

**„BABEȘ-BOLYAI” UNIVERSITY OF CLUJ-NAPOCA  
FACULTY OF GEOGRAPHY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY AND TOURISM**

**EDITORS**

**NICOLAE CIANGĂ ȘTEFAN DEZSI VOICU BODOCAN FILIP IPATIOV  
SIMONA MĂLĂESCU CRISTINA BOLOG MARIUS OPREA**

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM**

***SUSTAINABLE TOURIST DESTINATIONS  
IDENTITY, IMAGE & INOVATIONS***

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# L'ÉVALUATION COMPARATIVE DU POTENTIEL TOURISTIQUE DU BASSIN DE LA RIVIÈRE PRUT

BACAL P. <sup>1</sup>, EFROS V. <sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – L'évaluation comparative du potentiel touristique du bassin de la Rivière Prut. Dans cette étude est effectuée une évaluation complète des ressources touristiques dans le bassin de la rivière Prut aux secteurs transfrontières de Roumanie et de la République de Moldavie. Ils sont identifiés, structurés et analysés les principales attractions naturelles et anthropiques de la région d'étude. En comparaison avec les bassins hydrographiques voisins, le potentiel touristique du bassin de la rivière Prut est moins exploité. Ceci est dû aux: l'absence des objectifs touristiques avec une grande attraction, tels que les stations balnéaires, montagnées et littorales; position périphérique et sous-développement économique de la région; caractère essentiellement agricole et rural d'espace hydrographique respectif; plus faible développement des infrastructures de transport, d'hébergement et de loisirs.

*Mots-clés:* tourisme, potentiel, Prut, naturel, anthropique

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Le Bassin de la rivière Prut comprend les zones frontalières, laquelle séparent les trois pays voisins: l'Ukraine, la Roumanie et la République de Moldavie. La surface totale est 27, 5 milliers km<sup>2</sup>, y compris en Roumanie – 11, 0 milliers km<sup>2</sup> (40%), en Ukraine – 8, 24 milliers km<sup>2</sup> (30%) et en République de Moldavie – 8, 2 milliers km<sup>2</sup> (30%). La majorité absolue du bassin supérieur est situé dans la partie ukrainienne, mais aux bassins moyen et inférieur – dans les zones transfrontalières de la Roumanie et de la République de Moldavie, qui sont inclus dans la présente étude. De la frontière avec l'Ukraine jusqu'à la ville Târgu Frumos, la largeur du bassin hydrographique Prut est 120-150 km et variée insignifiante. Par la suite, la largeur du bassin diminue considérablement et d'atteindre, autour de la ville Raducaneni, à seulement 30 km. En conséquence, dans le cours inférieur, la plupart de la partie sud du comté de Iași, des comtés Vaslui et Galați, des rayons Cantemir et Cahul sont en dehors du bassin Prut, qui conditionne la réduction substantielle du potentiel touristique de ce bassin.

Dans le profil européen, le bassin de la rivière Prut a un grand patrimoine touristique très varié. Ici se trouve des paysages et des monuments naturels uniques, et le patrimoine ethnoculturel et religieux est très riche. Les principales ressources touristiques naturelles du bassin de la rivière Prut sont les aires naturelles protégées, parcs et jardins publics dans les grandes villes, Vallée du Prut, les zones forestières d'importance récréative, les lacs et étangs de la proximité des villages, en particulier le lac Costești-Stânca. Une grande valeur touristique, écologique et scientifique possèdent les chaînes de récifs coralliens fossiles (toltrii), qui sont largement répandues dans la Plaine du Prut Moyen [10, p. 14]. [5, 78-87].

Le Bassin du Prut est très riche en objectifs ethniques et culturelles. Les habitudes et les occupations traditionnelles sont bien préservés et présentés à la fois dans les musées

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locaux et dans la vie quotidienne de la population locale. Très demandés sont les métiers en pierre, en bois osier, le tissage de tapis et broderies, les fêtes traditionnels, en particulier, les danses populaires et des vins locaux savoureux.

Dans le même temps, le patrimoine touristique existant est insuffisamment exploité. Cette situation est conditionnée par la position périphérique et sous-développement économique, par caractère essentiellement agricole et rural de la région, par l'insuffisance et mauvais état des routes d'accès, par grave pénurie de logement et de loisirs aux destinations touristiques existantes, la saisonnier manifestation de phénomène de tourisme, d'insalubrité des localités et sites touristiques, par la promotion superficielles des destinations touristiques [3].

La domination ottomane a transformée la Moldova dans une zone périphérique et sous-développement d'Europe, avec un fort caractère agricole et elle est détournée par des flux économiques et culturels régionaux. Dans les deux derniers siècles, la rivière Prut s'est transformée en une zone de conflit d'intérêts géopolitiques des grandes puissances. En outre, après l'occupation de la Bessarabie par l'URSS, la rivière Prut est devenu une zone de frontière avec un accès très limité, et la propagande soviétique a cultivée une attitude hostile à l'identité ethnique commune. À la suite, on a produit l'enlèvement ethnico-culturel, politique et économique de la population du côté gauche et droit de la Prut. Malgré la politique officielle du rapprochement, ce processus a continué à la présente. Un intérêt majeur est attesté seulement aux édifices religieux et historiques dans la centres régionaux – Iași et Cernăuți. En raison de la faible motivation, l'intensité des flux touristiques de la Roumanie à la Moldavie et, surtout, aux destinations touristiques du bassin de Prut, est plus inférieur par rapport d'intensité des flux touristiques à la Roumanie et à l'Ukraine.

## 2. MATÉRIELS ET MÉTHODES:

Les principales sources d'information pour la réalisation de cette étude étaient: 1) rapports statistiques officielles nationales et du comté; 2) les listes d'objectifs naturels et anthropiques soumis à la protection nationale et internationale [1; 12; 13]; 3) les sources bibliographiques avec référence au thème de l'étude; 4) les expéditions sur le terrain des auteurs; 5) la consultation d'experts et des autorités gouvernementales dans le domaine, de l'APL (l'administration publique locale) et de la population locale dans la région d'étude.

Les principales méthodes utilisées pour réaliser de cette étude étaient: analyse et synthèse, statistiques, cartographiques, systémique, analogique. Méthode d'analyse et la synthèse a été utilisé dans l'étude approfondie de la littérature et le traitement des informations statistiques concernant l'évaluation d'éléments anthropique et naturel du potentiel touristique. *Méthodes statistiques* ont été utilisées pour traiter l'information statistique et narrative sur les aspects qualitatifs et quantitatifs des ressources touristiques naturel et anthropique. *Les méthodes cartographiques* (ARCGIS) ont été utilisées pour la représentation spatiale des principaux attractions touristiques et pour identification les différences spatiales dans l'emplacement des diverses catégories de sites naturels et anthropiques. L'utilisation de *la méthode systémique* a permis la définition des situations problématiques d'exploiter le potentiel touristique dans cette région et l'élaboration de recommandations pour leur prévenir et réduire.

## 3. RÉSULTATS ET DISCUSSIONS:

**Le potentiel touristique naturel.** Secteur de la République de Moldova.

Dans la région du bassin Prut se trouve  $\approx 70$  espaces naturels protégées par l'Etat (tableau 1), d'une superficie de 43, 3 mille d'hectares, y compris 3 réserves scientifiques, une zone humide d'importance internationale, 21 monuments naturels, 12 réserves de paysage, 21 réserves naturelles, 4 réserves du sol, 6 monuments de l'architecture de paysage et 44 arbres centenaires[7].

Les plus représentatives aires naturel protégées sont *monuments géologiques et paléontologiques*. Ils sont concentrés principalement dans la Plaine du Prut Moyen(fig. 1). Une valeur unique possède les chaînes de récifs coralliens fossiles (toltrii), qui sont séparés par des gorges et des canyons miraculeux. En outre, très apprécié sont des roches aux formes étranges, qui maintient des légendes vivantes, des cavernes et des grottes mystiques, où ont été trouvés de sites archéologiques avec des traces de l'homme préhistorique, etc.

*La caverne „Emil Racoviță”* occupe le troisième rang en Europe parmi les cavernes de gypse. Il commence près de village Criva, sur la frontière avec l'Ukraine, et continue dans l'Etat voisin sur quelques dizaines de kilomètres. Cette grotte a été découverte en 1959 etactuellement on cartographié environ 90 km de galeries souterraines situées dans 3-4 niveaux. Les galeries forment les grandes salles, comme „Salle d'Attente”, d'une superficie totale de plus de 4000 m<sup>2</sup>, „Salle de 100 mètres”, „Salle de Chien”, „Salle de Penguin”, „La Cathédrale”, „Le Tombeau de Dinosaures”. Dans les vides karstiques sont plus de 20 lacs parmi lesquels le plus grand sont „Lac du Daces”, „Lac Vert”, „Lac de Jeunesse”, „Lac Royal”, „Lac Bleu”, „Lac Transparent” [10, p. 14-16]. Les plafonds et les murs de la grotte sont décorés avec des stalactites et des stalagmites multicolore, extrêmement de brillent en lumière de lampe torche. La valeur de ce monument naturel est multipliée par les propriétés thérapeutiques d'ambiance souterraine et d'eau minérale. À l'heure actuelle, l'activité touristique de cette merveille naturelle est très faible. L'entrée principale de la grotte est verrouillée et les galeries souterraines aménagées pour les visiteurs presque disparus. Dans le périmètre de la caverne il y a une grande carrière d'extraction du gypse, elle est une menace de l'existence de ce monument unique naturel de valeur écologique et touristique supérieur par rapport aux avantages de l'exploitation industrielle de cette carrière [2, p. 165].

### Les aires naturelles protégées dans le bassin de la rivière Prut

Tableau 1

	La catégorie	Nombre	Part, en%	La surface, ha	Part, en%
1	Réservations scientifiques	3	4, 4	8700	20
2	Monuments naturels	21	30, 9	1124	2, 6
	Géologique et paléontologique	17	25, 0	1111	2, 6
	botanique	2	2, 9	11, 2	0, 03
	hydrologique	2	2, 9	1, 5	0, 003
3	Les réserves de paysage	12	17, 6	10730	26
4	Les réserves naturelles	21	30, 9	3220	7, 4
	sylviculture	15	22, 1	1608	3, 7
	des plantes médicinales	4	5, 9	1450	3, 3
	réserves mixtes	2	2, 9	162	0, 4
5	Les réserves de ressources	4	5, 9	286	0, 7
6	Zones de gestion multifonctionnelle	1	1, 5	50	0, 1
7	Monuments d'architecture paysagère	6	8, 8	56, 3	0, 1
8	Zones humides d'importance internationale	1	1, 5	19122	44
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>43290</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: préparé par l'auteurs après la Loi sur le contexte des Zones naturelles protégées d'Etat [7].

Aussi, parmi les plus précieux monuments géologiques et paléontologiques dans la Plaine du Prut Moyenpouvons énumérer: les méandres de la rivière Prut aux Pererita (Briceni); les gorges et les clés de la vallée de la rivière Lopatnic (Cracusenii Vechi-Corjeuti), Racovăt (Gordinești-Branzeni), Draghiste (Trinca-Fetesti), Ciuhur (Varatic-Duruitoarea) et Kamenka (Butesti); les récifs de Branzeni (Edinet) et Proscureni (Rascani); les grottes de Branzeni et Duruitoarea-Noua; les roches grandioses: „Tiglaui” dans Corjeuti (Briceni) et „Stânca Mare” de Cobani (Glodeni). Au sud de Plaine du Prut Moyen, les gorges de la rivière Narnova possède une haute valeur éco touristique, situé à proximité de la ville Nisporeni (figure 1).

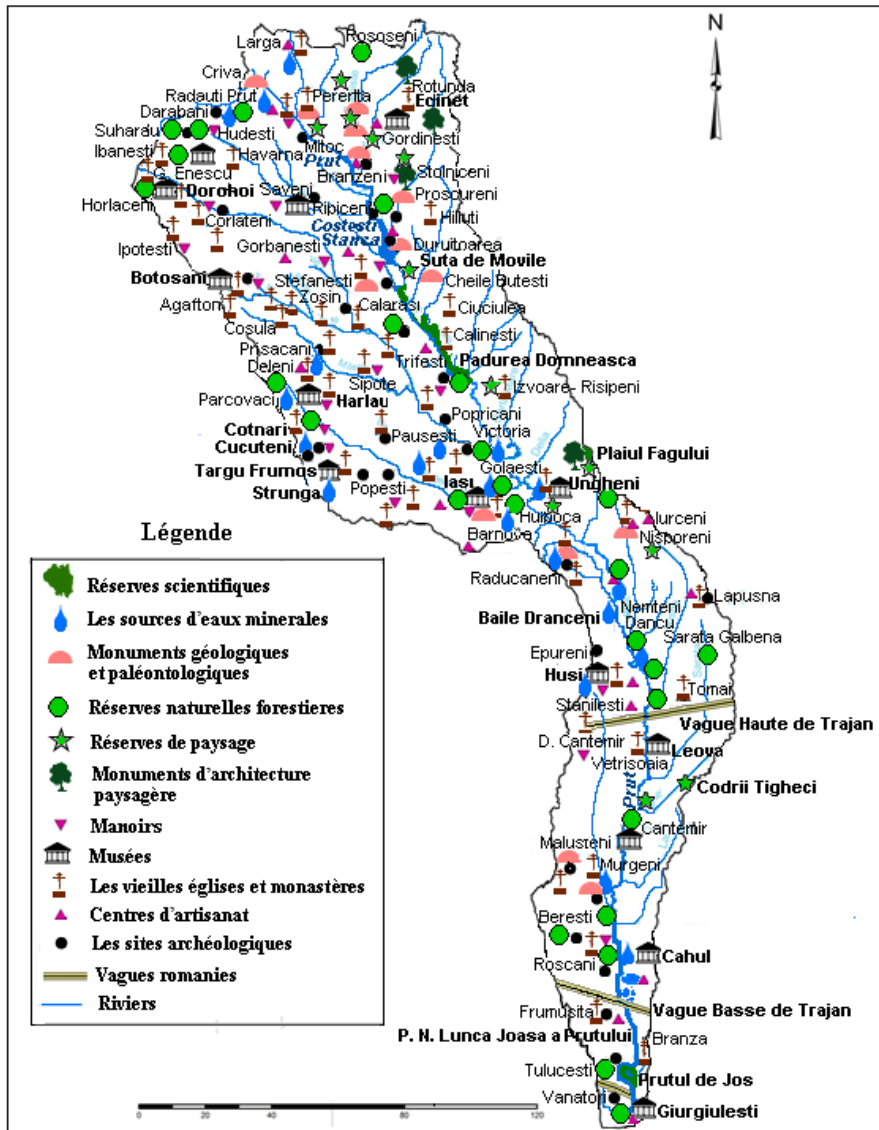


Fig. 1. La répartition spatiale des principaux sites touristiques du bassin de la rivière Prut.

*Réserves scientifiques* occupe une superficie d'environ 8700 ha, dont environ 1 000 hectares de réserve „PlaiulFagului” (La terre de hêtre) situés dans le bassin de la rivière Prut. Réserves scientifiques disposent non seulement une riche diversité biologique, mais aussi des spécialistes hautement qualifiés qui peut être utilisé efficacement pour la prestation de services touristes. Cependant, sont mal identifiés et promus les itinéraires et les sentiers éco touristiques, les signets et les routes d'accès sont insuffisants et partiellement aménagés. À l'exception de la réserve scientifique „PădureaDomnească” (Forêt Royale), manquent l'emplacement d'hébergement et de loisirs, les lieux spécialement aménagé pour le stationnement et camping, le système d'assainissement, les points d'information touristique [3]. La législation nationale de l'environnement est très restrictive, tant en termes d'accès général à ces zones protégées, aussi que de la construction d'infrastructure de transport et d'hébergement, ce qui limite considérablement les flux et les revenus touristiques dans ces espaces [7]. En même temps, dans les réserves scientifiques sont fréquemment dispersées l'exploitation forestière, sont promus les parties VIP et la chasse strictement interdite par la loi, mais adorée par des leaders des systèmes politiques, juridiques et économique, etc.

La plus représentatif et promue espace naturel protégée du bassin de la rivière Prut est la *réserve scientifique „PădureaDomnească”*. Elle couvre une superficie de 6032 ha et est située dans la zone frontalière de la Vallée Moyen du Prut, et elle forme une bande forestière qui s'étend de lavillage Cobani (Rascani) jusqu'au village Pruteni (Falesti). À la proximité de la réserve, il y a aussi d'autres objectifs éco touristiques précieux, tels que „Suta de Movile”, „CheileButești”, „Stânca Mare”, le lac d'accumulation Costești-Stânca (figure 1) et les grottes du Duruitoareaavec des vestiges archéologiques etc.

La réserve scientifique „PădureaDomnească” se remarque par une biodiversité très riche et elle vise à préserver, restaurer et protéger les écosystèmes forestiers inondables, les espèces et les communautésvégétales et fauniques rares. Il est l'un des plus anciens et les plus précieux, et les mieux conservés forêts inondables en Europe, ce qui est dû au régime d'accès limité dans la zone frontalière, qui est conservé jusqu'à aujourd'hui. Ici prédominent les espèces édifiants de chêne, y compris les arbres séculaires, le peuplier blanc et le saule [10, p. 31]. Aussi, ils rencontrent le tremble, érable, le frêne, le noisetier, l'aubépine, le cornouiller, de raisin vignes sauvages, des lianes etc. Dans la réserve il a été conservé un réseau d'étangs qui servent d'habitat pour les oiseaux d'eau, en particulier le héron gris, l'aigrette garzette, la grande aigrette blanc, la bosse de cygne, la cigogne noire, la spatule blanche, l'aigle nain, l'aigle tacheté. Très précieux sont: le lac relique „La Fontal” et „ȚaraBâtlanilor” (Terres de Hérons). Les espèces les plus représentatives de mammifères sont: le sanglier, avec la plus forte densité d'élevage dans le pays, le cerf noble, le chevreuil, le blaireau, la belette, le chat sauvage, la martre, l'hermine, la loutre. Dans cette réserve se trouve une zone clôturée de 32 hectares avec 3 bisons (un mâle et deux femelles), ce qui est une belle attraction touristique. Ces dernières années, l'administration de réserve scientifique „Pădurea Domnească”en collaboration avec l'APL ont commencé l'implémentation de 4 circuits écotouristiques.

Dans le bassin de la rivière Prut ont été créés 9 *réserves de paysage*, qui occupe une superficie d'environ 11 mille ha (tableau 1). Contrairement à monuments géologiques et paléontologiques, les réserves de paysage sont réparties plus uniformément sur le territoire du bassin Prut. Cependant, 7 du 12 réserves de paysage sont situées dans les districts de nord, trois – dans les districts centraux („Valea Mare”, „Vila Nisporeni”et „Cazimir-Milesti”), et seulement deux – dans les districts de sud („CodriiTigheci” et „Antonești”).

*La réserve de paysage „Suta de Movile”* (Cent Monticules) est situé au nord de la réserve scientifique „Pădurea Domnească”. „Suta de Movile” comprend des nombreux grandioses monticules de terre dans les zones humides du Prut, situé le long de la route entre Braniste (Rascani) et Balatina (Glodeni). Les monticules de terre se étendent sur une longueur de 7 km, et une largeur de 2 km, et occupe une superficie de 14 ha. Le plus grand monticule d'entre eux s'appelle „Movila Țiganului” (La Monticule de Gitan). „Suta de Movile” est mentionné pour la première fois en 1715, dans la „Description de Moldavie” par Dimitrie Cantemir.

*La réserve de paysage „La Castel”* (Au Château) est situé sur la vallée de la rivière Racovăț en aval du village Gordinești du district Edinet. Il a une superficie de 746 ha et il est l'un des plus miraculeux, mais aussi moins connus espaces naturels dans la République. C'est un magique lieu, une forteresse naturelle splendide où il se combine très belle et harmonieuse les écosystèmes rocheux avec des écosystèmes de forêt et inondable, un silence profond avec des eaux murmurantes et des chansons inoubliables d'oiseaux. Cette réserve se cachant habitats uniques et de nombreuses espèces végétales et animales rares et vulnérables. En outre, le nom de la réserve est lié à une belle et dramatique histoire d'amour. Avec regret, l'information et l'infrastructure touristique et routière nécessaire pour intégrer cet objectif naturel dans les circuits touristiques traditionnels presque manquants. Aussi, dans le district Edinet on mérite d'être visités les réserves du paysage Zabriceni (596 ha) et Fetești (555 ha).

Contrairement aux réserves scientifiques, majorité absolue des monuments géologique et des réserves de paysage ils sont gérés par APL. À défaut de ressources financières, logistique et humain nécessaire, il ne fournit pas une sécurité adéquate, préservation et la restauration de ces espaces naturelles. Les réserves de paysage sont soumises à une massive déforestation et aux pâturages illégaux, et la plupart des monuments géologiques sont transformées en carrière locale et décharges non autorisées. Aussi, nous remarquons le mauvais état ou l'absence de routes d'accès et les marquages routiers, des insuffisantes unités d'hébergement pour les visiteurs, le rejet ou la négligence de la population locale pour les possibilités d'activités touristiques, une mauvaise sécurité des itinéraires touristiques et d'autres [3].

Dans le Bassin de la rivière Prut été créé 21 **réserves naturelles** (tableau 1), ayant une superficie de 3220 ha, dont 15 réserves forestières (1608 ha), 4 réservations des plantes médicinales (1450 ha) et deux réserves mixtes (162 ha). La Région Centrale est la plus boisée (724 ha) et comprend la plupart des réserves naturelles (7), parmi lesquels: Seliste-Leu (315 ha) du district Nisporeni, Dancu (131 ha), Sărata-Galbenă (220 ha) du district Hâncești (figure 1). Les plus précieuses *réserves naturelles forestières* dans la région du Nord est Rososeni (Briceni), Pociumbeni et Saptébani (Rascani). À Rososeni, Seliste-Rau et Sarata-Galbena sont des *réserves de plantes médicinales*, et dans les écosystèmes de plaine inondable près de villes Leova et Cantemir sont des réserves mixtes. Les attractions touristiques majeures sont les six **monuments d'architecture paysagiste** représentée par les parcs et les allées des villages Pavlovca et Larga (Briceni), Hincauti, Branzeni et Stolniceni (Edinet), Milestii Mari (Nisporeni), avec une superficie totale de 56,3 ha.

