somebody, to put an end to this, and you can't do it in addition to the regular work you have, and that always somehow fades away.

The internet represents one particular aspect of the process of appropriation of the park's lands by groups performing outdoor recreation. If the publication of a certain trail in a book can be defined as a milestone in this process, internet forums and printed journal articles can be viewed as a fuel that drives the practitioners further into the park's inner areas.

For example, as the case of an illegal tour called the 'Bohinj Massacre' demonstrates (even the name of the tour itself indicates the extremeness of the ride), writing about it on the internet means announcing one's heroic performance and thus challenging others to repeat it. It is here that we can search for the discourse informing adrenaline activities, which is, as we will at-

tempt to show, inherent to mountain bikers' strategies to access the core of the park.

Recreation in the Light of 'Heroism Discourse'

As Shelley Burgin and Nigel Hardiman (2012a) argue, visitors' motives for visiting protected areas have historically changed from 'rest, relaxation and reinvigoration' with low ecological impacts to the recent trends that increased numbers of persons undertaking more active recreation, e.g. 'extreme sports,' therefore having higher ecological impacts and requiring proper management. This change, of course, does to a great extent concern relationships to park animals and those areas of the park where animals are supposed to live in peace (Burgin & Hardiman, 2012b). However, our research is primarily focused on people. It originates in questioning a discourse that fuels the so-called 'adrenalin sports,' which defines certain areas of the park as virginal lands that are yet to be conquered.

Although outdoor sports are sometimes connected to environmentalism discourses, which promote nature-friendly recreation, they also address people to perform 'heroic actions,' i.e. daring activities that no one or only a few have done before. Outdoor sports adventurers, in this paper examined via the case of mountain bikers, therefore often seek unconquered or challenging paths. Technological developments further stimulate practitioners to search for 'new' territories (Ewert & Shultis, 1999), and (as we have attempted to show) this heavily affects social relationships in outdoor recreation (Devall & Harry, 1981). In these activities, there is also an inherent element of competition that stimulates the participants to exceed the achievements of forerunners (Burgin & Hardiman, 2012a, 923). Certain publications further encourage people to behave heroically.

In regard to mountain bikers, Paul Rosen (1993, p. 499) writes as follows:

A typical example of [...] [de-modernizing] impulse [i.e., 'a resistance to modernization which is nevertheless at the same time a product of it'] is the search for wilderness areas uncontaminated by modernization. This is perhaps the most important theme in mountain biking

discourse, and was the initial motivation of the clunker group [the pioneers of mountain biking] who, according to one writer, were 'a pack of hardcore hippie bike bums' who had moved from San Francisco into rural Marin County 'to live less frenetic, more laid-back lives.' It is still a prevalent theme, with articles and advertisements drawing on notions of pioneers, frontiers and a relationship to nature which seeks at the same time both to escape to it as a haven from the city, but also to conquer it using the very technology that drives the desire to escape. Richard Ballantine writes that '[i]n any activity, there is always an edge of adventure, always a place where people are wild and free.' In mountain biking, this edge is 'a line of discovery and testing new limits.'

Fuelled with this discourse, we think there is a certain process happening in the park that could convert it into an all-encompassing 'adrenaline playground.' As mountain bikers regularly proclaim, what they do is not for just anybody. The previously cited article from *STOP* magazine is, for example, pervaded with a discourse about 'heroism' in these bikers' actions (Guzej, 2005, 8):

We are lured by the green below us, but we struggle every higher towards our first goal, using the narrow mountain road that is at some points carved into the steep rocks; steel cables embedded in the walls ensure a safer passage. There's no more kidding. Maximum alertness and vigilance are needed. Carelessness would quickly end tens and even hundreds of meters below.

