

INTRODUCTION IN THE CULTURAL TOURISM IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

Cultural tourism is not a new form of tourism but a growing niche product; it represents a form of economic development. This concept has emerged as a result of the interaction between tourism and culture and the increasing consumption of culture. Globalization has led to the standardization of culture which implies that it does not benefit all communities and it can affect the local and regional cultures.

The article wishes to present notions of culture and tourism and to highlight the main features of the concept of cultural tourism and its evolution over time from a niche market to a booming sector. Also it focuses on the specific features of the tourists that characterize this form of tourism. Cultural tourism is presented everywhere in the world, many destinations being known by tourists due to the cultural image they have. Among these destinations we can mention Paris with Versailles Palace, Notre Dame Cathedral; Rome with Colosseum; Targu Jiu with the ensemble of Constantin Brancusi.

Keywords: tourism, culture, cultural tourism,

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism represents a growing sector of the economy it defines the activity of a tourist of travelling outside its residence for pleasure or business activity. The origin of the word 'tourism' is usually attributed to the Grand Tour, which originated in Britain in the 17th century (Hibbert, 1969, Feifer, 1985). Towner (1985) defined the Grand Tour as: "A tour of certain cities and places in western Europe undertaken primarily, but not exclusively for education and pleasure". (Pahos and others, 2010)

Tourism and culture have a strong connection at the national and international level. Culture represents a complex concept and an engine of economic development. It underlies the cultural tourism and it can be seen both as a product and as a process. The majority of the decisions on visiting a destination include at least a cultural activity. Culture refers to the values, religion, beliefs, notions of time and cultural facilities.

The cultural tourism is a complex concept and the literature offers us a wide range of definitions. According to The World-Wide Tourism Organization (WTO) "the cultural tourism refers to a segment of the tourism industry which emphasizes mainly the cultural attractions. Those attractions are varied and they include: performances, museums etc. In developed areas, cultural attractions include museums, orchestra performances and plays. In less developed areas they may include traditional rituals, religions rituals, popular art or cultural – *folklore events*" (Gee and Fayos-Sola, 1997)

2. CULTURAL TOURISM. CONCEPT AND CHARACTERISTICS

Cultural tourism represents one of the oldest forms of tourism and the demand for this type of tourism has recorded a significant increase during the past years.

In order to understand this concept more we start from a short classification of the tourism forms in order to observe their evolution in time. According to Greg Richard, tourism can be classified in heritage tourism, cultural tourism and creative tourism which have the following characteristics:

Table no.1: Forms of tourism and their characteristics

Form of tourism	Primary time focus	Primary cultural focus	Primary form of consumption
Heritage tourism	Past	High culture, folk culture	Products

Cultural tourism	Past, present	High culture, popular culture	Products and processes
Creative tourism	Past, present, future	High, popular and mass culture	Experiences and transformations

Source: Richards, G. (ed.) (2001): Cultural Attractions and European Tourism, CAB International, Wallingford, UK

The above classification shows the continuous development of tourism and how much tourists want to experience the everyday customs of the people from the places visited.

European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) defines cultural tourism as: “*persons’ traveling towards cultural attractions for from the usual living place, with the intention of getting new information and experiences which should satisfy their cultural needs*”. (Richards, G.1996)

Cultural tourism is based on the cultural patrimony and the specific characteristics of the place to be visited. The main reasons for practicing this type of tourism include curiosity and the desire for a higher level of education. The progress of the human society and civilization highlights the originality and the artistic value of the cultural patrimony.

Although the concept of cultural tourism may seem that it has only positive implications (development of the regional and national culture and the season tourism, protection of the natural habitat and local traditions), it implies also some negative ones. The negative effects of the cultural tourism include the commercialization of the culture and the local customs and the deterioration of the environment and architecture specific to the visited region.

The cultural tourism is promoted at international level by UNESCO. The organization’s goal is to contribute to world’s peace and security collaborating between nations in education, science, culture, and communications in order to succeed a respect’s stabilization up against universal justice, for the justice’s rightness and the laws and the concepts of the free human being, irrespective of race, sex, language or religion. (Carta Natiunilor Unite,2003)

3. CLASSIFICATION OF THE CULTURAL TOURISM AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CULTURAL TOURISTS

During the years, the concept of cultural tourism has evolved a lot due to the changes of the needs of tourists, the expansion of the international tourism and the increase in the cultural travels.

Cultural tourism is a complex term and the literature offers various classification structures, one of them includes the following: (Smith, 2003)

- Heritage tourism: largely concerned with the interpretation and representation of the past;
- Arts tourism : art gets to tourists in the sense that theatre, dance, music and the visual arts travel well in the form shows, performances and exhibitions;
- Urban cultural tourism: the majority of the cities offer various cultural attractions;
- Rural cultural tourism: includes the agricultural tourism, eco –tourism, farm tourism;
- Indigenous cultural tourism: the indigenous people involved in all the activities;
- Contemporary cultural tourism: the type of tourism where the cultural activities are influenced by the latest trends

In order to create a sustainable cultural tourism one has to understand the tourism and cultural management. Also, an important role to achieve this goal is held by the connection between the culture capital and the socio-economic development of the area in question.

Another classification of the cultural tourism includes (Ivanovic, 2008):

- Creative tourism: concerns learning indigenous skills distinctive of the destination visited and developing individual creativity while on holiday
- Ethical tourism: emerged from the conscious movement of European tourists who became aware of the fact that tourist expenditure does not benefit host communities as it is expected to do
- Life-seeing tourism: personalized experience facilitated by a travel agency for every visitor individually to cater for his or her professional interests

Tourists characterizing the cultural tourism consist of visitors of cultural attraction with a high level of education which travel far from their residence, spend higher than the average and have different goals.

Tourists can be classified according to the importance of cultural tourism to visit destination as follows:

Table no.2 Importance of cultural tourism in the decision to visit destination

Deep	Serendipitous cultural tourist	Purposeful cultural tourist	
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Experience sought	Incidental cultural tourist	Casual cultural tourist	Sightseeing cultural tourist
Shallow	Low	Importance of cultural tourism to visit destination	High

Source: Hilary du Cros and Bob Mc Kercher, Cultural Tourism, Routledge, NY 2015

- The serendipitous cultural tourist is the type of tourist who obtains cultural experience without having the intention of travelling for cultural purpose
- The purposeful cultural tourist has as main motivation in choosing a destination the cultural part and obtain deep experience
- The incidental cultural tourist is not interested at all in cultural tourism;
- The casual cultural tourist is the type of person with a relative small interest in culture and a shallow experience
- The sightseeing cultural tourist is motivated mainly by the cultural purposes.

Tourists that practice cultural tourism evolve a lot as they understand the culture of the place visited at a higher level. The majority of the destinations selected are based on the cultural characteristics of them. Women usually prefer plastic arts and architecture while men have a predilection for technical and scientific sites.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the main characteristics of cultural tourism shows the fact that this concept has an important role in the development and modernization of the economy and society and that culture represents one of the most important resource of the international tourism. In order for it to become a sustainable tourism it has to respect the natural and cultural values of the area.

We observe that despite the fact that cultural tourism has grown more complex recently it may have the potential to develop and rejuvenate historic areas.

We notice that a higher number of visitors choose to place the cultural activities as their main reason for travelling in order to explore different ways of living and to get new information on different cultural attractions.

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