Dans la **Vallée du Prut Inférieur**, une valeur écologique et touristique supérieure possède la *réserve scientifique „Prutul de Jos”* (Prut Basse) près des villages Văleni et Slobozia Mare. La surface de réserve est 1691 ha. Environ  $\frac{1}{3}$  de la surface de la réserve est occupée par les eaux du lac Beleu. La végétation palustre et des plaines inondables sont représentées par les fourrés de roseaux et les roselières, les saules, les joncs, les bulrush, les nénuphars, les lis d'eau et les lentilles d'eau. Sur le territoire de la réserve rencontrer des espèces rares de mammifère, comme la loutre, le

vision d'Europe, l'hermine. L'ichtyofaune est représentée par plus de 30 espèces de poissons, parmi lesquels la carpe, le carassin, la brème, l'ide, le gardon, le saumon, le brochet, la carpe herbivore et des espèces rares comme la brème du Danube, le perche soleil, la starlette, le soretele, la lingue[9]. Les bandes d'oiseaux sauvages sont les plus nombreuses et bruyantes. Parmi les 160 espèces d'oiseaux, 21 sont incluses dans le Livre Rouge, y compris: les cormorans, la grande aigrette, le héron jaune, la spatule, le pélican, le cygne muet etc. En 2000, dans la région Basse-Prut a été créée une zone humide d'importance internationale Ramsar – „Les lacs du Prut Basse”, qui vise à protéger la biodiversité en amont du delta du Danube. La surface de zone humide respective est 19,1 mille ha ou 44% de la surface totale d'aires naturelles protégées dans le bassin de la rivière Prut. Lacs de la région, notamment le lac Manta, sont très appréciés pour les loisirs et la pêche sportive.

*La réserve du paysage „Codrii Tigheci”* est la plus importante de son genre dans le sud de la République. Elle couvre une superficie de 2519 ha (en districts Leova et Cantemir) ou qui ne représente que 2% de l'unité physique-géographique Collines de Tigheci. La réserve respective est une oasis unique de la flore, avec les secteurs représentatifs de la flore centrale européenne (chêne, frêne, orme, érable) avec de nombreuses espèces végétales des Balkans et la Méditerranée (chêne pubescent, cerisier), qui ont été maintenus près des villages Iargara et Larguta. Dans la réserve sont trouvés neuf espèces de plantes rares incluses dans le Livre Rouge, y compris: le bleuet (*Centaurea cyanus*), l'épipactis pourpre (*Epipactis purpurata*), la céphalanthère rouge (*Cephalanthera rubra*), perce-neige (*Galanthus nivalis*) et d'autres.

Avec l'exception des zones naturelles protégées par l'état, on jouit d'une grande popularité dans la rivière Prut, le lac Costești-Stânca, les étangs et les forêts communales, mais ces objectifs sont utilisés presque exclusivement par des habitants dans le but de loisir.

**Les eaux minérales.** Par rapport au bassin du Dniestr, le bassin du Prut est plus pauvre en sources minérales d'importance thérapeutique. Les plus précieuses sources minérales sont à Cahul, sur lequel est fondée la station balnéaire „Nufărul Alb” (Nénuphar blanc), et à Nemteni du district Hâncești. L'eau minérale de Cahul se réfère aux eaux sulfureuses, thermique faible, avec une forte concentration d'iode et de brome, réputé pour le traitement des maladies gastro-intestinales, rhumatismales, locomotrices et post-traumatiques [8]. Les sources minérales de Nemteni sont situées en face de la station balnéaire Baile Drânceni sur la rive droite de la Prut, ont la composition physico-chimique (sulfureuse et chlorée-sodique) et des effets thérapeutiques similaires, en particulier pour le traitement des maladies rhumatismales, mais qui ne sont pas exploitées. Les sources minérales se trouvent aussi près de la Larga, Cornesti, Ungheni, Cioara et Pogănești (au sud de Nemteni).

#### 4. LA SECTEUR DE LA ROUMANIE

Le potentiel touristique du secteur roumain du bassin de la rivière Prut est représenté par: zones forestières et aquatiques de l'importance récréative et situées à proximité de villages, parcs et jardins publics dans les grandes villes; la plaine inondable de la rivière avec des paysages spectaculaires, ressources halieutiques et des colonies bruyantes d'oiseaux; monuments naturels et des sources minérales curatives. Comparé avec la République de Moldova, le fond d'aires naturelles protégées du secteur roumain (tableaux 1 et 2) est moins nombreuses (39 vers 68) et occupe une surface plus petite (17 000 ha vers 43 000 ha).

Si dans le secteur de la République de Moldova, les aires naturelles protégées, en particulier les monuments géologiques, les réserves du paysage et les réserves forestières sont situées uniformément dans tout le bassin, alors que dans le secteur roumain, la plupart des aires naturelles protégées sont concentrées dans la plaine inondable du Prut

et sur ses terrasses (Figure 1). Aussi, dans le plaine inondable de la rivière Prut sont trouvées les plus grandes aires protégées dans le secteur roumain, y compris: Parc Naturel „Lunca Joasă a Prutului Inferior” (Plaine Basse du Prut Inférieur) dans le comté de Galati (8247 ha), la réserve naturelle „Râul Prut” (Rivière Prut) du comté de Iasi (4316 ha), et la zone de protection de avifaune „Le Lac Stânca-Costești” (2 950 ha) dans le comté de Botosani [1]. Ces trois aires protégées occupent 15500 ha ou 91% de la surface totale des aires naturelles protégées du secteur roumain du bassin Prut (tableau 2).

**Nombre (nr.) et la surface (ha) d'aires naturelles protégées dans le bassin du Prut**

**Tableau 2**

La catégorie du aires naturelles protégées	Botosani		Iasi		Vaslui		Galati		Total	
	nr.	ha	nr.	ha	nr.	ha	nr.	ha	nr.	ha
forestières	3	142	8	417			5	424	16	983
botaniques	1	10							1	10
floristiques			2	52					2	52
géologique et floristique	2	2							2	2
paléontologiques				10.						
			4	4	1	10	1	49	6	69
ichtyologiques			5	4364					5	4364
aquatiques			2	128					2	128
d'oiseaux	1	2950					4	8445	5	11395
	7	3104	21	4971	1	10	10	8918	39	17003

Source: préparé par d'auteurs après *Liste des aires naturelles protégées dans la Roumanie*.

**Les réserves forestières et floristique** occupent environ la moitié du nombre total de zones naturelles protégées (20 de la 39), sont représentées par des forêts avec une importance écologique, économique et historique spéciale. L'extrême nordique de la région d'étude, en particulier les forêts de Suharau, Ibanesti et Hudesti (fig. 1) [1], [13] conserve les vestiges de la légendaire Forêt de Cosmin, et des forêts inondables, en particulier les peupliers, hébergement des colonies de nombreuses espèces d'oiseaux précieux, typiques aux écosystèmes humides. Une haute valeur écologique et écotouristique possède: les hêtres séculaire de la Stuhaoasa (60, 7 ha) du commune Suharau; les aulnes du Horlăceni; les forêts de Quercus robur et Quercus petraea de Ibănești et Hudești; la Forêt Teioasa (à l'est de Darabani) avec Poiana du Four Oaks, plantés, selon la légende, par Ștefan cel Mare, souverain de Moldavie, en revenant de la bataille de Lipnic. En outre, les forêts de cette région sont importantes pour l'économie locale qui a assuré, en tout temps, le bien-être de la population locale et le commerce avec les zones voisines. Au sud du lac Costesti Stanca, en face de la réserve scientifique Padurea Domneasca est située la réserve forestière Ciornohal (76, 5 ha), qui vise à établir des relations fonctionnelles entre les composants précieux des réseaux écologiques de la zone transfrontière respectif.

Dans le comté d'Iasi se trouvent 8 réserves forestières et 2 réserves floristiques avec une superficie de 472 ha. Parmi eux, peut mentionner: hêtres séculaire de la Humosu (73, 3 ha) située à l'est de ville Hârlău; réserves floristiques „Fânețele Seculare (les prairies séculiers) Valea lui David” (46 ha) et „Sărăturile (les Pluviers) du Valea Ilenei”; réserves forestières Dancu-Iași, Icușeni, Medeleni (128 ha) et Miroslava (68 ha) à proximité de Iași et qui sont largement utilisé pour loisir de population du centre urbaine respectif. Toutefois, en raison des flux de loisirs non organisés, l'insuffisance des structures de loisirs, des

campings et des places de stationnement, sous-développement du système d'assainissement, mais le touristique et écologique culture inférieure des visiteurs, seattesteun impact massif sur les paysages naturels et de la biodiversité, en particulier le long des routes principales.

Une grande valeur écotouristique et récréative possèdent *les réserves forestières situées au nord-est de Galati*, y compris: Garboavele (230 ha), Breana-Roscani (78, 3 ha), Poganesi (33, 5 ha), Talasmani (20 ha) et „Ostrov Prut”située à l'embouchure du Danube [1]. Ils sont destinés à former avec la réserve scientifique „Prut Basse”et la zone humide de protection autour d'elle – un noyau de la protection transfrontière et à assurer, conjointement avec le Parc Naturel „Lunca Joasă a Prutului Inferior” (Flood Plain du Prut Inférieur), la réalisation d'un couloir écologique fonctionnel avec la réserve de biosphère „Delta du Danube”. Parc Naturel „Lunca Joasă a Prutului Inferior” a une superficie de 8247 ha et est la plus grande aire protégée dans le secteur roumain du bassin de la rivière Prut. Cela comprend la plaine inondabledu Prutde l'entrée dans le comté de Galati jusqu'à l'embouchure dans le Danube(145 km). Plus 60 % du Parc est occupé par des surfaces aquatiques, y compris: lac Brates utilisé, en particulier pour la pêche et les loisirs;lacs Pochina et Vlasca avec le statut de réserve naturelle d'oiseaux et ichtyologique. Forêts de la plaine inondable occupent le quart de la superficie du Parc et de prairies humides et les roselières – 6-10%. En conséquence de la proximité des villes Galati et Braila, d'accès facile et d'infrastructure touristique existante, les forêts et les pêches objectifs dans cette zonesont plus fréquemmentvisités.

D'une valeur récréatif augmenté bénéficie la rivière Prut et lacs de la région respectif, très apprécié par les pêcheurs amateurs et professionnels, non seulement dans les proche zones, mais aussi d'autres régions du pays et au-delà[11]. Application du statut d'aires protégées, et réglementation strict de la pêche dans ces plans d'eau a réduit considérablementle braconnage, la capture et le commerce illicites des produits de la pêche. Aussi, a été modifiée la destinationde pêche prioritaire de la période précédente avec destination de loisir et tourisme. En outre, en raison de l'augmentation des revenus et de la mobilité de la population, flux de visiteurs ont intensifiée significative. Dans le comté de Botosani, le plus visités sont: les lacs Costesti-Stanca, Drășcani (440 hectares) dans la Vallée de Satna, Balta Lată, Negreni (dans la Vallée Bașeu) Catamarasti, Cheval Blanc (calcul Alb), Mileanca; étangs Hănești, Havârna, Ghireni, Volovat, Dorohoi, Bașeu. En raison de la croissance des produits et la mobilité de la population, les flux de visiteurs ont augmenté considérablement. Dans le Comté de Botosani, le plus visités sont: les lacs Costesti-Stanca, Drascani (440 ha) du vallée Satnei, Balta Lata, Negreni (du vallée Baseu), Catamarasti, Cal Alb, Mileanca; les étangs Hanesti, Havarna, Ghireni, Volovat, Dorohoi, Baseu [6, p. 294]. Aussi, d'une grande popularité bénéficiées les objectif aquatiques à proximité de villes, Iași, Galați, et Hârlău.

Dans le secteur roumaine du bassin de la rivière Prut, il définit 4 zones distinctes de la concentration des **monuments géologiques et paléontologiques**: 1) *la zone Costesti-Stanca* autour des localités Stefanesti et Ripiceni; 2) *la zone Cucuteni*, avec le point fossiliser de Baiceni; 3) *la zone Iași-Raducaneni*, avec des monuments paléontologiques Dealul (Colline) Repedea(au sud du Iasi), Bohotin-Pietrosu et Pârăul Pietrei(zone Răducăneni); 4) Malusteni (Vaslui) - Beresti (Galati). Il est remarquable que, dans les zones mentionnées sont les plus grands et les plus précieux sites archéologiques dans le bassin de la rivière Prut [12], [13].

**5. LES EAUX MINÉRALES.** Comme mentionné antérieur, par rapport aux bassins hydrographiques voisins (Nistru et Siret), le bassin du Prut est plus pauvre dans les

eaux minérales curatives. Toutefois, dans le milieu et inférieure course du ce bassin, il définit 6 zones relativement riches en eau minérale (figure 1), que compris les sources situées sur les deux côtés de la Prut. Dans la partie du nord de la région l'étude, les plus riches sources d'eaux minérales sont autour de localités Radauti-Prut et Darabani en Roumanie, Larga – en République de Moldova et dans les villages voisins de l'Ukraine. Dans la partie centrale de la région sont distingués 3 zones principaux: 1) Hârlău-Târgu Frumos; 2) Iași-Ungheni-Cornești (République de Moldova); 3) Răducăneni-Bohotin. La première zone comprend des sources d'eau minérales d'importance locale à Deleni, Pârcovaci, Băiceni-Strunga et Gănești [4, p. 222]. Dans la zone Iasi-Ungheni, sources riches d'eaux minérales sont trouvées aux quartiers Copou et Nicolina dans la ville Iasi, ainsi que les sources d'eaux minérales d'importance locale de villages Breazu, Larga Jijia, Victoria et Barnová, situé près de Iasi.

Aujourd'hui, à fins thérapeutiques seulement sont exploitées seulement les sources de Nicolina, avec d'eaux minérales sulfureuses, chlorées-sodiques et iodées, utilisée efficacement pour traiter des maladies rhumatismales, traumatique, respiratoire, nerveux, gynécologique. *D'eaux sulfureuses de Nicolina posséder meilleures propriétés curatives en Roumanie et parmi les meilleurs de l'Europe.* En raison de grandes réserves, de valeur thérapeutique supérieure, ainsi que de l'emplacement dans la ville Iași. *Nicolina est la seule station balnéaire d'importance nationale et internationale dans le secteur roumain du bassin Prut.*

Très précieux sont les sources de Strunga, avec d'eaux minérales sulfureuses, bicarbonatées, sulfatées, calciques, sodiques, magnésienne et hypotonique et ont été utilisées pour traiter les rhumatismes, affections hépatiques, gastro-intestinales et respiratoires. Jusqu'en 1996, ici a été fonctionnée une station balnéaire, très demandée par la population de la région, notamment par les travailleurs ordinaires dans l'industrie et l'agriculture. En outre, pendant la période socialiste ont été exploitées les sources d'eaux minérales de Pârcovaci, Breazu-Băiceni et Răducăneni, mais maintenant est utilisé seulement pour les besoins des ménages. L'eau des sources minérales à Raducăneni est bicarbonatée, sulfatée, calcique, magnésienne et hypotonique et est recommandée pour le traitement de maladies gastro-intestinales.

Dans la partie du Sud du bassin de la rivière Prut se remarquent 2 zones riches en sources d'eaux minérales curatives: Huși-Drănceni et Murgeni-Cahul. La première zone comprend les sources aux Dobrina (Huși) et de Drănceni sur la rive droite et aux Nemteni, Cioara et Pogănești sur la rive gauche de la rivière Prut. Les eaux minérales de la **station balnéaire Baile Drănceni** sont utilisées pour traiter les maladies rhumatismales et gynécologiques. La station est intensément sollicitée par les personnes âgées dans le comté de Vaslui et les comtés voisins. En face de la Baile Drănceni, sur la rive gauche de la Prut, sont trouvées les sources d'eaux minérales de Nemteni, qui ont des propriétés thérapeutiques similaires, mais ne sont pas exploitées à des fins thérapeutiques ou d'embouteillage. Les sources de Dobrinet de Murgeni sont exploitées pour les besoins domestiques et pour l'embouteillage.

## 6. LE POTENTIEL TOURISTIQUE ANTHROPIQUE. SECTEUR DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA

Par rapport au secteur roumain, dans le secteur de la République de Moldova, le potentiel touristique anthropique est moins précieux en comparaison avec le potentiel naturel. Cependant, cet espace se distingue par l'héritage ethnoculturel très riche et précieuse. Très populaires sont les métiers et les occupations traditionnels, les vignobles et

les caves. Dans l'ensemble, peut être délimitée environ 70 attractions d'origine anthropique, y compris 13 sites archéologiques, environ 20 musées, quatre grand ensemble mémorial, 14 centres d'artisanat, 15 centres religieux, les moulins à eau et éoliennes et un seul centre de station balnéaire – „Nufărul Alb” (Nénuphar blanc) à Cahul (figure 1).

La vaste majorité des *sites archéologiques* avec les empreintes pertinentes de l'homme préhistorique ont été trouvés dans les grottes des récifs coralliens fossiles dans la Valle de Prut Moyen [10, p. 104-122], en particulier au Corjeuti (Briceni) et Branzeni, Trinca (Edineț) Horodiste, Duruitoarea et Varatic (Rascani), Butesti et Cobani (Glodeni). Malheureusement, la plupart de ces récifs fossiles et des sites archéologiques d'une valeur inestimable ont été barbaquement transformée en des carrières et des décharges non autorisées. Une grande valeur historique avoir les Vagues Haute et Basse de Trajan.

La plupart des quelque **20 musées** sont consacrés à l'histoire de ces localités et aux plus importants des événements et des périodes, qui ont profondément marqué l'histoire du pays et la vie de la communauté. Les pages les plus importantes de l'histoire sont dédiés à la aux Deuxième Guerre mondiale, aux déportations et collectivisation forcée. Aussi, la plupart des musées ont des riches expositions ethnographiques, et des pièces d'artisanat. Un rôle secondaire il présente des expositions sur l'histoire naturelle, de la flore et de la faune locale représentatif. Comme principales attractions touristiques peuvent servir les musées dans les les villes Edineț, Ungheni, Leova et Cahul, aussi bien que dans les villages Ocnîța (Ocnîța), Larga (Briceni), Gordinești et Branzeni (Edineț), Ciuciulea (Rascani), Bisericani (Glodeni), Sculeni (Ungheni), Stoianovca (Cantemir) et Giurgiulesti (Cahul) [3], [5].

Pendant la période soviétique ont été érigés des *ensembles mémoriels* dédiés à l'alliance russo-moldave contre l'Empire Ottoman, comme au Pleșeni (Cantemir) et Badicul Modovenesc (Cahul). Aussi, dans cette période ont été érigés des nombreux ensembles mémoriels dédiés à la victoire soviétique dans la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, y compris des obélisques, des funérailles et des tanks tels que du Leuseni (Ungheni). Dans la période postsoviétique étaient équipés et des plusieurs mémoriaux dédiés aux soldats roumains qui sont morts dans des combats dans la Bessarabie, y compris Țiganca (Cantemir), Mingir (Hâncești) et ville Nisporeni. Le cimetière du Tiganca ont été enterrés les restes de 1 020 soldats et officiers roumain tués dans les combats en Juin-Juillet 1941.

*Caves et vignobles* de la vallée de la rivière Prut ont un potentiel touristique élevé, mais est encore mal exploité. Très populaires sont les vins locaux dans le cours inférieur du Prut, en particulier dans les villes de Leova, Nisporeni, Ungheni et Cahul (annexe 1), dans les villages Slobozia-Mare et Brânza (Cahul), Pleșeni et Țiganca (Cantemir), Tomai, Iargara et Sărăteni (Leova), Voinescu et Leușeni (Hâncești), Vărzărești et Mileștii Mari (Nisporeni), Cornești et Valea Mare (Ungheni). En règle générale, au mois d'octobre, dans les centres des districts et dans certains villages sont organisés des festivals du vin [8].

Les villages de la vallée de Prut se distinguent par *les coutumes et les traditions populaires* bien conservés et, en particulier, par la musique et la danse folklorique uniquement. Très populaires sont: les collectifs folkloriques et les danses enchantresses des villages Slobozia Mare, Văleni, Colibași, Cotihana, Crihana-Veche (Cahul); les danses anciennes dans les villages Cioara, Dancu et Cotul Morii (Hâncești), Sărata-Răzeși (Leova), qui ont été présentée non seulement par des danseurs professionnels, mais aussi par les villageois ordinaires, jeunes et vieux, des amateurs du folklore.

Les *objectifs touristiques religieux* sont moins pertinents pour le bassin de la rivière Prut. Dans le même temps, il a été conservé des vieilles églises (18ème et 19ème siècles) en bois et en pierre, qui sont souvent des légendes vivantes bien gardés dans la mémoire des populations locales. Parmi les vieilles églises en bois méritent d'être visités de ceux dans les

villages Larga (la plus belle église en bois dans République de Moldova) [5, p. 85, 124] et Pererita (Briceni), Rotunda et Stolniceni (Edineț), Petrușeni et Hiliuți (Râșcani), Cobani (Glodeni). Les plus populaires anciennes églises en pierre sont trouvées dans les villages Tomai (Leova) et Ciuciulea (Glodeni), dans la ville Ungheni (Figure 1). Le monastère de Văzărești (Nisporeni) – une des plus anciens monastères (1420) en Bessarabie est situé dans un endroit silencieux et pittoresque. L'église „St. Archanges Michel et Gabriel” dans Tomai est construit (1883) après l'ancien style russe et dispose de 6 coupoles et ancienne iconostase.

Malgré des prémisses locales et la promotion active en période récente, dans le bassin Prut il y a un nombre insignifiant (15) de *centres d'artisanat*. L'artisanat en pierre est plus répandue dans les régions du nord qui est riches en matières premières pour ces fins, surtout dans les villages Criva et Drepcăuți (Briceni), Trinca, Gordinești et Brânzeni (Edineț). La poterie et l'artisanat en bois sont plus répandus dans les régions boisées centrales, notamment dans les districts Nisporeni et Hâncești. À Iurceni (Nisporeni) est le plus célèbre centres de poterie du pays, qu'on jouit d'une réputation internationale grâce à dynasties de potiers et à Festival „À la Foire des potiers” qui se tient chaque année à la fin de juillet. Les villages du Vallée de Prut sont célèbres grâce à *l'artisanat en bois et osier*, y compris la fabrication des tambours, des triptyques et iconostases, des chaises et tables [5, p. 126]. La production de bois est spécifique pour mai boisés districts et villages avec une tradition séculaire dans ce domaine, comme Balauresti et Grozești (Nisporeni), Cărpini et Lăpușna (Hancești), Larga (Briceni). Le tissage de la tige est plus répandu dans le cours inférieur de la Prut [3]. Aussi, les points d'attraction touristique peuvent desservir les villages avec la tradition conservée dans la fabrication de vêtements et tissus de laine, de chanvre et de coton, en particulier: Larga (Briceni), Brânzeni (Edineț), Văzărești et Mileștii Mari (Nisporeni), Slobozia-Mare (Cahul). Dans le village Lapusna (Hancesti) - mère patrie du souverain A. Lăpușneanu est conservé un moulin à vent et le Tetcani (Briceni) et Branzeni (Edineț) sont des moulins à eau fonctionnels.