Such masculine heroism (Gilchrist, 2006; Vivanco & Gordon, 2006; Wesely & Gaarder, 2004), the quest for conquering and then presenting (publishing) the achievement of penetrating into new, virginal and dangerous territories, is the fuel that makes the process of 'disneyfication' of the park irreversible. If yesterday a biker's success was driving the slopes on the edge of the park, today TNP rangers regularly find bikers

on tops of various mountains. When a certain trail is conquered, it is time to find new ones. Therefore, we are concerned that there truly are no limits since, as the environmental writer Todd Wilkinson suggests in the case of Yellowstone kayaking (in Yochim, 2005: 61), the point is 'to pump up the ego and worship at the Holy Alter [sic] of ME!, ME!, ME!' So-called 'adrenaline junkies' and 'thrill seekers' will thus probably always search for virginal lands to conquer, and the TNP will still appear as a 'promised land' for them. However, as we will propose, there is a way to at least diminish the claims of the majority of mountain bikers for their right to use this territory and thus to prevent it from becoming an outdoor recreational Disneyland.

Conclusion

Burgin and Hardiman (2012a, p. 932), authors of many scientific articles on recreation in protected areas, argue that:

[M]echanisms available to land managers to minimise environmental degradation include a range of legislative arrangements and educational programmes. Enforcement typically relies on regulation, focused on controlling behaviour with the potential for punitive action. This approach is frequently counterproductive and costly to enforce. A more effective approach to minimising the environmental impact is to employ education programmes aimed at raising awareness of the issues of environmental degradation.

At the same time, these two authors were sceptical about the potential of education to minimise the effects of expanding recreational adventurism. Therefore, they propose diverting the gaze of recreation practitioners from protected areas to newly designed areas for outdoor recreation (2012a, 932–933). The TNP also acted in this direction and gave consent to the establishment of a bike park at the winter ski area above the Bohinj Lake; the Vogel Mountain Bike Park was officially opened in September 2012. The park also weighs the possibility of opening certain walking paths on the edge of the park for mountain bikers.

However, we doubt that such arrangements could satisfy the appetites of practitioners. As we are attempting to show, there is a search for challenge, for 'unconquered' territories and for 'real' wilderness in the discourse that drives the mountain biking scene, so alternative areas in our opinion cannot turn mountain bikers away from the park. Instead, we would like to suggest a different solution (unfortunately, against the recommendations of Burgin and Hardiman, a restriction), which cannot 'drive away' mountain bikers themselves but would nullify the most influential discursive argument they employ to claim access to the protected area. We would like to suggest the implementation of equal restrictions for all forms of recreation, including mountaineering.

The TNP is currently in the process of spatialisation, which means that, together with different actors in this territory, it is involved in preparing the rules for different regimes of the use of its lands. One of the ideas for this new spatial plan, presented in the new TNP management plan, is the introduction of so-called 'peaceful zones,' which implies limited access to certain areas. We salute this proposal, but find it insufficient, because peaceful zones as they are planned now do not apply to all groups of sportspersons, especially not mountaineers. Mountain bikers regularly compare themselves to mountaineers, querying why should be something forbidden for them when they cause less harm to the environment than mountaineers. Their argument is that one group is privileged while the other is marginalised. This is indeed not particularly democratic, although it is true that mountaineering has a long tradition and that biking is probably a more quiet activity (and is surely faster) than walking, thus causing bigger shocks for wild animals when they meet. However, in our opinion, a solution of closing certain zones for everyone for the sake of animal procreation while at the same time strictly defining different paths for different types of users could silence such inter-group referentiality with demands for opening new territories as in the case of bikers and hikers. Moreover, mountaineers are not innocent either. They also form their own heroism discourse and publish descriptions of walking or skiing in deserted areas (Habjan, 2009; Jenčič, 2002), which

are becoming increasingly crowded exactly because of those publications. However, if and when the TNP attempts to implement the establishment of 'proper' peaceful zones, this will not happen without difficulty. We are quite sure that the Mountaineering Association of Slovenia would not accept such an idea open heartedly, and the association represents a potential obstacle because of its political power, its arguments of mountaineering tradition and the democratic accessibility to mountaineering by both the rich and the poor. However, as TNP authorities have effectively solved a situation in the case of canyoning by defining three streams within the TNP where this activity can be performed in certain months, they should also be able to demarcate areas for other recreational activities. Otherwise, TNP authorities will not be able to deal with new adrenalin sports that are emerging daily (such as base jumping) which are so recent that they have not been included in the 2010 act, and therefore represent legal grey areas that cannot be managed in this manner. In peaceful zones that would apply to everyone, i.e. to any human activity (except to the park's expert administration), however, such new sports would not represent grey areas, but would simply be forbidden.

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