## 7. SECTEUR DE LA ROUMANIE

Bassin de la rivière Prut dans le secteur roumaine possède également un patrimoine historique et culturel très valeurs, qui comprennent plus de 720 cibles, dont 60% (444) sont situés dans le comté Iasi et plus ¼ (190) – dans le comté de Botoșani (Tableau 3).

**Objectifs historiques du bassin de la rivière Prut (secteur roumaine)**

**Tableau 3.**

Catégories	Botoșani	Iasi	Vaslui	Galați	Total
Les sites archéologiques	65	109	11	10	195
nécropole	15	2	2	2	21
fortifications	5	10	3	7	25
ponts	2	5	0	0	7
Monastères	5	8	0	0	13
Églises en pierre	26	105	8	2	141
Églises en bois	26	16	8	0	50
Maisons commémoratifs	19	106	23	0	148
manoirs	11	12	2	0	25
palaces	2	14	1	1	18
musées	4	8	2	1	15
théâtres	1	1	0	0	2
monuments	9	48	3	4	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>724</b>

Source: préparé par l'auteur après *Liste des monuments historiques dans la Roumanie* [10].

Dans les comtés de Vaslui et Galati sont un nombre insignifiant de sites historiques, qui est expliqué par la petite taille du bassin de la rivière Prut dans ces comtés, et en étalant beaucoup moins de ces sites historiques. En outre, la partie de sud de la Moldavie était définitivement plus pauvres, moins peuplée et plus fréquemment soumis à des invasions de peuples nomades et armées turques, des sécheresses et d'autres catastrophes naturelles.

La plus grande catégorie de sites historiques est *les sites archéologiques*, qui représentent environ un quart du nombre total des objectifs. En outre, les sites archéologiques ayant une importance touristique inférieure, et la plupart d'entre eux ne sont pas équipés pour les touristes visitant. Plus de 1/2 (109) à partir de sites archéologiques ont été découverts à Iași, et 1/3 d'entre eux - Botoșani. Dans les comtés de Vaslui et Galati sont un nombre insignifiant de sites archéologiques (21). En générale, les sites archéologiques les plus précieux sont situés dans le périmètre de plus précieux monuments géologiques et paléontologiques, y compris les sites de la: Ștefănești, Mitoc, Horodiștea, Prisăcani et Suharău du comté Botoșani; Răducăneni, Băiceni, Bălțați, Belcești, Țigănași, Iași, Dancu du comté Iași; Bărlăiești et Mălușteni du comté Vaslui; Berești et Vânători du comté Galați (figure 1). La plupart des *nécropoles* ont été découverts dans le comté de Botoșani à Movileni, Corlateni et Ștefănești. Dans la partie du sud, est observé „Vagues du Traian Basse et Haute”, avec signification historiquemajeure, mais insuffisamment équipées pour les visiteurs ordinaire.

Dans le bassin du Prut sont situés ≈200 *objets religieux* inclus dans la liste des monuments historiques[12], y compris plus de 140 églises en pierre et 50 églises en bois (tableau 3). Les *vieilles églises en pierre* prédominent dans les villes et grand villages, en particulier dans le comté d'Iași et dans la partie du sud de comté de Botoșani et *églises en bois* – dans les zones boisées de la Vallée du Prut, en particulier dans le comté de Botoșani. Par rapport de comté Suceava, dans les comtés du bassin de la rivière Prut sont un nombre net inférieur (13) de monastères, dont la plupart (8) sont situés dans le comté d'Iași. Cependant, au cours des dernières décennies, dans le périmètre du bassin Prut a été construit de nombreuses nouvelles églises et monastères particulièrement belle qu'attirent de nombreux visiteurs et pèlerins. Parmi les objets les plus précieux religieux situés dans le bassin de la rivière Prut se remarquer: la Cathédrale Métropolitaine „St. Parascheva” (XIXsec.) du Iași; *monastères* „Sts Trois Hiérarques” (1637), Cetățuia (XVIIsec. ), Golia (1582) et Frumoasa (1587) du Iași, Agafton, Zosinet Cosula du comté Botoșani, „D. Cantemir” du comté Vaslui (1692). Une valeur historique et architectonique particulier représente *les églises anciennes en pierre*, y compris: „St. George” (1551), Uspenia (1552), „St. Nicolas-Popauți” (1496) et l'Église d'Arménien (1782) du Botoșani; „St. Nicolas” du Dorohoi (1495), „Assomption” du Dimăcheni (1612), „St. Parascheva” du Ștefănești (1640), „Sf. Voievozi” du Hudești (1759) – comté de Botoșani [11], [6, p. 296-298]; les églises, „Sf. Ioan cel Nou” (1507) du Sîpote, „St. Nicolas” du Aroneanu (1594) et Prisăcani (1830), „St. Parascheva” du Cotnari (1493) et TarguFrumos (1541), „St. Dumitru” du Harlau (1535), „St. Archanges” du Cucuteni, Letcani (1662), „Sf. Voievozi” du Moșna (sec. XVIIsec. ) – comté de Iași; „Biserica Domneasca” du Huși (1495) et „Assomption” du Roșcani (1827), comté de Galați. Très précieux sont les *vieilles églises en bois*, parmi lesquelles: „St. Nicolas” du Prisăcani (1657), Radauti Prut (XVIIIsec. ) et Havârna (1795), „St. Arhanges” du Agafton (1747), „l'Assomption” du Vaculești (1712), „Sf. Voievozi” du Baluseni (1740) – comté de Botoșani; „Annonciation” du Bradicești (1691) et Sinești (1717), „St. George” du Pausești (1643), „St. Trinity” du Popești (1700) –

comté de Iași; „St. Nicolas” du Mălușteni (1814), „Sf. Voievozi” du Vetrișoiaia (1760), „La Nativité” du Murgeni (1831) – comté de Vaslui (figure 1).

Parmi les objectifs d'architecture se distingue des *maisons commémoratives et des manoirs de boyard* (tableau 3). Maisons mémorielles sont prédominants dans les zones urbaines, en particulier dans la ville de Iasi, où il y a environ 100 de ces objectifs, dont la plupart date du XIXe siècle et représente les maisons de résidence ou le bureau des écrivains, des politiciens, musiciens, peintres, marchands de renom. En dehors de municipalité Iasi peut être à visiter: Maison „Tautu” du Harlau (sec. XVII), Maison Mémoriel „Ion Neculce” du Prigoreni – comté de Iași; Maison „N. Iorga” du Botoșani, maison „Teodor Bals” du Darabani, maisons „Moruz” (1850) et „Enescu” (1860) du Dorohoi, Maison de Naissance de St. Ioan Hozevitul de Crăiniceni, – comté de Botoșani; Maison „Ralea” du Huși et autres.

La majorité absolue des manoirs de boyards sont situées à Iasi (12) et Botoșani (11) à distances disponibles (en XVIII-XIX siècles) vers les principaux centres urbains. Sont recommandés pour les visiteurs: dans comté de Iasi - Cours Royales de Cotnari, Harlau et Iasi, avec les célèbres vignobles et caves, manoirs Cantacuzino de Căpeleni et Cucuteni (fig. 1), manoir Negruzzi de village Lunca Prutului; dans comté de Botoșani – manoirs Boldur (1757) du Hudești, Haret du Corlăteni (1760), Ratos du Săveni (1800), Rosetti du Potești (1825), Capri du Brăiești (1860), Ion Pilat du Miorcani (1830), Mavrocordat du Dângeniet dans comté de Vaslui – manoirs Rale du Huși et Corbu du Mălăiești.

Patrimoine architectural et historique est représenté par les 25 *palais*, dont la plupart sont situés dans Iasi et sont le siège des bâtiments administratifs, l'université culturelle, religieuse et régionale (Moldavie), de comté et de municipalité, ont été construits à la fin du XIXe siècle et au début du XXe siècle. Une attraction touristique présente les palais de la Dynastie Sturdza, le Palais Royal (1726), „Palaces et l'Université de A. I. Cuza”, Palais de la Culture, Métropolitaine Palace, le siège des Mairies de Botoșani et Dorohoi. Mais comme des palais, la majorité absolue des *musées et monuments* sont situés dans Iasi et Botoșani. La plupart des pièces de musée présente le thème historique national et régional, des célébrités qui sont nés et qui ont travaillé ici. Il y a très peu de musées des sciences naturelles et techniques, les musées, etc. La plupart des monuments sont dédiés aux événements et des héros des deux guerres mondiales et de la guerre d'Indépendance, les dirigeants de l'Etat et des gens créatifs de l'époque, la révolte de 1907, etc.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS:

La plupart du potentiel touristique naturel existant du bassin de la rivière Prut est représentée par les espaces naturels protégés, avec un régime d'exploitation et d'accès limité, qui ne permettant pas le développement du tourisme de masse. Forêts et lacs situés à proximité des localités, surtout des centres urbains, sont très sollicités pour non organisés loisir de population locale, mais que ne sont pas accompagnée, en générale, par prestation contre paiement de services touristiques.

Par rapport aux bassins hydrographiques voisins, le bassin du Prut est plus pauvre dans les eaux minérales, et celles existantes sont insuffisamment exploitées en fins thérapeutiques. Dans la région d'étude fonctionnée seulement 3 stations balnéaires (Nicolina, Băile Drânceniși Cahul). En outre, la prédominance de soulagement plaine et la proximité d'hiver stations des Carpates Orientales, limiter considérablement le développement du tourisme et des sports d'hiver dans la région respective.

Malgré le patrimoine historique et culturel très précieux et de son rôle dans l'histoire de la Roumanie et d'édification d'Etat unitaire, les plus objectifs touristiques de la région d'étude sont de l'importance régionale, ne sont pas inclus dans les circuits touristiques majeurs.

Sur la rive gauche de la Prut, la majorité absolue d'objectives touristiques sont situés dans les zones rurales, mais en raison de l'insuffisance de l'hébergement et des structures de loisirs, la plupart des flux touristiques sont réalisés sur la forme d'excursion d'une journée, et des visiteurs reviennent sur le lieu de résidence ou à l'hôtel à Chisinau et Balti. La rive droite du Prut se caractérise par une répartition plus uniforme, et les nombreuses attractions touristiques d'origine anthropique se trouve dans les zones urbaines, surtout dans la ville Iașet Botoșani, dans lequel sont situées la majorité des hébergements et qui attirer les plus grand flux de visiteurs. En outre, les comtés voisins Suceava et Neamt, ainsi que les villes du bassin du fleuve Dniestr, possédées un potentiel touristique plus attrayante et infrastructurel plus développé, ce qui redirige et diminue la intensité des flux touristiques du bassin Prut.

Cependant, le redressement économique de la région, la mise en œuvre de l'Accord d'Association avec l'UE, promotion plus intense de projets culturels et économiques communes, rapprochera de population des deux côtés de la Prut et augmentera l'attractivité touristique de la région respective.

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# SPA TOURISM AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT IN REMETEA, HARGHITA COUNTY, ROMANIA

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**ABSTRACT.** – **SPA Tourism and Territorial Development in Remetea, Harghita County, Romania.** Remetea is a large village in the north-west of the Giurgeu basin. The village is lying at the foot of the Gurghiu volcanic mountains, at an average altitude of 750 meters above sea level. The magmatic hearth of the two enormous volcanic formations of the Gurghiu Mountains emit carbon dioxide which comes to the earth's surface along the river Mureş. These mineral resources have laid the basis of health tourism. The history of Remetea's mineral water baths began in the 1880s when, on the land owned by the Mélikfamily, four mineralwater sources close to each other. The water for bathing was heated in cauldrons. In the heyday of the Remetea baths, in the 1970s, more than ten thousand people have visited each year. Remetea's mineralwaters are recommended for the treatment of many diseases. In 2010-2011, the Remetea baths project, as part of the "Mineral Water Road" project, received funding from the Ministry of Tourism and in collaboration with Harghita County Council a modern treatment center will be built nearby. Besides the mineral waters there are many natural tourist attractions near the village of Remetea. All these natural tourism resources can develop and diversify the touristic services from Remetea.

*Keywords:* mineral water, spa tourism, ecotourism, "Mineral Water Road", Remetea, Harghita

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Remetea village is located in a spectacular area of Harghita County. Within the village there are springs that have already been studied and which have therapeutic properties. Surrounding springs is in the public domain (Munteanu et al., 1978). The local council shall prepare a development project, which will consider the use of these mineral resources as a basis for achieving a spa center.

Remetea is a large village in the north-west of the Giurgeu basin (Laczkó-Sznetmiklósi, 2003). The village is lying at the foot of the Gurghiu volcanic mountains, at an average altitude of 750 meters above sea level. According to the 2011 census, the population is 6171 inhabitants. The total surface area of the village is 10774 hectares (Buz, Dombay, 2008).

The magmatic hearth of the two enormous volcanic formations of the Gurghiu Mountains – called "Fâncelu" and "Bacta" – emit carbon dioxide which comes to the earth's surface along the river Mureş, either in the form of carbonated mineral water or gas. The mineral waters sources in the village fall into two categories, depending on how they

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originally emerged. The first category is that of man-made mineral wells, such as the one in the center of the village. The other category is of mineral water sources lying over the fault line along the river Mureș, where there are both natural springs and excavated wells. Some of the many mineral water springs in Remetea have been analysed. They form part of the group of waters with a high content of sodium, magnesium, hydrogen carbonate and chlorine (Kisgyörgy, Kristó, 1978).

These mineral resources have laid the basis of health tourism (Pricăjan, 1975). The history of Remetea's mineral water baths began in the 1880s when, on the land owned by the Mélikfamily, four mineralwater sources close to each other. The water for bathing was heated in cauldrons. The first baths have been destroyed by floods in 1913. In the hundred years that has gone by since then, the baths have passed through the hands of several owners, and have been re-developed several times. In the heyday of the Remetea baths, in the 1970s, more than ten thousand people have visited each year.

Remetea's mineralwaters are recommended for the treatment of many diseases. In 2010-2011, the Remetea baths project, as part of the "Mineral Water Road" project, received funding from the Ministry of Tourism and in collaboration with Harghita County Council a modern treatment center will be built nearby. Besides the mineral waters there are many natural tourist attractions near the village of Remetea. For example: „După Luncă” swamp p.a.; „Piemontul Nyires” from Borzont botanical p.a.; Mlaștina cea Mare” swampland botanical p.a., „PiemontulNyires” from Borzont botanical p.a.; Mlaștinacea Mare” swampland botanical p.a., Remetea and so on (Cocean et al., 2013).

The sustainable tourism is the basis of long-term tourism(Dombay et al., 2008, Dombay, 2006). Therefore, it is necessary to consider the problems of compatibility with the environment and sustainable development,as well the existing structures and services.In preparing the current study there are some strategic elements that must be taken into account:

- Environmental sustainability;
- Conservation of mineral water springs;
- Introduction to the touristic area of natural elements;
- Preservation the unspoiled countryside.

All these things must be made step-by-step, to ensure a gradual development. This study has individual character, because it is linked to a well-defined location. Pending the development of sustainable tourism must take into account the opportunities, risks and chances of success. They can be carried out successfully only if there is a well elaborated basic concept, resulting finally in a spa tourism center, which become a leader in this area. The concept must be the basis for the next steps of development, and economic calculations as an essential part of the concept itself. The calculations are based on empirical values and customized planning. Based on feasibility studies and projects can be estimated the costs related to the construction itself (Nathan, 2010).

This study is developed individually about a specific location. This is a perspective project, which aims to realize a spa tourism in the Remetea area. The result should be a treatment and recreation complex with leadership characteristics in the region.

The main factors in achieving the economic calculations are: what are the strategic objectives of the community, future spa center must harmonize with the environment, exploitation of mineral waters, tourism services that will be introduced (spas, accommodation, meals etc.), collateral types of tourism (ecotourism, cycling). All this must be combined with tourism demand, and with the probable niche segment (László, Dombay, 2006).

## 2. CONDITIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

For the location of a spa hotel in Remetea must be considered besides the general economic and structural conditions, three other important factors:

- the characteristics and the strategy of the place;
- the exigency of future customers;
- the landscape and the architecture.

Remetea is not a tourist destination and does not has a formed touristic image on which tourism could be developed. At the same time the locality has a few features that may be interesting for tourists. For foreigners it is a beautiful region with a peaceful atmosphere. At the same time here functioned until in the 90s a nationally known resort.

At present there is a change in the way of travel and spend time, which results in the changing of travel services. The accommodation companies must respond to this change, the projects must be based on new demands and requirements.

The place of the spa complex is located on the outskirts of the village in a very nice environment. This landscape and the rural character are the most important architectural design of the spa complex.

The strength of the place is given by the presence of mineral waters, by the history and traditions related to them. The community uses a "step-by-step" strategy. Therefore the development concepts must be modular and constantly changing. The development must take account of environmental protection, and the use of local resources is a priority. The management of the village wants to keep the character of the locality, as the tourists feel a rural experience.

All current trends indicates that the nature and its perception directly influences the choice of accommodation. It is because, that the person wants to be closer to the nature. The magnificent natural and cultural elements in the village neighborhood, the healing mineral waters, and the panorama of the Eastern Carpathians form a unique natural landscape.

This space must receive great importance when it will begin design, siting and layout of buildings. The interaction between nature and traditional architecture with mineral waters must be the basic element in the elaboration of this project.

The treatment hotel from Remetea must be a comfortable hotel that will operate all year. The SPA centers does not have a pronounced seasonality as other accommodation bases, on the contrary, if they have an "indoor" infrastructure when the weather is bad they produce higher incomes.

The place is suitable for individual tourists, who wants to recover their health in an original natural environment. The healing springs represents the originality of the site, elements that can attracts many tourists.

The attractive elements of Remetea:

Location: the characteristics of curative springs, the site characteristics, history, stories, the nature.

Architecture: interesting natural elements.

Daily activities which adapts to the requirements of tourists.

The experience with tourists.

In the case of this atypical complex there will be no large swimming pools, sauna cabins, all these infrastructure elements will have individual character. This is the concept of "personalized tourism", of the "luxury of simplicity".

The private nature of tourism can be ensured by several methods, for example:

- private SPA;
- bases individual accommodation;
- stay established by the tourist;
- modular services which can be acquired;
- the small wellness facilities can be used individually.

The small tourist units are more suitable to satisfy the desire for "private tourism" of the tourists, than the bigger ones. That is why in Europe appear increasingly the "Chalet-Hotel" systems.

Taking into account the rural character of the site and the idea of sustainable tourism, it would be well that to be used the traditional buildings, crafts and local craftsmen in this way will be create a link between the modern and traditional.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study is based on the following principles:

- preserving the rural character of the village;
- the use of existing resources;
- the integration of the local community;
- health care;
- the luxury of simplicity;
- nature, landscape, ecology.

*Preserving the rural character of the village* can be achieved by preserving the traditional architecture: the use of old buildings, the new buildings be made from traditional materials and in traditional style

*The use of existing resources, the integration of the local community, health care:* the use of mineral waters to insure for various tourist services. For example: treatment and wellness services, outdoors and indoor pools, personalized treatment opportunities. It is important that the local population to be involved in tourism by economical activities (pensions, restaurants, recreational activities).

*Old materials - new requirements.* To achieve the "luxury of simplicity" (fig. 1) it takes much care when we want to use old materials to satisfy new requirements. The whole environment must be represented in the architecture of the new touristic complex.

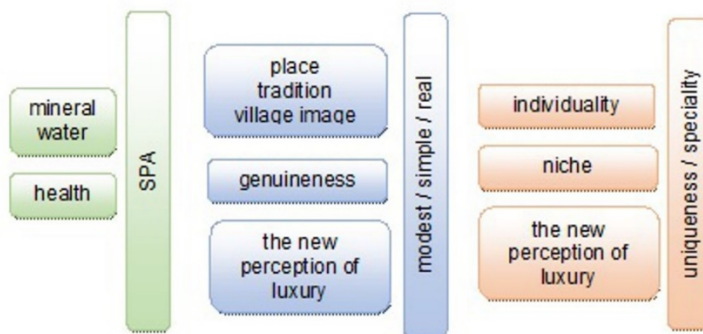


Fig. 1. Personal SPA, luxury of simplicity.

*Permanent - seasonal exploitation.* The cold and humid temperate climate with just 80 sunny days per year does not represent a characteristic tourist destination, but as a wellness resort that will work in the less pleasant periods.

*Quality and price.* The infrastructure must be of high quality and ensure the "luxury of simplicity" at a price as low as possible. At the same time the relation quality services – low prices will result in a beautiful revelation for tourists who want to come back.

Establishing the target groups: according to demand, age groups, wellness, balneary treatment, country of origin, family status (married, single, couples) with or without children, individual tourists, organized groups.

### **3.1. SWOT analysis**

#### Strengths

- unbuilt property, with healing water source;
- the ownership of the property is clear;
- picturesque environment, beautiful panorama;
- a very good location;
- strong traditions, a good traditional spatial planning, there is a tradition in spa tourism;
- modular services;
- political will for implementation.

#### Weaknesses

- is hard to reach by public transportation;
- the touristic infrastructure is underdeveloped near the village;
- Remetea is not a tourist destination and has not a touristic image.

#### Opportunities

- there are no such services in the area;
- marketing advantage;
- this concept make possible a step-by-step development;
- there are good conditions for achieving "the niche conception".

#### Threats

- inconsistency during the project implementation;
- the economic situation in Romania and tourists emitting areas;
- an unsuitable market conception;
- must be prepared the know-how for the development.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Ecotouristical development of Remetea is possible mainly due to natural conditions (protected areas, Natura2000 Parks and National Parks in the region). This can be diversified by the touristic and sustainable exploitation of mineral water springs located settlement. This is the fundament used by municipality implementing a health center.

The cultural capability of the regions should be added, on which new touristic services can be developed. Based on all these we could speak about ecotourism, health tourism, cultural tourism and rural tourism regarding Remetea.

With all these possible opportunities and threats should be considered: lack of infrastructure, deficient marketing, financial possibilities which are limited for the

settlement. The serious intent of the political factor (local and regional political actors) in realizing the proposed development could be considered vital.

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# LE TOURISTE, EST-IL PRET A DEVENIR UN « SMART-TOURISTE »? L'ENJEU DES TERRITOIRES CONNECTES ET DES SMART-CITES ET DES SMART DESTINATIONS

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**ABSTRACT.** – Le touriste, est-il prêt à devenir un «smart-touriste»? L'enjeu des territoires connectés et des smart-cities et des smart destinations. L'e-tourisme a bouleversé l'ensemble des valeurs et a transformé la chaîne des valeurs marchands et commerciaux, l'enjeu du e-tourisme et de la mobilité a entraîné l'amélioration de la gestion des produits commerciaux et touristiques. Dans la même mesure, le développement des villes et des agglomérations urbaines et en parallèle des technologies ont facilité l'accès et les échanges entre les villes, les pouvoirs publics, la gouvernance et l'organisation urbaine avec les outils informatiques et plus particulièrement les outils de recueil et de centralisation de l'information. Démarche plus connue actuellement sous le nom de la « Smart-City». Une passerelle importante s'est ouverte entre le e-Tourisme et l'administration publique par la mise en place des actions visant à inclure dans la réflexion de la ville connectée, le touriste de passage, notamment le touriste connecté et mobile. Ce touriste est mieux décrit par les néologismes « smart-tourist » ou le « m-Tourist ». Deux termes cherchent à décrire le touriste qui, fait appel, en partie ou en totalité, lors de son parcours touristique, l'une ou plusieurs technologies numériques par le biais d'un appareil mobile. Toutefois bien que des actions soient menées en vue de faciliter l'accès à l'information et à rendre la ville plus accessible au citoyen et par extension au e-Touriste, il est important d'apprécier la place de ce dernier au sein de l'organisation de la ville et surtout la façon dont le touriste en général se place face aux politiques et aux actions et aux technologies de dématérialisation et de virtualisation, et médiation de son parcours touristique. Bien que les démarches sont mises en place, il est très important d'inclure dans l'analyse de la destination, les divers facteurs communs au développement d'une nouvelle technologie et à une nouvelle démarche communicationnelle. Notamment, l'un des facteurs centraux est la peur et l'état d'acceptation ou non acceptation de la part des utilisateurs des divers supports touristiques mobiles mis à sa disposition. En somme, est ce que le touriste est-il prêt à devenir un «Smart-Tourist»? Smart Tourist, Smart Destination.

**Mots clés:** *Smart-Tourism, Smart City, e-Tourisme, m-Tourisme, connectivité, ville connectée, Smartphone, Tablettes, dispositifs numériques, tourisme, destinations.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Les variations sociales et culturelles portées par l'introduction des technologies numériques ont été, sont et seront variées (Vryzas et Tsitouridou, 2011). Internet n'est pas seulement une source d'information, il est devenu aussi un carrefour transactionnel. L'information et les échanges facilités par le web sont des vecteurs du changement des entreprises touristiques (Longhi, 2008). Chaque année nous observons la multiplicité de produits touristiques où les technologies informatiques, communicationnelles, de mise en

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réseau et numériques en général, transforment les entourages naturels ou cherchent à agrémenter un espace touristique quelconque. Autant l'expérience touristique, comme les destinations touristiques subissent un impact important du développement des techniques et des technologies de la mobilité et du e-commerce (Barba, 2011).

Nous avons observé des périodes de vague où tout d'abord la technique et les techniques ont trouvé leur place dans l'environnement social et économique. Toutefois une fois leur place trouvée, il est nécessaire passer d'un effet de nouveauté vers un stade où les techniques soient davantage mûres et leur conception et utilisation mieux abordées et mieux conçues, en effet, les technologies de communication créent une structure dans laquelle la culture s'exprime. Toutefois la culture s'évolue beaucoup plus lentement que la technologie (Vryzas et Tsitouridou, 2011).

Ainsi, après cette première période de développement et d'accès au écosystème commercial et social, les concepteurs techniques entendent qu'ils doivent se tourner davantage vers les utilisateurs finaux, afin de, non seulement, rendre leurs développements durables, mais pour adapter et améliorer l'outil, le rendre davantage orienté utilisateur. Que la technique donne la place à l'humain (Bachelard, Schrödinger, Auger, Guyenot, De Santillana, et Dubarle, 1952).

Au niveau des concepts traités dans ce document nous allons observer qu'autant la ville connectée comme le tourisme connecté cherchent à redonner la place à l'utilisateur, à comprendre davantage ses caractéristiques cherchant personnaliser davantage son expérience touristique afin d'améliorer l'interfaçage entre la technologie, le territoire et l'utilisateur.

Toutefois l'analyse de l'utilisateur final doit passer par l'étude des limites techniques, sociales et culturelles qui freinent l'accès et l'utilisation des technologies de l'information et de la communication en mobilité et en situation de parcours touristique.

Ce document cherche donc à analyser les divers freins au développement des technologies connectées en terrain touristique au sein d'un territoire hyper connecté, ainsi qu'au sein des territoires touristiques où l'accès aux technologies numériques est limité ou en voie de développement.

La méthodologie utilisée pour ce document sera basée sur le comparatisme et l'analyse des données issues des outils de téléchargement et d'utilisation des applications mobiles.

## **2. BIG-DATA, ANXIÉTÉ ET SÉCURITÉ**

Notre analyse doit commencer d'une étude globale vers la particularité propre de l'utilisateur. Cette méthodologie ressemble à celle qui est cherchée par la mise en place de l'utilisation des outils mobiles en situation touristique. Il est recherché que, l'utilisateur particularise son parcours et son expérience touristique par l'utilisation de son propre outil technique (Pouponnot, 2013), soit son téléphone mobile ou bien sa tablette. Cette modalité de tourisme peut être appelée le « *Smart-Tourism* » modalité de tourisme où le « *Big-Data* » est au cœur de l'action touristique par la mise en relation des données, leur stockage et leur mise en commun (Zhang, Shen, Zhang, et Zhang, 2015).

Toutefois pour arriver à l'utilisateur final nous devons analyser toute la chaîne des valeurs qui intervient entre l'utilisateur et l'objet visité ou connecté au sein d'une ville ou une destination qui se place en tant que ville ou destination intelligente.

La ville intelligente cherchera à mettre en commun et à améliorer le taux d'interaction entre les institutions et les citoyens afin d'améliorer la qualité de vie des

citoyens par des moyens techniques et technologiques (Buhalis et Amaranggana, 2013), aussi la « *Smart-City* » cherchera à mettre en commun les données et améliorer la gestion de l'information par le « *Big-Data* », ou la gestion de grands afflux des données (Sust, García Illera, Solana Berengué, González García, Peláez Alonso, Tomé Torres, Roca Verard, Lloret Albert, Capellades Ramos, et Rodríguez Rodríguez, 2014). L'importance de l'afflux des données, leur stockage et la mise en commun des fichiers, le partage des données entre administrations publiques génèrent, au sein d'un pan de la population, des situations d'angoisse et de rejet technologique (Demarthon, Delbecq, et Fléchet, 2012). Nous le voyons de plus en plus au sein des pays développés et industrialisés comme en Allemagne. Les citoyens revendiquent de plus en plus leurs préoccupations à propos du traitement de l'utilisation de leurs données personnelles. Pareillement, les diverses instabilités sociales et économiques actuelles font que les états cherchent à sécuriser davantage leurs frontières, cherchant non seulement à mieux gérer les menaces externes, mais aussi à mieux cerner les divers dangers internes (European Commission et Directorate-General for Communication, 2013). Cela peut se voir en France par rapport à la répression des nationaux radicalisés partant au moyen Orient. Cette recherche sécuritaire bien qu'acceptée et comprise par la plupart de la population, pose des questions aux nationaux sur leurs propres données personnelles (Direction de l'information légale et administrative, 2013).

Cet aspect macrosocial fait partie de la gestion des larges bases de données est nécessaire à la mise en place d'une politique de « *Smart-City* » et peut constituer un frein potentiel à l'utilisation et à la gestion des données croisées entre le gouvernement et des acteurs ou producteurs touristiques locaux. Bien qu'intentionnellement dirigée vers la sécurité de la population, le croisement des données privées en termes d'identité et activités, en dehors du cercle policier, par exemple lors du croisement des données aéroportuaires de sorties et entrées du territoire, en vue de calculer et créer des données de visite plus cohérentes, pourraient poser des questionnements d'ordre morale et social. Le traçage mis en place par les pouvoirs de sécurité étatiques peuvent aussi être contournés, détournés ou tout simplement évités. Exemple, en Allemagne des citoyens mettent en place des mesures en vue d'inhabiliter ou brouiller les puces NFC contenues dans leurs documents d'identité, des groupes d'entraide, des forums voient le jour expliquant les actions et démarches à faire en vue de bloquer et rendre inopérable les outils de traçage de l'état (Stilloaks, 2015).

### **3. LES GRANDS ACTEURS TECHNIQUES, LES OUTILS ET L'USAGE**

Le téléphone en tant qu'outil de médiation des échanges techniques et informationnels est, dans l'analyse du m-tourisme l'une des pièces centrales. Avec la tablette, le mobile représente à lui tout seul le socle et la base d'un tourisme tourné vers la mobilité (Wang, Park, et Fesenmaier, 2012) cependant, les utilisateurs pensent que le noyau central technique est leur téléphone mobile (Salesforce, 2014) plus que leurs tablettes ou d'autres dispositifs. Il est impératif de rappeler que le grand saut modificateur du e-tourisme vers ce qui est actuellement le m-tourisme vient du fait que bien que les deux activités sont liées au besoin d'utiliser des réseaux et internet pour la promotion, diffusion et commercialisation du tourisme, le mobile va permettre en plus de garantir ses trois étapes, l'immersion et la favorisation d'une expérience touristique, inscrite dans une temporalité réelle (Lorenzo Cantoni, 2012).

Le mobile, notamment le Smartphone, présentent des avantages concurrentiels notables nécessaires à l'implication de cette technologie au sein d'un parcours touristique. Tout d'abord, Le touriste de par l'utilisation de son propre dispositif justifie la démarche BYOD « *Bring Your Own Device* » (Pouponnot, 2013) où de par l'utilisation du dispositif du touriste, les structures touristiques limitent les immobilisations et les investissements en dispositifs mobiles (tablettes, téléphones, iPads, iPods, entre autres) souvent chers et très vite obsolètes, éliminant des problématiques du vol et des dommages liées à l'utilisation des dispositifs appartenant à la structure touristique. Toutefois cette démarche implique aussi que, si le touriste n'est pas équipé, ou si le touriste à un dispositif incompatible ou des faibles connaissances d'utilisation de son propre équipement, le produit m-touristique ne peut pas être diffusé.

D'un autre côté, le touriste peut télécharger l'application touristique par le biais de son plan téléphonique des données sans avoir à passer par une connexion WIFI. Toutefois ceci pose une limitante à l'utilisation et au développement du m-Tourisme. Rares sont les contrats téléphoniques qui permettent l'utilisation du paquet des données en situation de Roaming, faisant que, pour les touristes étrangers, ouvrir son appareil à l'utilisation des données soit prohibitif en termes de coût. Bien que la commission européenne soit en train d'éliminer le Roaming au sein des pays de l'union, ce surcote sera encore applicable aux touristes provenant des zones externes à la CCE, où les prix du service sont inégaux. Pareillement, au niveau de l'utilisation mobile dans les régions et zones rurales, les enjeux d'infrastructures portent, plus que sur la couverture des réseaux, sur leur qualité et leur stabilité pour optimiser l'expérience de l'utilisateur notamment pour la vidéo.

En termes d'utilisation des objets mobiles, nous devons nous concentrer sur le fait que l'objet numérique le plus largement utilisé au sein de la mobilité est l'application. Il est impératif de rendre cet outil logiciel simplifié et multi support.

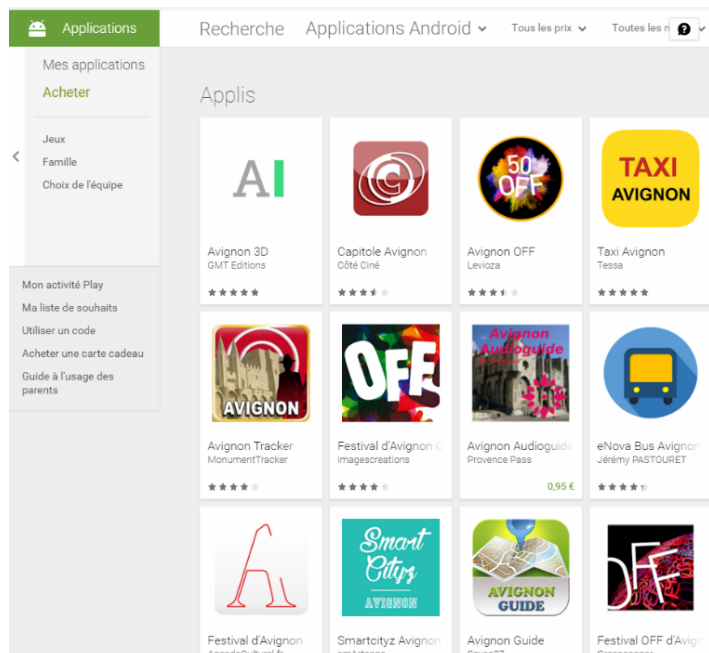
#### **4. L'APPLICATION ET L'OUTIL TECHNIQUE, LE TÉLÉPHONE, PORTE ET BARRIÈRE**

Les grands acteurs de la gestion des contenus numériques dédiés au m-tourisme sont tout d'abord les sites infomédiaires de téléchargement des données numériques adaptées à la mobilité. Principalement, deux acteurs se partagent le gros des flux de téléchargement. Tout d'abord iTunes Play le magasin virtuel de Apple qui récence 10 millions de téléchargements d'applications par jour (Newman, 2015). L'autre grand acteur est Google représenté par « Google Play ». Toutefois d'autres acteurs sont présent dans cet écosystème numérique de proposition et génération des outils numériques structurés sur la base d'une architecture logicielle, Bien que les deux plus importants soient Google et Apple, d'autres acteurs proposent leur propre « market » comme par exemple Samsung, Windows, BlackBerry, entre autres. Leurs produits se basent soit sur une logique d'architecture physique de l'appareil comme BlackBerry ou Windows qui proposent des zones de téléchargement où les applications sont compatibles à leurs dispositifs, ou bien comme Samsung qui propose des applications mobiles adaptées à la structuration logicielle Android mais davantage adaptée aux dispositifs Samsung.

L'utilisation de ces sites infomédiaires d'acquisition et achat d'applications numériques implique un traçage des données de l'acheteur. Non seulement les données bancaires doivent être renseignées en vue de pouvoir acheter des applications, et ce, dans

des outils propres aux marques comme « Google Wallet » qui enregistre vos données bancaires en vue de faciliter le paiement des lors que vous souhaitez acheter une application ou un contenu numérique par « GooglePlay », mais aussi par le recueil des données sur les tendances de consommation et d'utilisation des contenus numériques.

Le consommateur doit, pour pouvoir télécharger les données numériques, se connecter à son compte avec ses identifiants comme son adresse mail pour GooglePlay. De cette manière-là, Google, peut stocker l'ensemble des applications téléchargées par un utilisateur donné et bâtir, sur le croisement des données de ses téléchargements, des profils d'utilisation. Il faut se rappeler que Google aussi fait des analyses des contenus des



**Fig. 1.** Capture d'écran des résultats de la Recherche Avignon sur Google Play.

courriels électroniques ainsi que des données de navigation des lors que l'utilisateur fait ses recherches par Google ou navigue sur Internet par Google Chrome. Or, le fait d'avoir à renseigner ses données personnelles en vue de pouvoir télécharger des applications mobiles, font que les utilisateurs limitent l'utilisation de leur mobile ou leur tablette aux options de base. Cela du d'un côté à la multiplicité d'actions nécessaires en vue d'accéder aux contenus numériques, et d'un autre côté, et ce, reprenant le point sur les aspects de la vie privée signalés antérieurement, pour limiter leur trace numérique. Au niveau des contenus, nous avons pu observer aussi que, pour une destination donnée, il existe une multitude d'applications autant pour le socle Android (Google Play) que pour le socle iOS (Apple). Cette multitude d'applications bien qu'illustrant une industrie active et innovante montre aussi une forte problématique : Les contenus de chaque application sont séparés et le savoir est parcellé, aussi, il devient donc nécessaire télécharger diverses applications pour combler divers besoins bien qu'on parle d'une seule et même destination touristique. Par exemple, pour la recherche Avignon sur Google Play nous avons pu obtenir 25 applications touristiques et sur iTunes nous avons pu obtenir un montant similaire d'applications diverses traitant sur la ville d'Avignon.

Showing results for "avignon"

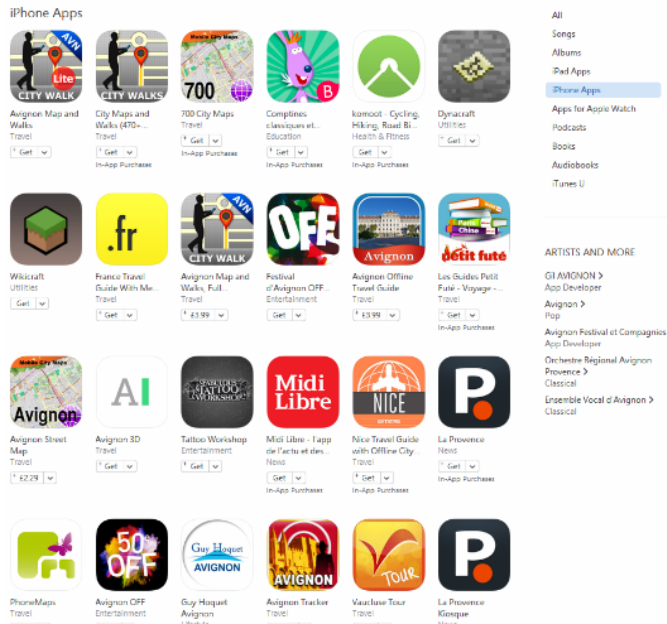


Fig. 2. Capture d'écran d'iTunes App Store lors de la recherche Avignon.

## 5. LA DESTINATION, VECTEUR DU SMART-TOURISME

Le concept Smart bien qu'il est souvent associé et directement lié à la téléphonie et à l'objet, le Smartphone, relève et explique aussi d'autres phénomènes liées à la ville. Le terme reste encore très flou (Hollands, 2008) le terme « Smart » peut référer à divers aspects liés non seulement à la disponibilité des données, Le concept d'intelligence urbaine est lié à la gouvernance, la disponibilité des données et la facilitation des échanges économiques et financiers. Notamment, l'instruction et l'éducation sont des facteurs clés souvent liés au concept de Smart City (Caragliu, Del Bo, et Nijkamp, 2011). En outre lissant les diverses littératures liées au concept, dans très peu d'entre elles il est formellement associé avec le Smartphone.

Selon Hollands (2008) la Smart City se caractérise par l'utilisation d'une infrastructure connectée afin d'améliorer l'efficacité économique et politique, ainsi que de faciliter le développement social, cultural et urbain. L'accent est donné au développement d'un climat propice aux affaires et à la commercialisation, facilitant entre autres l'inclusion social des divers résidents urbains et améliorant leur accès aux services publics. Dans les caractéristiques propres à la Smart City il y a le concept de sociabilité, la Smart City doit être un catalyseur des relations sociales dans le développement urbain. Finalement, la soutenabilité et la durabilité sont deux points stratégiques composant la Smart City. (Buhalis et Amaranggana, 2013 ; Hollands, 2008).

Comme nous le pouvons observer, les divers composants de la Smart City si bien n'ont pas une relation directe avec les dispositifs, nécessitent la mise en place des systèmes interconnectés très développés. Ici le Smartphone ne devient qu'une part limitée et minime de l'engrenage de la Smart City.

Partant du concept de la Smart City, où les technologies de l'information et la communication deviennent des médiatrices de la ville ; le vecteur de transformation d'une destination vers un profilage de Smart Destination nécessite d'habiliter les intervenants et producteurs touristiques d'infrastructures afin de déployer des services touristiques mobiles ayant pour but de customiser l'information selon les attentes et les besoins des visiteurs (Lamsfus, Martín, Alzua-Sorzabal, et Torres-Manzanera, 2015).

La Smart Destination doit mettre en place des passerelles informatiques où les données soient mises en commun et où l'information touristique soit mise à disposition du touriste. Le touriste doit avoir un accès facilité à la ville, être placé en égal à un local. Ceci demande entre autres rendre l'information complètement accessible, éliminant les barrières de langue, niveau éducatif entre autres. Ainsi la destination touristique doit, pour pouvoir se placer autant que Smart Destination, comme une productrice des contenus multilingues ou au moins suffisamment profilés selon les afflux les plus importants des visiteurs. Ceci, peut aussi être facilité par les outils informatiques propres au visiteur lui-même, comme les applications de traduction automatique, mais, une fois de plus, faire appel à les dits outils de traduction nécessite de l'utilisation du réseau des données donc cela deviendrait vite une barrière à l'utilisation.

Le touriste peut il avoir en amont un profil très technique il peut être un ample connaisseur des technologies et des possibilités de ses outils connectés, toutefois si la destination en tant que telle ne propose des contenus appropriés, le touriste mobile ne verra pas le besoin de faire appel à ses outils connectés.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

L'état de l'art de la société numérique actuelle nécessite, au-delà d'une prise de position ostracise et fermée envers les technologies de l'information et la communication, une amélioration des connaissances sur les us des technologies. L'utilisateur final, doit savoir, être formé et il doit avoir la possibilité de contrôler son positionnement dans le monde numérique. De cette manière-là, les déviances liées au traçage des données privées peuvent être limitées. Le mobinaute doit être maître des données qu'il partage des lors qu'il adopte un mode de vie numérique.

Au niveau des producteurs touristiques, il est nécessaire d'adopter des politiques visant à élargir l'intercommunication entre les applications. Ceci afin de mettre en commun des moyens humains et techniques ainsi que limiter le nombre d'applications et améliorer l'utilisabilité des applications limitant l'accès aux données privées des utilisateurs. Dans la réflexion de la Smart City, l'interaction entre pouvoirs publics et aussi entre producteurs touristiques doit être accrue et facilitée afin de mieux adapter les outils aux usages. Bien que l'internaute télécharge un grand nombre d'applications, il n'utilise que très peu, le mobinaute n'utilise que les applications qui lui offrent une vraie plus-value. Ceci est davantage visible dès lors qu'on parle d'un m-Touriste. Plus l'application lui offre l'information nécessaire à son parcours touristique, plus il va préférer l'utilisation de celle-ci.

La commission européenne est actuellement en train d'instituer des normes visant à protéger les données privées partagées avec les fournisseurs des services informatiques hébergés en dehors des frontières européennes.

Il n'y a pas un seul profil de touriste, et ce constat implique que, afin qu'une destination devienne une smart destination adaptée au Smart-Tourisme, les pouvoirs locaux et les producteurs touristiques travaillent afin de faciliter l'accès à l'information.

Toutefois, afin que le touriste devienne véritablement un Smart Touriste, les destinations touristiques intéressées par cette démarche doivent se questionner sur les divers tenants et aboutissants de cette tendance. Aussi elles doivent travailler afin de communiquer et diffuser les outils et les actions menées pour que la démarche ne reste une action isolée et morte car le noyau central de la Smart City, de la Smart Destination n'est pas la donnée numérique mais l'utilisateur.

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# INNOVATION IN THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: A CASE STUDY OF MARAMUREȘ

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**ABSTRACT.** – *Innovation in the Tourism Development Projects: a Case Study of Maramureș.* This paper is a case study on the innovation occurring in a special space – Maramureș, and under certain circumstances – tourism development projects. In essence, it is a problem - oriented case study. The research objective is to analyse and to identify the types of innovation in regional tourism, the features of diffusion patterns towards the local actors, through university involvement. Findings concentrate on territorial capabilities linking it with the tourism development, with innovation readiness. Regarding the projects, a general index was synthesized to provide an image of objectives, outcomes and budget, also on territorial impact. A comparative analysis was done on the communes with and without tourism flows, to determine if the tourism projects are relevant for the overall development of the region. Network mapping shows what type of knowledge could be transferred and where is its current location.

*Keywords:* innovation, tourism development projects, Maramureș

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Innovation in tourism became a never-ending debate for the tourism literature, professionals and researchers tackle the subject in order to outline the dynamics of a domain. As a result of theoretical crystallization of the concept and a wide range of areas started to benefit: creative tourism, festival tourism, rural tourism, and even new technology-based tourism. This paper is a case study on the innovation occurring in a special space – Maramureș, and under certain circumstances – tourism development projects. In essence, it is a problem - oriented case study. The main research objective is to analyse the types of innovation in regional tourism, and to identify the features of diffusion patterns towards the local actors, through university involvement.

Assuming that the most branded in Maramureș are the attractions, the services and the tourist infrastructure, innovative development projects have these as their objectives. The study analyses the type of innovation that is more likely to appear. Diffusion patterns are important to trace the link between stakeholders and formal or informal innovation managers. Real life examples from rural tourism, balneal and ecotourism outline the stages through which innovative ideas have to flow in order to become real: Exposure - Explanation - Rationale - Negotiations – Implementation. As result, network mapping will show what type of knowledge could be transferred and where is its current location.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Literature review was conducted on three directions: studies with focus on regional development linking it with the tourism development, on tourism as catalyst of

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development projects and on innovation readiness. The theoretical background revisits concepts as: territorial innovative capability, network innovation, and innovation in tourism (services and infrastructure).

*Territorial capability* is often assessed in relation with the individual or with the community (Loubet& Perrier-Bensahel, 2015). It is a double faceted concept, derived from the freedom of action, in order to valorise the opportunities. Collective capability is linked to the features of public policies and programmes designed to overcome several issues of territorial and social cohesion. It is also a measuring tool for the evaluation of development level at a certain scale. Perret (2002 in Loubet& Perrier-Bensahel, 2015) demonstrated that territorial capability has an important impact on individual opportunities. It is argued that innovation in tourism services, as renewal, is a result of building territorial capabilities.

Network innovation is enabled by the cooperation opportunities (Dissart, 2012), projects and programmes that are included in a local development strategy, as the LAGs' example shows it - and how the implementation of the strategy affected not only the tourism businesses but also cultural and social stakeholders. The resources of the territory are approached, seen, valorised in a specific way, depending on basic capabilities and on functionality. As the main objective of the paper is to find solutions for identified problems at the regions' level, basic capability is formed by the territorial features of the economy (labour force, businesses, profit) and the accessibility to information (human capital and ITC infrastructure). Tourism functionality and readiness for innovation in services is analysed through indicators available at this scale (tourism intensity, accommodation density) as defined by the official statistical data (EUROSTAT and INSSE), and detailed by Korres (2008) in a set of case studies on innovation in tourism services. Harmaakorpi (2006) has a more detailed vision on territorial capability, dividing it into concepts as innovative capability, learning, networking, leadership and visionary capability, all linked to development projects' strategic approach.

Innovation readiness of a community is marked by constraints (Dexlee, 2004), starting with the schumpetrian commons: „changes involve *new combinations*”. New creative ideas have *to be implemented* in order to be called innovations, and the development projects are conveyors. In order to escape from marginality, changes have to be totally new; imported ideas implemented for the first time at a certain level does not equal with innovation although the innovative measures designed for the new LAGs' strategy may in firm that concept. Innovation creates victims by changing traditional methods or at least by threatening certain interests; the available resources are hard to relocate when it is about heritage preservation, cultural events (Loubet and Perrin-Besahel, 2015, p. 174).

Therefore, this study is based on a multi-dimensional analysis, at the county and locality scale, with emphasis on Maramureş Land, the northern part of the county. These will enhance the overall perspective on the capability and readiness for innovation in tourism projects.

Concerning the types of innovation and the diffusion patterns, few studies were published on Sapanta and VaduŢei communes, two of the most frequented villages with tourism activities and other services assortments (Ilieş&Hotea, 2010) and on Ocna Sugatag, balneal tourism resort of local interest (Ilieş, Hotea&Ilieş, 2013). Field research was based on semi-structured interviews in Barsana, Ocna Sugatag, Oncesti villages, covering a three year period, 2012-2014. The OSLO Manual (2005) argues that there are three forms of novelty that could turn into innovations, in general: new to the firm, new to the market, and new to the world. Diffusion of knowledge and the status of innovative firm are closely

related to the research policy and needs. Useful indicators could be drawn from the main CAEN /NACE rev.2 code of the firms in a certain area, correlated with field research /interviews on innovation agents. It was structured as timeline of introducing new services and building new infrastructure for innovative services. A comparative analysis was done on the communes with and without tourism flows, to determine if the tourism projects are relevant for the overall development of the region. Joanne Mackellar MBus (2006) brings another aspect in discussion, relatively to the event tourism, extending the benefits of a festival from regional development, social innovation and destination attractiveness, to intangible benefits as business networking and exchange of ideas. Regarding the projects, a general index was synthesized to provide an image of objectives, outcomes and budget, also on territorial impact.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Linking the tourism projects to the regional development, innovation catalysts and readiness

##### *Innovative territorial capability*

Maramureş County has 76 elementary statistical units, 12 towns and 64 communes, 528768 inhabitants, 6400 bed-places and over 2.000.000 overnights registered (2014, INSSE). At this scale, basic capability is formed by the territorial features of the economy (labour force, businesses, profit) and the accessibility to information (human capital and ITC infrastructure). The correlation between the number of firms, net profit, the jobs, the road network and the PCs available for information accessibility, presented on figure below (Fig.1), offers a bigger picture about the territorial innovation capability.

Human capital important for innovation readiness is disaggregated into classes: Millennials (ages 15-29), Generation X (ages 30-49), and Boomers (over 50), according to scientific studies related to the use of new technology, openness and decision influence at work (Fry, 2015).

##### **Generations in Maramureş County and several localities**

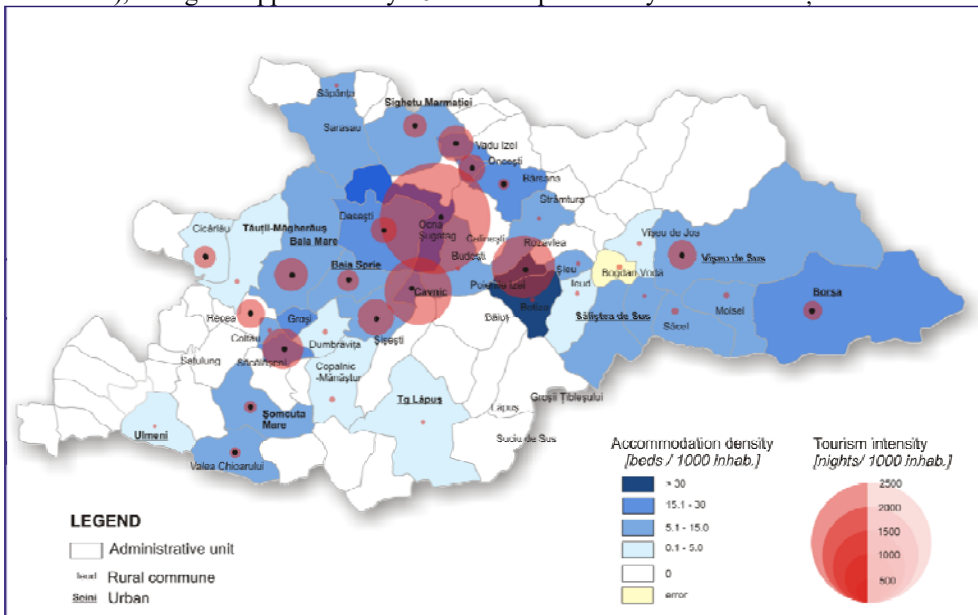
**Table 1**

	Millennials (ages 15-29)		Generation X (ages 30-49)		PC domestic owners	Employees	Population
	[no]	[%o]	[no]	[%o]	[No/1000\ inhab.]	[Jobs/1000 inhab]	[No. inhab.]
<b>Total County</b>	<b>108194</b>	<b>204.62</b>	<b>167020</b>	<b>315.87</b>	<b>13.98</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>528768</b>
Baia Mare (Recea, Grosi)	31111	197.19	53335	338.04	20.87	337	157775
Sighetu Marmatiiei	13786	310.04	12183	273.99	17.81	191	44465
Borsa	6654	222.88	9798	328.19	8.13	91	29855
Cavnic	1178	219.33	1684	313.54	13.40	79	5371
Ocna Sugatag	858	202.22	1303	307.09	15.32	57	4243
Vadu Izei	550	188.68	942	323.16	10.60	75	2915
Oncesti	295	194.98	458	302.71	10.57	145	1513
Barsana	954	201.05	1345	283.46	5.05	56	4745
Desesti	436	179.28	686	282.07	7.8	39	2432
Poienile Izei	159	173.77	239	261.20	18.57	37	915
Sacalasseni	416	184.23	694	307.35	7.97	74	2258



The selection criteria for the tabular data (Table 1) are derived from figure 1. Urban settlements usually tend to foster innovative environments; here we have the main tourism destinations in Maramureş. Data from other towns do not correlate. Tourist resorts (OcnaSugatag, Borsa, Cavnic) and rural tourism villages (Vadulzei, Oncesti, PoienileIzei) have important tourist flows and also higher access to information, therefore their territorial innovative capability is higher.

Tourism functionality and readiness for innovation in services is analysed through density indicators, Korres (2008) suggested that there is a strong link between accommodation density, tourism density and job density in defining the competitive environment that could trigger innovation in services, marketing and organisation networking. *Accommodation density* used here is defined by the capacity /1000 inhabitant ratio. At European scale, numbers vary between 250 and 37000 bed-places at 1000 inhabitants, with five classes (<250, 251-500, 501-1000, 1001-2500, and 2501-37000). With an average of 15.8, counting only the units with tourist flows (34 off 76) Maramureş County is situated outside the definition of a classical tourist destination. Anyway, the variability of the data on commune level, 0-75 shows a greater competitive pressure in the Maramureş Land and Baia Mare's suburban villages, with highest in OcnaSugatag and PoienileIzei (Fig.2). *Tourism intensity*, measured as the overnights and number of inhabitants' ratio, with an average of 407.8 overnights/1000 inhabitants, is below the European lower class (<1000, EUROSTAT, online data code: tour\_occ\_nin2). Simple statistical treatment point towards a sector with higher competitiveness around tourist resorts, towns and tourist villages (800 – 2350 nights/1000inhab.): Baia Mare, SighetuMarmatiei, Cavnic, Borsa, OcnaSugatag, Vadulzei, PoienileIzei, Desesti, Oncesti, Sacalasseni (Fig.2). Tourism statistic system counts capacity for units over 5 bed-places and occupancy for units over 10 bed-places (<http://www.insse.ro/cms/ro/content/statistica-turismului>), living out approximately 16% of bed-places only in Maramureş Land.



**Fig. 2.** Tourism functionality and innovation readiness in Maramureş County, the commune scale, 2014 (data source: INSSE, Tempo on-line data, 2014).

### *The profile of development projects*

The inventory of development projects in the region is difficult to outline due to the diversity of funding bodies and requirements. Transparency is imposed by the European programmes, and public bodies communicate their portfolio on their own websites: the county council, the local councils, museums, universities etc. The strategy for sustainable tourism development of Maramureş County (County Council Publication, 2010) has a list of 128 projects linked to tourism, but only a small percent became actual projects (approx. 10%). Another objective was to compile a list of implemented projects on the county's territory, which materialised in 2015 at a different level, a project for Natura2000 sites promoted by WWF, and with focus on environmental issues. Therefore, the present study outlines the features of the development projects, with the remark that only inside promoters were taken into account (table 2).

**The profile of development projects, with inside promoters**

**Table 2**

<b>Promoter</b>	<b>Key-concepts</b>	<b>Budget (in EUR)</b>	<b>Funding bodies</b>	<b>Link to tourism</b>	<b>Link to innovation</b>
Maramureş County Council	Crossborder development, environment, tourism, education	5 - 6 digits	ENPI CBC HU-SK-RO-UA, REGIO, INTERREG IVC, international	Information centres, thematic trails	Discourse of innovation, use of new technology, accessibility to Internet.
Local councils for urban settlements	Accessability / transport, building rehabilitation, sustainability	7 digits	Local budget, REGIO	Not always obvious	Only in terms of discourse
Local councils for rural settlements	Modern rural agricultural exploitation, transport and utilities (water, sewage, electricity), heritage preservation, tourism information centres	6 – 7 digits	Local budget, REGIO, LAGs, PNDR, government (National authority of tourism)	Priority, as part of raising the attractiveness of the territory.	Not always obvious
Cultural Centres	Heritage preservation, events	4 – 5 digits	Local budget, government (National Cultural Fund), County Council project calls	Only for immaterial tourist attractions (events, festivals, music, dance and other creative industries)	When outsourced
LAGs	Raising the attractiveness of the territory, sustainable growth	6 digits	LEADER	Specific measures for tourism businesses	Innovative measures
NGOs	Economic development, tourism and environment	6 – 7 digits	POS Mediu, LIFE III, INTERREG III	Ecotourism and sustainable valorisation of	New technologies for

			and IV, ERDF, National programmes calls for the associative sector	protected areas	prospective research and for protection
Universities	Babes-Bolyai Extension of SighetuMarmatiei (mostly tourism and heritage preservation and thematic mapping)  UTCN – Baia Mare (mostly for environment and engineering)	4 – 5 digits	Research funding, national and international, other funding bodies for third stream projects	Knowledge transfer, concept translation, qualified human resources, events	The highest level of innovation in development projects.
Tourism businesses - Tourism agencies	The tourist attractiveness of the territory	N/A	Marketing budget of the firm	Linking packages to most marketed attractions in the region	Organisational and marketing innovation, considered very risky.
Tourism businesses – accommodation	The attractiveness of the unit	N/A	Tourism information budget of the firm	Linking services outside the facility	Not always obvious

Large majority of projects promoted by public bodies, local authorities are co-operation projects, and include a co - financing part. Key concepts used to communicate the features of the project (objectives, results, targets) were ranked in order to outline the connection to tourism or to innovation. The budget is significant in terms of digit number in Euro, tourism projects having smaller values at local levels, and the highest in NGOs sphere of influence.

### **3.2. Linking the innovative activities in tourism for Maramureş to the university**

#### ***The role of the university***

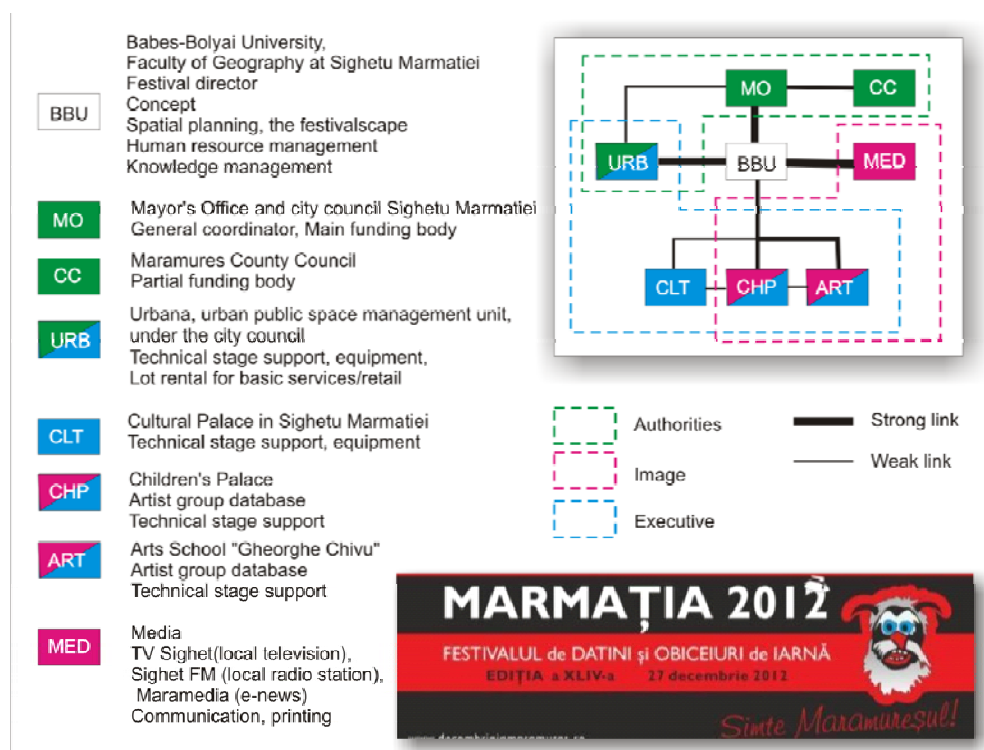
Innovation in a land type region as Maramureş is a result of specific factors' occurrence: creative environment, highly qualified human resources and powerful negotiators. The creative environment fosters new ideas, implemented by qualified staff, and communicated with the tools and skills of excellent communicators and negotiators. Innovative ideas could and would be targeted by traditionalists, risking the alteration or even the total shift. The university can be involved in nurturing innovation by building a new network with the organizers and the stakeholders (Ilieş, Ilieş, Hotea&Petrea, 2013). The main intervention points are: social innovation, destination attractiveness, a new knowledge management scheme, communicator and policymaker, building the networking capacity. Along the history of the relationships with the community (since 1998), the university had to overcome at least three milestones: (1) to demonstrate individual professionalism of its researchers (2003), involvement in projects based on personal profile; (2) to prove understanding capacity of the community's problems (2007 - 2010), designing research projects with real impact, communicating and sharing results, consolidating the neutral position image of the university; (3) to transfer knowledge in specific areas (2012-

2014), invited to implement innovative ideas for events, built heritage issues, local development strategies and mapping.

### Network analysis

Coordination and cooperation are important for tourism destination in order to maintain an acceptable level of activities. As studies demonstrate, as early as 1992 (Lundgren, 1992), and 2002-2003 (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003), destination management plays an important role. In Maramureş, this kind of coordination is managed by DMO place holders, the university being the most important (Ilieş&Ilieş, 2015).

This case study approaches network analysis based on the *epidemic diffusion model* (Baggio&Cooper, 2010), similar to models used to describe infectious diseases spreading from an infected individual. It was used for tourism network analysis at destination scale in Elba (Italy), to describe a scale-free topology and limited clustering of tourism stakeholders. For the traditional festival in SighetuMarmatiei, the graph shows a good resemblance with the cited model (Fig. 3). Computer simulations have taken into account data from: interviews with responsible persons in order to identify the key nodes, sociograms to outline the work with the broker, ethnographic approach to describe the features of the network, combined with other data (from the attendance survey, media coverage, observation, notes, etc).

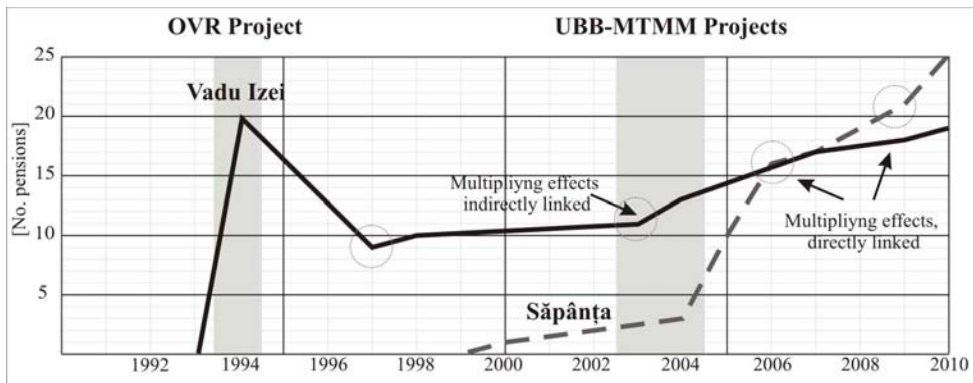


**Fig. 3.** Knowledge diffusion for the festival's network, based on epidemic diffusion model (source: Ilieş, Ilieş, Hotea&Petrea, 2013).

### *Timeline for impact evaluation*

Assuming that territorial innovative capability is correlated with the impact of university generated ideas on communities, the present case study draws a timeline. First significant impact is observed from research grants (since 2001) – thematic mapping for tourism, geobranding, and educational purpose, in Maramureş Land, cross - border region, mountain areas, cities etc. Practical issues were solved by providing the tourism economy with maps and posters, enabled a better understanding of the territory and a higher quality of tourist information. Economic impact is difficult to assess, one could only speculate upon the value of the projects and the shift in the profile of most frequently asked questions at the accommodation units (empirically studied by students in their field work, remained unpublished).

Infrastructure and networking was a relevant chapter, eight villages without or limited tourism accommodation units at that time (Sacel, Moisei, Barsana, Budesti, Ocna Sugatag, Giulesti, Sapanta, Rona de Sus) were organized around a new rural tourism network, MTMM. Accommodation was crucial for the villages, in order to stabilize the transit tourism and increase expenditures. Local councils, the university and a foundation (Carpatca Foundation) applied for international funding; the objective was to help local families to organize BB units, eventually other services, with their own capital, only know-how transfer. This was after OVR, started to organize the network at Vadu Izei, in 1994, with external capital and support (figure 4).



**Fig. 4.** Knowledge diffusion for the rural tourism network, based on good-practice examples (*source: Ilieş&Hotea, 2010*).

Multiplying effects, directly or indirectly linked to the university lead projects, were counted from the capacity vantage point (Table 3). Increasing trend of the number of accommodation units was continued long after the project was implemented. Good practice examples were emulated by neighbors; therefore, in 2015 field research showed a replacement phenomenon, the units opened in 2003 that had limited management capacity (10%) were replaced by other units in the geographical proximity.

**Accommodation capacity (bed-places) in villages covered by the MTMM projects (data source: \* and \*\*, INSE, 2015 and tourism. gov, 2015, respectively)**

Table 3

Communes	Capacity * (1990) [beds]	Capacity* (2003) [beds]	Capacity* (2014) [beds]	Capacity** (2014<10 beds) [beds]	Occupancy* (2014) [nights]
Sacel	0	8	53	0	532
Moisei	20	8	67	8	1245
Barsana	0	0	144	6	1092
Budesti	0	0	44	18	311
OcnaSugatag	260	332	366	59	9975
Giulesti	0	0	16	22	error
Sapanta	0	6	146	42	611

Third stream projects implemented as knowledge diffusion cover a smaller area, Mara - Gutai Local Action Group (two studies on the zone, in 2014), could be completed with the experience of PATZ - Prahova Valley and PATJ - Maramureş County, conducted form alma mater but with team members from Sighet.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Universities could trigger innovation through cooperation and development projects with selected beneficiaries. Infusion of qualified staff, communicating what kind of skills study programs produce, have a strong impact in smaller communities. Knowledge transfer and diffusion has to be enhanced by creative project management teams, as well as showcasing the most relevant good practices. Consultancy in the field of tourism development has to overcome several technical issues: translation of concepts for authorities and other stakeholders, especially those linked to new domains; limited understanding of the cutting edge ideas in rural environment; low operational capacity (due to staff shortening or qualifications), difficulties in project based activities, work flows, regulations etc.

Regarding the tourism development projects, the main constraints consist of the high number of organisations outside the domain which apply for funding for tourism specific activities (limited understanding of the features and functioning of regional tourism), and the continuous negotiations with the local authorities and public bodies to maintain the overall outline of the concepts, innovative ideas etc (constantly challenging them and routing towards third parties).

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# THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE LAND OF BEIUȘ THROUGH RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND TOURIST ANIMATION

LAURA ANDREEA LAZĂR<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – **The Sustainable Development of Tourism in the Land of Beiuș Through Recreational Activities and Tourist Animation.** The issue of sustainable development has lately encroached several areas including tourism, due to the strong impact it had on this environment and local culture. By linking the concept of sustainable tourism with recreational and tourist animation we wanted to highlight a new way to change the concept of tourism as a "destructive factor" of the natural environment and highlight an area less known for its elements that targets tourism. What Beiuș Land has to offer to become a sustainable tourism destination is reflected in the outstanding cultural values, crafts still well-preserved, natural resources that can be exploited through hiking, speleology, cycling and, not least, dowry-related people and ancestral traditions. Habitat development strategy targets the idea of meeting the needs of present tourists keeping in mind the protection of the environment and providing opportunities for future sustainable development strategies under the auspice thought of durable development.

*Keywords: sustainable tourism, tourism animation, entertainment, Beiuș Land, cultural values*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The vast tourist phenomenon has been associated over time with various fields, but the current trend of tourism offers a new dimension, that of sustainable development. The idea of sustainable tourism in Romania appeared relatively recently and is most often associated with rural tourism. The latter is defined as a type of tourism that is based on values and promoting the Romanian village without damaging their authenticity, ideal for a sustainable tourism. The land of Beiuș's transformation into a sustainable tourist destination can be an opportunity to promote the tourism market, recreational and tourist animation through various forms of ethnographic approach that can shape a recognized local tourist attraction and its values.

The implementation of sustainable tourism in the area of Beiuș recreational and tourist animation is the optimal solution that can ensure the survival of local traditions and cultural values to future generations so the village identity is not lost. Despite the fact that most times habitat conservation conflicts with the desire of people to enjoy modern elements imposed by society globally, rural development through tourism has proven to be one of the best ways to keep rural identity. The village's cultural heritage is the hearth of our ancestors, and the preservation and promotion of key traditional items, we keep alive the legacy left by past generations.

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It can be seen that lately the attention of tourism specialists has a new orientation. From the economic point of view the nature of tourism activities, turned to a new dimension regarding the phenomenon. Recently, tourism takes into account the social side and the impact that it has on both the tourist activity, especially on the local population and the environment. These new approaches are the way to achieve a sustainable development, thus creating a bridge between the concept of sustainable tourism and rural tourism. Awareness of the importance “man” has both in the consumption of tourism products, especially in their promotion specialists today an increased interest towards creating sustainable tourism destinations.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Beiuș land, one of the 18 “countries” of Romania (Coccean, 2011) is located in the south - eastern part of Bihor’s county, being crossed, throughout its territory by the river Crișul Negru and its tributaries (Fig.1).

The geographical boundaries of the area are not very clear; the land of Beiuș is about 1.900 km<sup>2</sup> in surface and is more defined by the ethnographical aspects.

The defined space merges 127 villages grouped into 22 communes (Răbăgani, Pomezueu, Roșia, Căbești, Remetea, Pocola, Uileacu de Beiuș, Șoimi, Finiș, Curățele, Budureasa, Drăgănești, Târcaia, Lazuri de Beiuș, Buntești, Rieni, Pietroasa, Câmpani, Lunca, Nucet, Cărpinet și Criștioru de Jos) and 4 cities: Beiuș, Ștei, Vașcău. Through their characteristics these places have managed to shape one of the most beautiful “countries” Romanians have, fully respecting the concept of “country” as a geographic area that has common values but retain varying dimensions: ethnic homogeneity, economic organization, politics, both social and cultural (Surd,1993). Given the premise of social individualization, this “country” takes into account the ethnic and religious characteristics, where the majority of the population is Romanian and Orthodox and maintains its integrity in relation to neighbors.

Overcoming the mental borders of the “country” Beiuș and the territory as a physical medium of relations between all the components mentioned above, the land of Beiuș is distinguished as a region, bordered on three sides by mountains: in the northern region Pădurea Craiului mountain group, Bihor and Vlădeasa to the east and the Codru Moma group to the south and south east which highlights the beautiful interweaving of two major landforms: the Apuseni Mountains and the Criș Plain .

The geographical elements that are bordering the land of Beiuș, the mountains and the plains give it a special status: thus taking one of the general characteristics of Romania relief: variety and with a sublime exaggeration we could say and proportionality if we limit ourselves to the lowland and mountainous regions (Berindei et al., 1977). Even if the lowlands of the Land of Beiuș show less, representative tourism resources it’s compensated through the complexity and variety of morphological forms of the mountains bordering the region. Be it the outstanding panoramic vistas for tourists or various forms of exokarstic or endokarstic elements, we can see the beauty of the picturesque landscape that gives visitors a variety of attractions capable of boosting cultural tourism, scientific and largely on the recreational part. A special feature is given by sectors that formed along the valleys, and defile of the river Criș.

The natural landscape is enriched by the groundwater components rich in mineral waters from Stâna de Vale, Finiș, Cusuiuș, Albești, Criștioul de Sus and the thermal waters of Beiuș and especially the surface rivers “Crișul Negru” and its key tributaries, also the

two fishing lakes “la Nițu” and “Crăiasa” together contributing to Beiuș’s attractive dowry. Other important aspects which help establish the land of Beiuș’s tourism potential is its biogeographical elements, that shelter a number of natural reserves who protect the heritage



**Fig. 1.** The geographical placements of the land of Beiuș in Romania.

left by nature in this region.

Moving on, in the analysis of Beiuș region being a possible tourist attraction we turn our attention to the most representative component to support the development of sustainable destinations namely local culture and tradition. The Beiuș region is a unique ethnographic area which over the years has shaped its own identity through culture, traditions and crafts sacredly preserved in places. Notice how, in these parts, the wares and authentic folk music form constant elements, some of which are protected for centuries (Fig.2). These can be added to complement the tourist potential of a number of crafts, each more diligent. From famous the chests crafted at Budureasa, the lime that burned for years in Izbuç, the stairs of Cresuia famous in Transylvania and Banat and even the red pottery from Leheceni, prove that the land of Beiuș offers the durability of the people’s occupations as real tourism attractions and also a valuable material basis for a future



**Fig.2.** Traditional costumes from Beiuș Region

sustainable tourism. A key feature for this land is certainly the best known fair in Beiuș, popularly nicknamed „fair in Binș” where every Thursday peasants come from the villages down to the city to sell or buy something (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 3.** The 2015 craftsman fair – Beiuș.

From the early days, long past, the fair represented the place where goods are exchanged between peasants and today, it retains its former character sometimes. And now we see people who bring hand-crafted products: wooden tubs, pitchforks and rakes, some flour sieves stairs and herbs gathered in the town of Poienii de Jos. The anthropic potential of the region is closely linked to historical cultural monuments (City Museum of History and Ethnography in Beiuș, the Fortress from Finis, the museum „La Fluturi” from Chișcău), especially the religious buildings: the wooden churches.

Beiuș houses 29 wooden churches, some built as early as the seventh century. Even if



**Fig. 4.** The wooden church from Rieni.

only a few of them today maintains the original architecture, the beauty of these holy places is given by several aspects: durability over time, the history of the paintings or unique elements, that define them. For example, the wooden church from Rieni is adorned with

crosses of the Heroes from the area. Located on a hill, the church dominates the space around her being situated on a hill. Around her lies the eternal world of the cemetery, with numerous crosses made from wood or stone that were painstakingly carved by hand (Fig.4). The wooden churches of Beiuşului together with ethnographic elements: tradition and crafts are living proof that in this region, the local community is linked to ancestral land, and could thus shape the idea of sustainability in the territory .

Based on traditional research methods, direct and indirect observation, which refers both to the territory studied and the concepts debated. The present study has the purpose of broadly outlining, the idea that Beiuş can become a sustainable tourism destination under the idea of quality, continuity and balance between the institutions involved, the environment and local community. This ideal is supported by longstanding approach to habitat and actions taken by various organizations aimed at promoting the region. Beiuş was addressed often lately. A variety of tourism resources and the placing of the region in an area with wide opening to the West have made scientific reaserches over time to shape new ideas that will promote the tourism market zone.

Quantifying the number of vistas was done in several stages, depending on the category they each fall into: nature objectives, wooden churches, elements of ethnography, accommodation and catering, attention shifted towards several aspects: the state of preservation for these elements, accessibility, attractiveness relative to age, uniqueness, conservation we managed through this method to establish a coefficient of attractiveness for the region of Beiuş.

Considering that tourism development in the area must be sustainable environmentally, profitable economically, especially constant and lawful from a ethnical and social point of view for the local population, observe the how, based on a promotion strategy with sustainable goals the region can become a top destination in Bihor county, country and, why not, an international attraction for lovers of art, culture and history.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The rows above basically shows us some of the reasons underlying the idea that Beiuş can become a sustainable tourism destination, what turistic objectives it's holding the area and can be exloatate. In what follows, in summary form we will try to answer a new question, namely: how can become the Land of Beiuş a tourist destination using its resources within tourism in a sustainable way, without negative effects on the environment, involving the local community and contributing to economic prosperity .

If we are to start with the definition of sustainable tourism given by the World Tourism Organisation we notice that this refers to tourism that ensures meeting the needs of present tourists, and the receiving unit without compromising future tourists and more so, protecting and increasing opportunities for the future. Also it aims at maintaining cultural integrity, biological diversity and maintaining a healthy and clean environment. Taking into account the economic factor, the third pillar in sustainable development, we can say that sustainable tourism contributes to the economic welfare of the local society, the development prospects are much more viable.

Over the past few years, every tourist destination in Romania tried to follow international models, and to this end ANTREC ( National Association for Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism) issued several objectives aimed at sustainable development of destinations. From these emerge several promotional strategies and solutions for the transformation of a region, a model that the land of Beiuş can follow through advertising

campaigns as a sustainable tourism destination that has recreational and animation activities:

- identifying tourism resources in rural areas;
- rational exploitation of tourism resources;
- the adequate planning of routes and objectives without harming the environment or the smooth development of elements;
- ensure the safety of protected areas, caves and wildlife parks;
- renewal of material and technical basis in order to ensure a competitive and ecological tourism;
- stimulating government institutions in the development of tourism infrastructure;
- promotion through workshops and craft centers of local values;
- maintaining a healthy and environmentally friendly lifestyle;
- preparing local community for the coming tourists and their involvement in recreational programs and animation;
- promoting local values in schools;
- the attraction of nongovernment organizations N.G.O's, volunteers with the purpose of promoting the region.

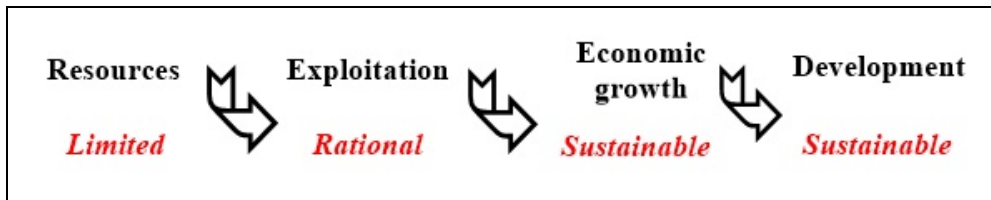


Fig. 5. Sustainable development scheme.

These are just some measures that can be taken at regional level on the promotion of the region of Beiuș as a sustainable tourism destination (Fig.5). Certainly, an important role is played by local community interests to preserve and pass on the cultural and natural heritage for future generations. In the interest of promoting a sustainable development in Beiuș a number of tourist information centers currently operate, whose mission is to identify how many more destinations and possible offers that they can find in order to promote the region while also taking into account the factors imposed by sustainable development: maintaining the natural balance of the environment, strengthening ties between the local community and tourists and, not least, increase the economic capital, so that in the future the number of investors in tourism will grow.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

As a final note, we can say that Beiuș land as a future tourist destination must take into account the environmental problem and keep it within normal parameters and also resolve the local community issues. The current context of sustainable development requires that the region must follow the safest route to continuity, to maintain and transmit the „spiritual,, assets to future generations so that they can benefit from local dowry at least as much as previous generations. Sustainable tourism comes as a loophole to revive tourism in Romania, which, as we know, suffers for the past years when it comes to international recognition.

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# THE EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM APPROACH IN TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING: WHY NOT?

SIMONA MĂLĂESCU<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – **The Experiential Tourism Approach in Tourism Product Development and Marketing: Why not?** The experiential travel as a paradigm in tourism product development, if not as a new form of tourism, is already popular in some inbound and outbound areas for almost a decade. At the beginning, the popularity was mostly among practitioners. Soon after, the research on the topic increased considerably. However, according to our findings, the tourism research literature in Romania didn't consider this research topic yet. This paper aims at furnishing some working hypothesis about why both scholars and practitioners don't acknowledge and use the concept of experiential tourism/travel. We found elements of experiential tourism in a series of tourism products proposed by Romanian TO and Associations (but not marketed as such) so the question of marketing their tourism product to a potentially inbound customer for whom the approach of experiential tourism represents a decisive added value in a purchase decision still stands. Several theoretical arguments such as: the overlapping with other forms/types of tourism (culinary, oenotourism, creative tourism etc.), the fuzziness of the concept, the insufficient popularity of the concept have been taken under consideration.

**Keywords:** *experiential tourism, tourism product designing, tourism destination marketing, tourism product development*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The experiential travel as a paradigm in tourism product development, if not as a new form of tourism, is already popular in some inbound and outbound areas for almost a decade. In his work of *Experiential Tourism around the World and at Home: Definitions and Standards* (2004) Smith places the beginnings of experiential tourism in late 1990's and the new millennium, "a rapid emerging trend in a tourism industry report in Australia in June 2001" (ATS Group Consulting Solutions' Report, 2001 quoted in Smith, 2004, p.2) at first, only in tourism practitioner's literature. However, the use of term can be traced back to 1984 in Fridgen's work *Environmental psychology and tourism*, four other articles had the term in fields like *Abstract, Title* and *Keywords* from the peer-reviewed journals indexed in SCOPUS Database. At the beginning, the popularity was mostly among practitioners. Soon after, the research on the topic increased considerably. The number of scholar articles in academic peer-reviewed journals grew slowly in the final decade of the last century and sharply from 2009 (Figure 1).

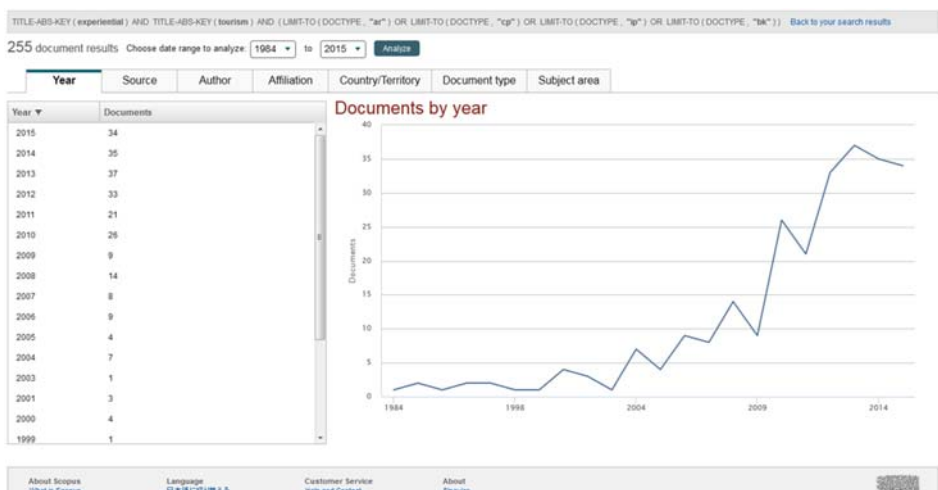
Starting as a new trend in tourism destination marketing and in the practitioners' efforts of creating new experiences in a new emerging competitive market, experiential tourism become "an outgrowth of a global movement toward experiential learning, whereby people create meaning through direct experience" (Smith, 2004, p.13). In the practitioners view-point the experiential travel (ET) „engages visitors in a series of

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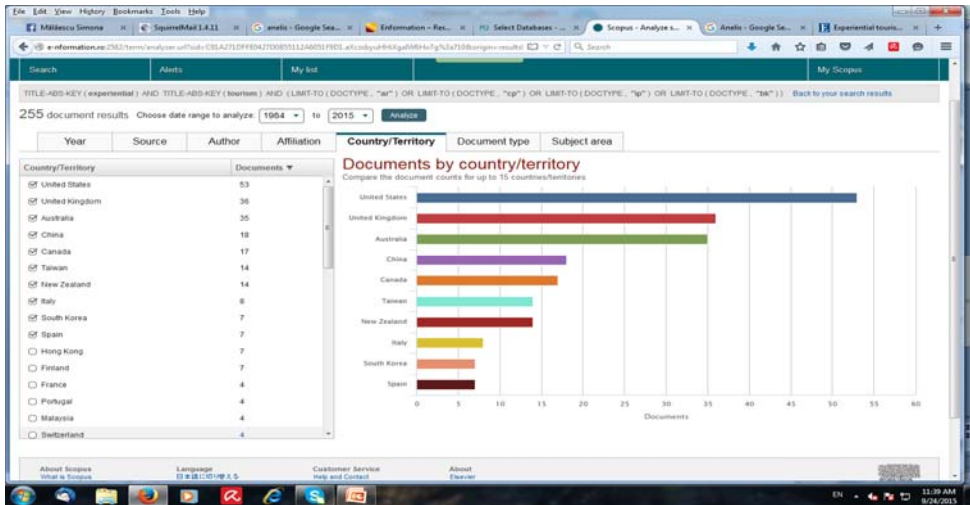
memorable travel activities, revealed over time, that are inherently personal, engage the senses, and make connections on an emotional, physical, spiritual, social or intellectual level." (*Canadian Tourism Commission*, 2011, p.8)

In organising the first international conference on experiential tourism (IMIC, Santorini, 2015) it was probably felt a need for gathering the scholars exchange opinions and reach a common ground on topics like: the multidisciplinary approach, state of the art in theoretical knowledge (forms of tourism, activities, ET experiences and their characteristics, authenticity as a research field, the sense of place and the multi-sensory tourist experience as central pillars), design and development of ET products, the economic benefits and the synergies in the framework of the local communities, ET as model for business practice, consumption, cultural Heritage and its experiential dimension, branding meeting destinations, meeting venues and meeting service providers, social media and online marketing, modern networks and sales techniques for ET innovative tourism products and successful case studies and practices around the world. These topics, comprehensively covered theoretical and practical areas of the nowadays debate regarding the universe of the ET. Smith (2004, p.15) point out the fact that "experiential tourism has become the current term that encompasses a variety of tourism and traveller categories, including the following: cultural tourism, ecotourism, educational travel, experimental tourism, heritage tourism, nature tourism". IMIC (2015) included *cultural tourism* as a whole in the various forms of tourism that are part of the concept, not just the *heritage tourism* along with the *culinary tourism* and the generic *outdoor activities* instead of *nature tourism* that Smith used in 2004.



**Fig. 1.** The dynamics of articles published in SCOPUS indexed peer-reviewed journals pertaining experiential tourism issues during 1984 – 2015 period (SCOPUS Data base analysis, October, 2015).

With this broader international theoretical context in mind, we couldn't help but notice the fact that on one hand, from the 255 ET articles in peer-reviewed journals (indexed in SCOPUS) published between 1984 and 2015 (Figure 2) all Central and East-European countries demonstrate research interests in ET except from Romania, and on the other hand, in the practical field, even if experiential activities and principles in marketing tourism destinations and tourism product design are consistently present, the first attempts of marketing destinations or tours as experiential tourism are seldom and surprisingly recent.



**Fig. 2.** Structure of academic articles by country published in SCOPUS indexed peer-reviewed journals pertaining experiential tourism issues during 1984 – 2015 period (SCOPUS Data base analysis, October, 2015).

As a consequence this paper aims at furnishing some working hypothesis about why both Romanian scholars and practitioners don't acknowledge and use the concept of experiential tourism/travel. We found elements of experiential tourism in a series of tourism products proposed by Romanian tour operators (TO) and Associations (but not marketed as such) so the question of marketing their tourism product to a potentially inbound customer for whom the approach of experiential tourism represents a decisive added value in a purchase decision still stands.

We have been preoccupied for quite sometimes with the possible explanations for the apparent lack of interest from academic sphere and practitioners' formal labelling towards ET in Romania when outside Romania the concept reached a vividly popularity (Figure 3) for more than a decade. The second edition of the conference *SUSTAINABLE TOURIST DESTINATIONS Identity, Image, Innovation* looked like the perfect framework to advance, discuss and amend with both academics and practitioners possible causal hypothesis.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Despite the large involvement of the practitioners, even in the field of experiential tourism the theoretical interest grew slowly. SCOPUS data base, indexing journals just from 1983 returned 255 articles published between 1983-2015 in peer-reviewed journals when searching using *experiential* and *tourism* and *interpretation* in *title, abstract and keywords* fields. When search was restricted to the field "Title" 19 article were found. The majority of articles indexed in SCOPUS data base in October 2015 have an USA university affiliation of the authors (53 articles) followed by RUMB affiliation of the author (36 articles) and Australia (35 articles) results somehow consistent with the longest interests of the practitioners in the area. Authors from China, Canada, Taiwan and New Zealand follow with more than 10 articles per

country, the list ending with other country affiliation with less than 3 articles per country. All Romania neighbouring countries are present with between 1 to 3 articles on the topic but no article pertaining experiential tourism in Romania or having a Romanian affiliation at least, was found. The literature pertaining the experiential tourism in Romania is also very limited. We found no academic paper published in journals indexed in international databases or ranked B+, B or C (Cf. UEFISCDI, 2014) but a work pertaining the use and translation in Romanian of English tourism concepts in the academic field (Rață et al., 2012). Considering the fact that this work advances for another fuzzy concept - the *experimental tourism* - the definition of the concept retrieved from Wikipedia (“visitors do not visit the ordinary tourist attractions (or, at least not with the ordinary approach), but allow whim to guide them” (Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Experimental\\_travel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Experimental_travel)) respectively “tourism in which visitors do not visit the ordinary tourist attractions (or at least not with the ordinary approach) but allow whim to guide them” (Rață et al., 2012, p.21) supports the idea of much needed work in the theoretical literature. For “*experiential tourism*” the authors advanced as a translation into Romanian the term „*turism de experiență*” (Rață et al., 2012, p.23) in the same manner as “*coastal tourism*” – “*turism de coastă*”.

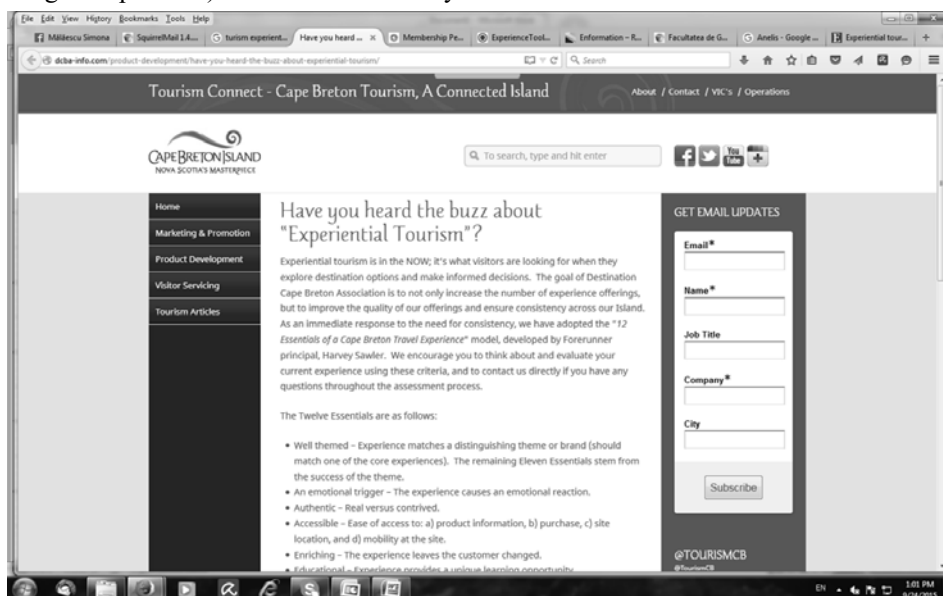
In our opinion, the proposed term („*turism de experiență*”) firstly, has no informational value or reaches its initial function in Romanian language. We can find “*turism de coastă*” as a suitable and informational term for translating “*coastal tourism*” but the same construction doesn’t serve the purpose in the case of experiential tourism (the most informational translation would be “*turism centrat pe experiență/tourism focused on experience*” which could function as a short working definition). Secondly, considering the fact that the *experiential marketing* and *experiential tourism* as an approach to providing services, come from the same paradigm and the distant *The Experience Economy* (Pine and Gilmore, 1999) and in Romanian the long accepted and used by theoreticians and practitioners “*experiential marketing*” was translated as “*marketing experiențial*” and not as „*marketing de experiență*” and Romanian analysts (Pașcu, 2012) and scholars already translated the term using „*turism experiențial*” (Mălăeșcu, 2011, p.21, 2014, p. 23) the final word in how “*experiential tourism*” will be adopted in Romanian language is still to be said depending how strong the influence of the practitioners living language manifests itself.

In order to distinguish rather experiential tourism products in their nature from other types of tourism programs we have used a simple technique that initially we have used for helping students distinguish well designed tourism products in general from more mediocre products in the respect of type of tourism and activities proposed. In time we used to test if the description of a tourism product promises a rather experiential type of tourism and specific activities. In short, analysing the description and the program of a tourism product, we blind the nouns naming tourism objectives the tourists would visit and names in general, and look for coherent, articulated promising tourism experiences in the rest of the description. Then the number of verbs describing actions were counted and the more numerous and divers the verbs were, the more experiential in nature it is supposed to be the trip. A final test of eliminating the eventual verbs describing actions or activities not related in anyway with the sphere of ET was run down. Considering the fact that experiential tourism “involves active participation, involvement, even immersion” of the tourist (NOTO, 2015, document without pagination)(Figure 3) the number of the verbs describing actions in the trip description proved to be a fair discriminating test on quite a number of product analysed. This blinding process and numbering was undertaken especially on the internet site descriptions of trips offered in a rural tourism area or TO internet sites in order to spot the experiential trips in their core nature but not marketed such.

We have also analysed results in searching engines with the key word in Romanian in order to spot results reported from practical sphere. Others internet sites of sphere-headed practitioners in the field (Associations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Regional Administrative Structures, Professional Associations etc.) were reviewed in order to spot changes, trends and new tools.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Some hypothesis and other observations surfaced after this brief analysis. The first one is a rather obvious observation that in Romania in general (and in the ET case, not just in Romania) the scholars' interest is following the practitioners preoccupation with a certain latency in which empirical data gather, than research interest follows. We have failed in finding a possible explanation for the fact that after almost 30 years of using the term experiential tourism and 14 years of academic interest, in Romania is not yet present as an alternative to the classical tourism exploitation of rural tourism destination (agritourism, rural tourism, active tourism etc.) even if is a small step from what the description of many tourism products announce and even fits in many respects, the range of tourism activities usually the ET encompasses. If the term is seldom used in marketing destinations difficulties with the sphere of understanding surface. Fifteen years had passed since the Australian massive initiatives and 2011 (the year of "*Is all about experience*") was the global turnover in tourism market: from selling tourism services or products to selling experiences. This was the main trend and change in paradigm 2011 brought. Is hard to imagine that the practitioners ignore international trends (Figure 3) or are reluctant to follow them (usually they are the sphere head) which let us with the risk aversion, but ET is more like a change in the paradigm of designing travel experiences, experiences that usually don't imply change or investing in new, sophisticated and pricy infrastructure and it was easily adopted and enjoyed by the Romanian consumers (oenotic tourism, culinary tourism, outdoors activities, ecotourism or heritage interpretation). So it doesn't look risky either.



**Fig. 3.** Mission stated on Cape Breton Island Association' site for a sphere head ET destination (Nova Scotia). Tourist are encouraged to evaluate how well their experience was respecting ET principles in crafting ET trips (Source: <http://dcba-info.com/>).

The second glitch could be the “fuzziness” of the concept and the fact that experiential tourism is overlapping at least partially, with other related or subjacent terms (Figure 4), one of them in themselves recent and not well delimited.



**Fig. 4.** Experiential tourism (NOTO, 2015. *Source:* noto.ca/about\_noto).

educational travel, experimental tourism, heritage tourism and nature tourism, where activities are environmentally sensitive, displaying respect for the culture of the host area



**Fig. 5.** Tourists painting in Cortona (Tuscany) for an afternoon activity. Creative tourism or experiential tourism?

The Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters Association (NOTO) points out the fact that “experiential tourism has become the current term that encompasses a variety of tourism and traveler categories, including the following: cultural tourism, ecotourism, educational travel, experimental tourism, heritage tourism and nature tourism, where activities are environmentally sensitive, displaying respect for the culture of the host area and looking to experience and learn rather than merely stand back and gaze.” (online material without pagination). As pointed out in the experiential tourism diagram from NOTO ET encompasses elements (especially tourism activities) characteristic to other form of tourism (culinary, creative, active, heritage or eco-tourism) but this, and maybe sometimes a principle or two are the only elements in common. ET is not a tourism resource-centred type of tourism (as oenotic tourism or religious tourism etc.) nor a tourism equipment-conditioned type of tourism (as adventure tourism) although borrow activities from both areas sometimes. When an experiential trip aims at creating memorable *once in a life-time* experiences from each moment of the program if possible, is easily understandable that an ET trip planner will design for one day a local visit with purchase to an organic farm, browsing the traditional vegetable and fish market under the local Gourmet guy’s advice and cooking with the ingredients just bought for the evening

meal and this is a different approach to tourism resource exploiting from the one of the culinary tourism or oeno-tourism (where the theme is different, the resource is homogeneous, the tourism segment targeted is divers etc.). That situation doesn't lead to the conclusion that the two concepts are frightening overlapping instead of two different approaches to travel.

An argument supporting the idea of experiential tourism as a paradigm in designing tourism product combined with tourism destination development and marketing comes from Smith (2004) quoting ATS Group's Report (2001) considering that "interpretive highways have responded to the needs of the experiential tourist by providing the links among disparate experiences for a more comprehensive visitor experience (...) primarily attributed to improved interpretation offered along the travel path to break the monotony of long haul travel between attractions" (Smith, 2004, p.13). The same viewpoint is adopted by Frochot and Batat (2013) in their *Marketing and Designing the Tourist Experience* seeing the experiential tourism as an approach in tourism product development and marketing.

When the program schedules for an afternoon an easel painting activity for tourist we usually think "creative tourism" but when the painting is scheduled in order to be a part of the unique, once-in-a-lifetime Tuscany experience (Figure 5) after enjoying an exhibition, explaining and showing in artists' view-points or even sampling the morning light, the afternoon light the summer light etc. that Tuscany landscape gazing and painting must have more to do with experiential tourism principles of making the travel an experience.



**Fig. 6.** Nomad Camp (Câmpul Cetății).  
Accommodation infrastructure with Mongol Iourtas.

In the same way, if we crop (which we don't recommend) the activity from the rest of the program's activities, theme and principles respected in trip designing we might find it difficult to distinguish if sleeping in a Mongol "Iourta" (Figure 6) is an experiential or a heritage tourism element. If the sleeping is completed by learning (central activity in ET) how to use different battle or hunting weapons, how to cook traditional Mongol meal, horse-back riding etc. you might still find reasons. However, if the trip theme is coherent and centred consistently on sampling the way of living of (your ancestors') Mongols the labelling becomes evident. In

ET the principles respected or central in trip designing that define an experiential tour. The principles can be found described in any practical or more extensive handbook on experiential tourism (Smith, 2004, *Experience Nova Scotia. A toolkit*, 2015 etc.). When the information in the description of the program is not enough to rate if the principles are respected or not you can analyse also the theme, the marketing key element in conjunction with the structure of the program. Usually, if the description lacks in relevant information if the tour is experiential in its nature or not is because it isn't an experiential well-crafted tour.

But on the Romanian context the main difficulties will emerge in differencing experiential programs from agri-touristic ones. One of the ET results we found on the Romanian context was an initiative of *Village Life*, an Association for Community Development (as described by *Romania Pozitivă* (2011). In this case (Figure 7) even the tourism marketing consultants get confused in presenting community-based travel initiatives as experiential tourism. The Village Life initiatives did create some confusion in the media coverage at that time when their declared community-based travel initiatives such as making cheese, mowing, extracting wine, milking a cow, helping in preparing jams etc. where described as tourism activity when the word agri-tourism was absent from the entire article (*Dezvoltarea rurala printr-un altfel de turism*, 2011).



**Fig. 7.** Internet tourism marketing consultants still get confused in presenting community-based travel initiatives as experiential tourism.

In the description of the (tourism) activities Village Life designed (especially for urban consumers and international tourists the principles respected in crafting the tourists experiences are, as expected, the community-based tourism. The initiatives such as the ones projected by Village Life are not singular in offering elements that can be easily borrowed in ET programs, and other associations for rural development also promote tourism programs and activities related with the experiential tourism but not marketed such as (or at least, not on an internet source).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The popularity of experiential tourism was initially mostly among practitioner and soon after, the research on the topic increased considerably. However, according to our findings, the tourism research literature in Romania has not been considered this research topic yet. We found elements of experiential tourism in a series of tourism products proposed by Romanian tour-operators agencies and associations but not marketed as such. On the income market many potential inbound costumers could consider the approach of the experiential tourism as a decisive added value in a purchase decision so the question of not marketing some destinations or designing new tourism product as experiential still stands. Several theoretical arguments such as: the overlapping with other forms/types of tourism (culinary, oenotourism, creative tourism etc.), the fuzziness of the concept, the insufficient popularity of the concept have been taken under consideration.

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# BUCHAREST TOURISTS' PERCEPTION OF ROMANIAN PEOPLE OF GENIUS AS A RESOURCE FOR CULTURAL TOURISM

DANIELA NICOLAIE<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – **Bucharest Tourists' Perception of Romanian People of Genius as a Resource for Cultural Tourism.** Along the centuries, the progress of mankind brought forth the world nations' assets. Most of them are tremendous cultural tourism elements. Culture, as a product of human mind's imagination, ingenuity and genius evinced in different areas, can become a rich and attractive resource for cultural tourism. People of genius from different parts of the world, who showed interest in various domains, increased their peoples' cultural heritage. Thus cultural tourism heritage can be enriched with new attractive sites such as works of science and art, architecture, sculpture and painting, literature and history. The aim of this article is to analyze the perception of the potential tourists of Bucharest regarding Romanian people of genius assets as touristic destinations promoted within the national cultural tourism. The research method was based on a survey precisely the semi-structured questionnaire. Questionnaire data processing was performed by SPSS v. 17. The results show that the destinations related to Romanian people of genius's life and activity would have a significant impact on cultural tourism development and individuals' education on national values.

*Keywords: tourists' perception, cultural tourism, Romanian people of genius, cultural heritage*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Cultural tourism in Romania

Cultural tourism as one of the most ancient forms of travel which constitutes the main motivation for travel in many parts of the world needs to put in a new light several products such as people of genius. The concept of cultural tourism started to be used since the 80s, as noted in the 2009 OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) report on the relationship between tourism and culture (Sabou et al., 2015).

Many states in the world formulate policies and plans to encourage and support the development of particular forms of tourism (Light, 2007: 746) to attract both domestic and foreign tourists. Cultural tourism is a niche form of tourism in which cultural sites, attractions and experiences are marketed as primary tourist experiences (Cave et al., 2002).

Continual efforts have been made by international organizations to discover new tourism products and activities that have the opportunity of being marketed and promoted (Matei, 2015). Nowadays cultural assets have been identified as some of the bestselling tourism products all over the world.

Cultural tourism can be defined as "visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution" (Silberberg, 1994).

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Regarding culture as a result of genius human mind, this has been turned into an attractive resource for cultural tourism (Busuioc, 2008). Cultural tourism makes a wide field of interest, which combines the concepts and knowledge of cultural assets and their sustainable exploitation in tourism sector in different regions of the world. Cultural tourism based on marketing, exchange of knowledge, and introducing the heritage of a place to visitors becomes an activity that allows its economic valorization and also spreads local culture to other social and spatial levels (Vijulie et al., 2014).

Romania has a history and cultural heritage of great values and attractiveness. There are over 680 cultural heritage values of national and international interest, among which stands out: churches and monasteries complexes, monuments and architectural ensembles and art, urban ensembles, historical and archaeological sites, some of which have been the values under the aegis of UNESCO World Heritage (Medieval Fortified Churches of Transylvania, Painted Monasteries of Bucovina, Wooden Churches of Maramures, Dacian fortresses, historic centre of Sighisoara etc.). A tour of these sites is a good way to discover Romania's history and ancestors legacy (Matei and Nicolaie, 2014).

Cultural tourism is motivated by tourists' interest in historical, artistic, scientific or heritage offering by a community, region, group or institution. Wood (1984) argues that the relationship between tourism and cultural identity is an ongoing process mediated by the state within the wider context of globalization and that the state may assume the role of marketer of cultural meanings, in which it attempts to make a statement about national identity by promoting selected aspects of a country's cultural patrimony. Visits to places of national significance are a means of affirming senses of citizenship and identity (Edensor, 2002; Franklin, 2003; Palmer, 1999).

## **1.2. Concept of tourists perception**

The studies of resident perceptions are usually related to the impact that tourism has on certain regions of the world.

The role of commercialization of culture for the purposes of tourism product is closely linked with concerns of both financial viability and a sense of community pride (Cave et al., 2002 : 371). Lanfant (1995) argues that the theme of identity is omnipresent within tourism discourse and that each country will seek to present its own unique character to promote itself in a way to emphasizes and flatters its sense of national identity. One way in which a country can present itself to its domestic or foreign visitors is through the promotion and interpretation of its national heritage (Light, 2000). Through museums and other heritage sites both domestic and foreign tourists can be told the 'national story', presented so as to affirm and reinforce national identity and self-image.

In the context of a globalized world economy featured by contradictory effects of homogenization of markets the need of individualization through national identity has increased. This can be achieved by bringing forward and highlighting those genuine and unique assets that give a nation a distinct image among other countries. Culture is the fundamental structural element of national identity (Dumbrăveanu, 2008) consisting of units such as language, literature, music, science, techniques, gastronomy, sports, architecture etc. Likewise every people's scholars along with their artistic, scientific or technical works are elements of national identity for the country they were born in.

It is well known that the better the cultural product the greater the likelihood that residents will spend money within a region, province or country. Even more important is the ability of cultural products to attract and increase the length of stay of long-haul tourists

because they bring in new money as tourists from out of province or out of the country pay to attend a museum or other cultural site such as a memorial house or a particular monument erected in honor of a famous writer, a great artist, or an outstanding scientist.

### 1.3. Romanian people of genius

Romanian language dictionary defines the term 'genius' as the highest stage of human spiritual endowment characterized by a creative activity whose results are of a great significance. 'Genius' is a label tagged by next generations to personalities who gave to the history of humankind a new, more complex, more beautiful, more ingenious, and more efficient than previous asset (Mihut and Ilica, 2009).

As heritage and cultural tourism assume greater significance, the variety of 'tourist places' covered by that description has become more evident (Herbert, 1996: 77). Places associated with writers, scientists, painters and others, as brilliant minds of Romanian culture, can become landmarks to promote a specific kind of image and to attract visitors. Such places have at least two kinds of attractions for visitors: first, they attract people who have an intrinsic interest in the personal life histories of remarkable people, and second they have connection not just with the life of every individual but also with the works they created (Herbert, 1996: 77).

John Simmons (1996) shows in his book – *100 Most Influential Scientist* – that 6% of the top 100 greatest geniuses of the world, from Euclid and Archimedes until today, were from Romania (Henri Coanda, Hermann Julius Oberth, Nicolae Paulescu, Gogu Constantinescu, George Palade). A population which represents only 0.3% of humanity gave 6% of the world's most famous people of genius.

Romanian cultural personalities, whose major works and achievements are acknowledged in this article, have been picked out according to a set of selection criteria. The selection criteria highlights skills, attributes, experience, education, outstanding works that the competent bodies has identified as being essential and important and have changed or influenced the evolution of mankind.

Romanian people of genius selected in this paper have been remarked in different domains of interest with pioneering works of international recognition. They have been Romanian Academy or/and other international institutions members, Doctor Honoris Causa honored and Nobel Prize winners: Mihai Eminescu (most famous Romanian poet) and Nicolae Iorga (Romania's greatest historian) in literature and history, Spiru Haret (mathematician and astronomer), Gheorghe Țițeica (the founder of the Romanian school of differential geometry), Hermann Oberth (one of the founding fathers of rocketry and astronautics) in mathematics; Victor Babes (one of the most famous earliest bacteriologists), Ion Cantacuzino (established the fields of microbiology and experimental medicine in Romania), Nicolae Constantin Paulescu (discoverer of pancreine – later called insulin), Constantin Ion Parhon (published the first book of endocrinology in the world), Ana Aslan 10 (discovered the anti-aging effects of procaine, pioneer of gerontology and geriatrics in Romania), George Emil Palade (biologist awarded Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine granted for his innovations in electron microscopy and cell fractionation) in medicine; Anghel Saligny (engineer, most famous for designing a railway bridge over Danube, the largest bridge in Europe at that time), Emil Racoviță (one of the founders of biospeleology), Traian Vuia (inventor and aviation pioneer), George Constantinescu (creator of the theory of sonics, a new branch of continuum mechanics), Ștefania Maracineanu (she formulated the theory of radioactivity, artificial radioactivity, and

artificial rain trigger process), Dimitrie Leonida (engineer, specialist in energy sector, assisted the electrification of Romania), Henri Coandă (aerodynamics pioneer, builder of an experimental aircraft described as the world's first jet) in science, techniques and engineering; Nicolae Grigorescu (one of the founders of modern Romanian painting), Constantin Brâncuși (pioneer of modernism, one of the most influential sculptors of the 20th-century), George Enescu (composer, violinist, pianist, conductor, regarded as one of the greatest composers of the 20th century and Romania's most important musician) in arts.

## 2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

This paper investigates Bucharest tourists' perception of Romanian people of genius as brilliant minds whence Romania inherited priceless heritage assets in order to understand if the sites related to these people can represent a reliable source of new destinations for cultural tourism. The research draws upon an empirical study which investigated a number of some of the most important possible destinations dedicated to Romanian geniuses included in a cultural itinerary. The paper deals with the specific purpose of investigating whether the relationship between the tourists and their perception is linked to their visitation patterns, knowledge and acknowledgement of nation's geniuses and their achievements along the last two centuries of history. It argues that the understanding and management of cultural heritage, scientific, technological, literary or artistic, as a social phenomenon should not be based solely on an arbitrary factor: the presence of tourists (Poria et al., 2003). It is suggested that elements more subjective in nature such as tourists' motivation in visiting a place, national identity elements and be educated lie at the core of this phenomenon. For this study, a semi-structured questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding the tourists' perception toward attending the *People of Genius Route*. The questionnaire consisted of eighteen questions among which eight have used socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, five were closed-ended questions and six were open-ended questions. The results of the SPSS v.17 © Statistics, respectively Chi-Square Test, were based on correlation of demographic characteristics (gender, age), socio-economic (occupation, education level, income, marital status, type of dwelling, neighborhood) and information method, social method to attend the proposed tourist route and means of transport preferred. The sampling was based on rationale, trying to follow the population structure.

## 3. RESULTS

The questionnaire has been applied to one hundred respondents considered a representative sample of the population aged over 18 in Bucharest. The last section of the questionnaire included such demographic variables as age, profession, education level, monthly income, district, housing, marital status, gender. The questionnaire started with a filter question (*Have you ever heard about 'Genius'?*). Responses to this question were 100% positive.

The first question in the questionnaire focused on a short definition of the term "genius". 34% of respondents mentioned the term "intelligence" while defining it as "individual with high intellectual capacity as cognitive intelligence", 19% brought forward the creative power and ingenuity, 24% defined it in terms of "above average internal resources and capabilities, and exceptional intellectual endowment" and 9% referred to the

decisive role of genius in a certain field. Only 2% of the respondents could not define the term and the remaining 12% did not give a proper definition of the term.

The second open question inquired respondents in listing examples of geniuses. 77% considered Mihai Eminescu as most important Romanian genius followed by Constantin Brancusi (51%) and George Enescu (31%) (Figure 1).

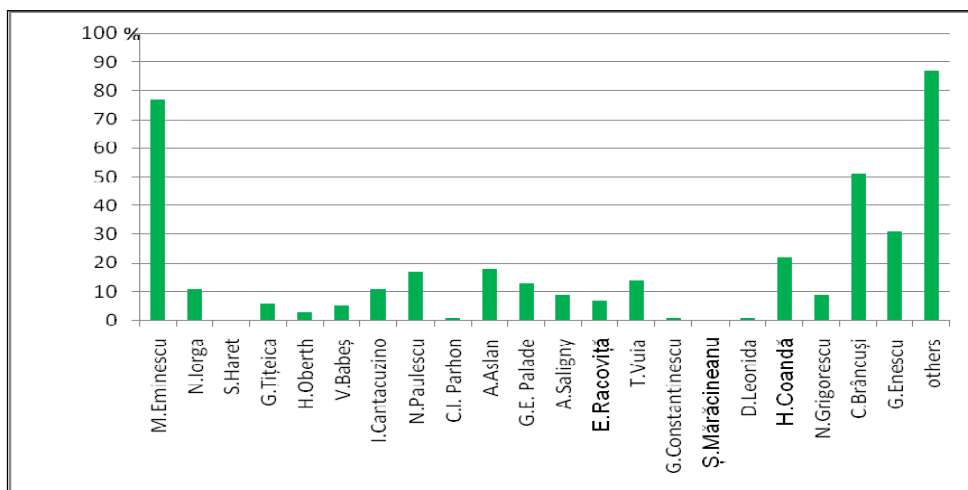


Fig. 1. The graph of the most frequently mentioned geniuses.

Then the research aimed to find out if respondents have visited places consecrated to listed Romanian geniuses. Sculptural Ensemble of Constantin Brancuși at Târgu Jiu was the most mentioned place visited by the tourists. The ensemble comprises three sculptures: the *Table of Silence*, the *Gate of the Kiss*, and the *Infinity Column*. The ensemble is considered to be one of the great works of 20<sup>th</sup> century outdoor sculpture. Next most visited sight was Mihai

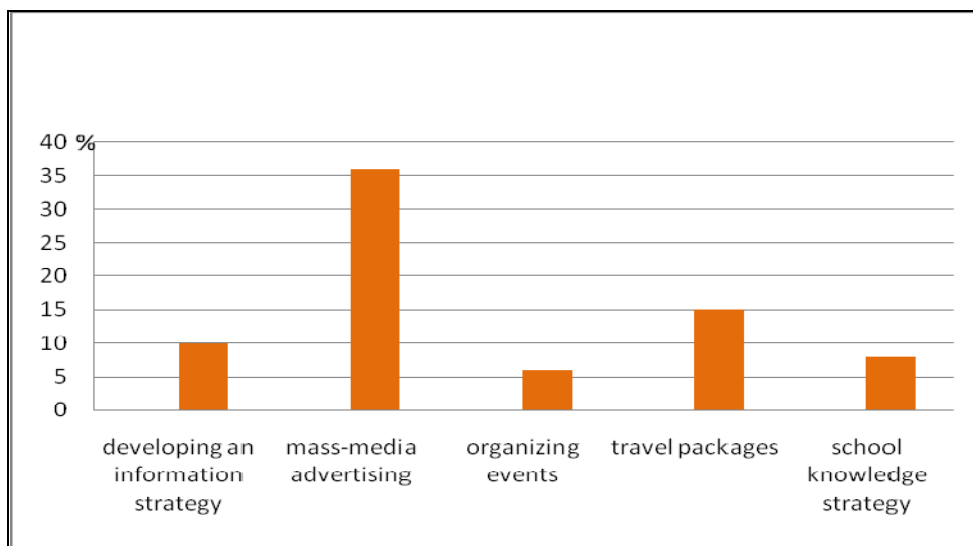
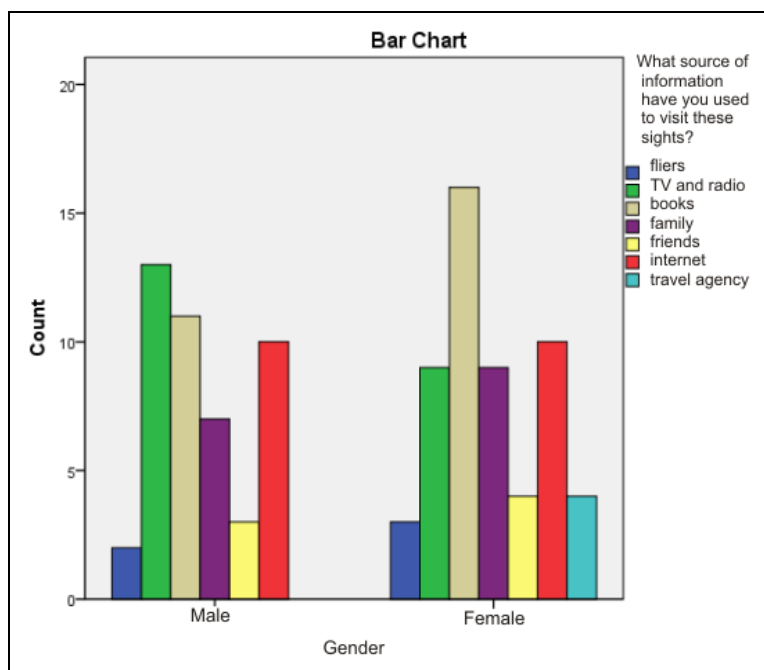


Fig. 2. Most quoted strategies of capitalizing geniuses landmarks.

Eminescu Memorial House in Ipotești (12%) and Anghel Saligny Bridge (7%). Those who mentioned National Institute of Gerontology and Geriatrics (5%) and Romanian Aviation Museum in Bucharest (5%) listed dr. Ana Aslan and the two great inventors and aviators Traian Vuia and Henri Coandă as some of the most important Romanian geniuses.

Before testing tourists' option for a route dedicated to Romanian people of genius respondents have been requested to suggest methods to capitalize and improve these cultural sights. Thus, most of them (36%) propose radio and TV promotion in prime time, on-line through advertising and websites, travel books and guides. As shown in Table 2, 15% would like these sights included in a tourist package attended by map, pocket guide and brochure provided by travel agencies. The fact that 8% believe that information about geniuses and sightseeing generated by their lives must start in school demonstrates that educational institutions should have, perhaps to a greater extent, the role of informing and educating the population. Another group of respondents (6%) set out a strategy to promote sightseeing events and performances dedicated to geniuses such as conferences, festivals and summer schools (Figure 2).

The results show that there are some differences between female and male sources of information, because male respondents inform themselves primarily through TV and radio (28.3%) and then from books and through the family, while female tourists got informed primarily through books (29.1%) and then from TV and radio and through family (figure 3).



**Fig. 3.** Tourist information sources according to gender (Extract from SPSS v.17).

There has not been any statistical association between respondents' desire to go on "The Geniuses Route" and gender, as well as modality of transportation (car, bus, train, others) and social modality of attending the itinerary (by himself/herself, with family, with friends, with unknown group).

In analyzing the association of age and other variables the "source of information" presented significant statistical association [ $\chi^2(12) = 21,666; p=0,04$ ], which means that when designing such a marketing product it must be taken into account the age of potential tourists.

According to Figure 4 young people are influenced primarily by the internet (53.3%) when visiting the sights related to geniuses' life and work, people between 21-60 years inform themselves especially from books (31.6%) and seniors both from TV and radio and books (28.6%).

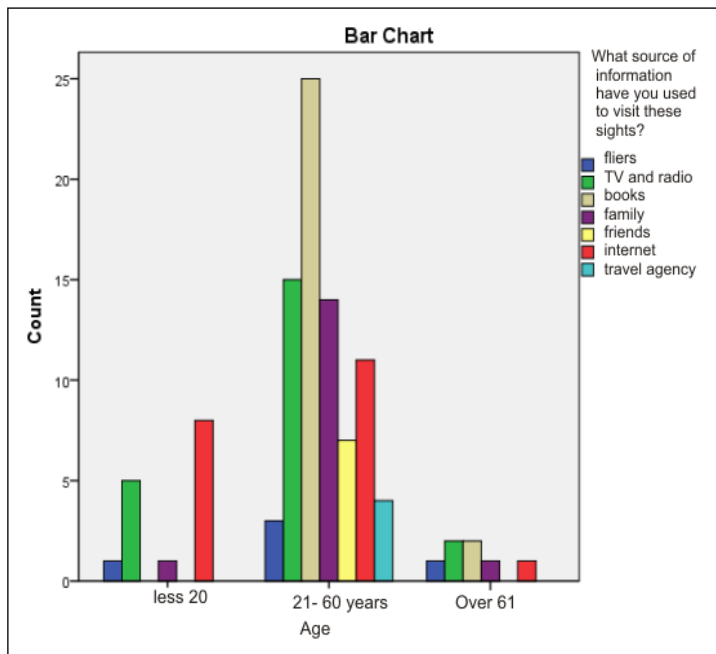


Fig. 4. Information sources according to age.

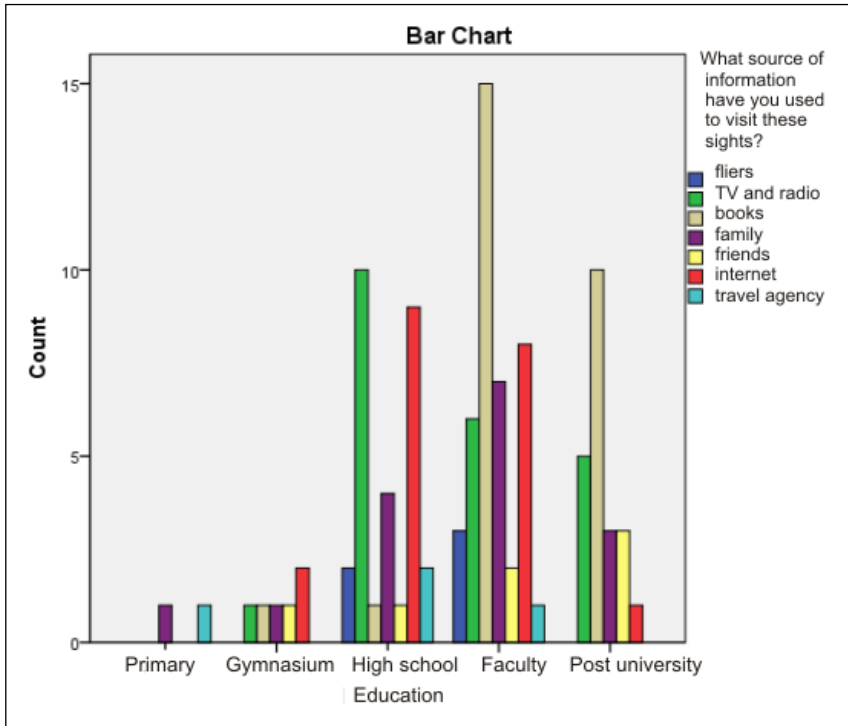
**Chi-Square Test regarding the correlation between education level and sources of information**

Table 1

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	39,581 <sup>a</sup>	24	,024
Likelihood Ratio	38,707	24	,029
Linear-by-Linear Association	4,462	1	,035
N of Valid Cases	101		

The analysis of the correlation between respondents' education and sources of information for visiting touristic sights expressed a significant association as shown in Table 1.

Graduate and postgraduate respondents inform themselves predominantly from books and mass-media, then from family and friends (Figure 5). Undergraduate respondents get informed through mass-media and then from internet. This brings into attention that graduate and postgraduate people seek information not only in books and internet but also from people who have traveled before on certain itineraries and can give real feedback on places, accessibility, attractiveness etc.



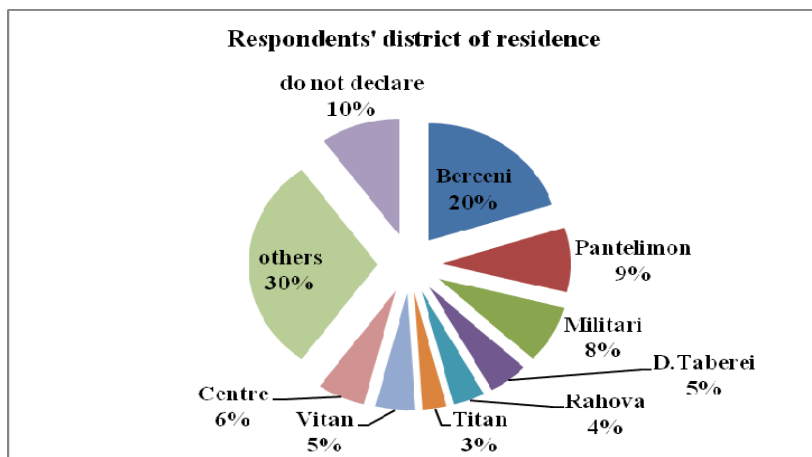
**Fig. 5.** Information paths according to education level.

Another correlation has been identified between education level and the social way to go on the route. The most desired social group to go through was family (50,5%) and then friends (38,6%), which may lead to the idea that this type of product is most suitable for education purpose inside family.

A strong correlation proved to show the marital status and the initiation of the Romanian people of genius itinerary. 64,1% of wedded respondents consider it a good idea, 72,4% of unmarried believed the same while divorced 75%.

Another evident correlation is between respondents' profession and their opinion of going through the above mentioned route and the social way of attending it. The first group made by students and teachers show a total agreement for this route; even the other group of jobs (mechanic, electrician, chemist, soldier, economist, postman, editor, sales agent, marketing specialist, engineer, nurse, IT specialist, confectioner clothing), covering a percentage of 53, expressed as much as the first one a high rate of interest for.

The correlation between 'neighborhood' and the questions contained in the questionnaire do not show statistical significance; therefore the analysis was based on Excel 2007. The most frequently mentioned districts were, in descending order, Berceni, Pantelimon, Militari, Center, Drumul Taberei and Vitan, Rahova, and Titan (Figure 6).



**Fig. 6.** The most frequently mentioned respondents' districts of origin.

Most of respondents (85%) from Berceni District agreed to go on a route of genius people and 15% do not know. From Pantelimon District all respondents would like to go on the route while from Militari District respondents – 87% would go and 13% would not like to go.

With regard to favorite means of transportation, the married potential tourists chose personal car (56%) and then the coach (31%), the single preferred firstly the coach (44%) and then personal car (40%), while the divorced respondents selected the coach (75%) and train (25%).

The fact that the means of transport is influenced by the marital status shows that when designing such a route this aspect must be considered. Therefore a detailed study should be undertaken as the access to certain tourist destinations depends on road infrastructure. It is known that certain sights are less accessible to certain means of conveyance and this might require transfer to destination by changing the transportation. This can be a hindrance to the smoothly running of the trip when it comes about elder social groups or families with children.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

At the moment, cultural heritage is a valuable source of attracting tourists from all over the world. It must put in a new light several products such as people of genius. Based on the investigation on Bucharest inhabitants' perception (as potential tourists), the study reveals that in Romanian people of genius can be a strong resource for cultural tourism.

The results revealed that the majority of Bucharest potential tourists, despite the gender, education, profession or area of living, perceived that a Romanian people of genius route is a competitive tourism product and a good opportunity on educating young and adult population on country's brilliant minds' life and activity.

The research on designing a new tourism package as a cultural tourism itinerary highlighted the fact that such a product worth it and could have a significant impact on both educating the population and development of national tourism. This can generate financial resources that may be subsequently reinvested in tourism.

The cultural sights generated by geniuses' life and work, as fund of tangible and intangible assets, are perceived by respondents of Bucharest as an important part of cultural heritage left by our forefathers. The Romanian state institutions involved in their restoration, preservation, protection and promotion would make a real difference in terms of showing them off.

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# WOODEN CHURCHES OF LĂPUȘ. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

LILIANA MUREȘAN<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – **Wooden Churches of Lăpuș. Sustainable Travel Destinations.** The church is a holy institution founded to sanctification and salvation of people and consist of believers who profess the same faith, being active organ in continuing the work of salvation in the world, where human life is united with the divine life. The church join as to meditation, leads us to the knowledge of itself in communion with heaven, with something that is not tangible, something that goes beyond human understanding and reason; in church we keep quiet to hear God's voice in our consciousness. Lăpuș land is one of the most sustainable tourist destinations which have more than twenty wooden churches, masterpieces of outstanding artistic and technical achievements with harmoniously elements integrated in the specific land, evidencing the faith and unity of the Romanian people. The oldest wooden church in Lăpuș land is the wooden church from Rogoz, 1663, included in the World Heritage Site, followed by four other churches that belong to the seventeenth century: Sfinții Arhangheli from Libotin (1671), Sfânta Parascheva from Rogoz (1695), Adormirea Maicii Domnului from Lăpuș (1697) and Biserica Sfinții Arhangheli from Vima Mică. From the eighteenth century are kept eleven churches: Dobric (1701), Drăghia (1706), Cupșeni (1733), Răzoare (1740), Dobric (1740), Ungureni (1760), Larga (1771), Libotin (1776), Inău (1778), Cupșeni (1778), Boiereni (1782). Nineteenth century strengthens faith and unity of the nation by raising and conservation of eight churches: Poiana Botizii (1825), Peteritea (1842), Groape (1842), Stoiceni (1860), Costeni (1875), Răzoare (1875), Costeni (1888), Fântânele (1900). Three elements were and is essential and obligatory for a church building: Man, Wood and God. How did these places tourist destinations and what stands to be a sustainable? This will be argued in this present work. The present work is divided into chapters. The Introduction underscores some general aspects of the role and essence of the church as an institution and fathering of believers and aim of the work and objectives. The second chapter refers to the methodology and in the third chapter research results and documentation are played, followed by conclusions and bibliography.

**Keywords:** *sustainable travel destinations, wooden church, conservation, tradition, faith*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism is a sector in a continuous development included on nationally and globally plan. Romania hosting a varied natural potential, to which adds a valuable cultural and historical heritage, represented by: churches, monastic complexes, architecture and art monuments, historical centers and archaeological sites. To realize a great sustainable

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development of tourism is a continuous process and involves the monitoring of impact that this activity has on environmental factors and aims at maintaining a high level of tourists satisfaction, increasing their awareness about the principles of sustainability and promoting the best tourism practices.

The most important keywords regarding sustainable development are: the values protection and conservation of the present generations, so that for the future generation their needs to be satisfied without compromise. An exceptional heritage is given by the wooden churches from our country, which might be considered an sustainable tourism destinations, through the useful contribution made over time by sacred and state authorities to preserve and improve the quality of these buildings. Wooden churches from Ardeal are very famous in the world, especially for their purely artistic qualities, proportions, soundness, clarity, details, contrast and also their fit into the landscape. The wooden churches from Romania shows, usually, a high artistic quality (Ch. Steinbrucker, 1932), being the popular soul expression (C. Petranu, 1934), mirroring the soul of the people (O. Bloch, 1932), proving a developed artistic taste and a long practice in the wooden art (P. Henry, 1930).

The Romanian peoples are essentially an traditionalist and conservative persons. Popular art subsisted until today, preserving both wood and stone architecture (C., Petranu, 1934). Wooden churches express many of nation's attributes (S., Erixon, 1934), architecture defines the rasa because there is a Romanian religious art which have its own personality unique in the world (J., Alazard, 1933). The wooden churches value consists in distinct note that manifests as a whole, presenting a number of common features, such as: rectangular planimetry, oblong between sunrise and sunset, nave arching roof of four slopes and workmanship quality (Petrescu, 1974). Technique, form and decoration vary very much from one region to another, depending on the different living conditions of the community. Woodworking requires both artistic sense, dexterity and also skills necessary for the processing. As ornamental style prevails geometrical style and the wooden objects decorate cultivate floral, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic motifs. Wood primacy in this sacred architecture is due to both natural potential and also for a strong tradition in wooden art. The tradition of construction a wooden churches has been very strong in the countryside until the second half of the nineteenth century, influencing some churches from the XVIII, XIX and even XX century, raised from more sustainable materials (Retegan, 1995). Over time, the wood was the principal raw materials for Romanian people, being used in constructions, in the manufacture of tools, objects and furniture products. The workmanship, showing patience and talent, can give life to the wood which identify the Romanian as a nation, by preserving traditions to our ancestors. In this technique of wooden work, are many types of wood which are used differently: strong essences such as fir and oak wood is used in constructions, beech is used for chests of drawers, horn and nuts is used for beat herding, ash frames for doors and windows and maple and lime for distaffs, spoons and boxes.

### **1.1. The aim theme**

The principal purpose of this study consists in outlining strategies for conservation and promotion of wooden churches from Lăpuș land, for their inclusion in package tours.

### **1.2. The study purpose**

To achieve the study purpose it can be follow the next steps:

- the identification of the defining elements that provide value to these masterworks;
- determining the attractiveness depending on age, degree of conservation and accessibility.

The research results will be supported by maps and photos.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

This study is the result of the documentation and information activity, the interpretation of bibliographic material from speciality literature and also is the result of the fieldwork and the interpretation of dates and of the information obtained.

As scientific research methods used during the elaboration of the study were used: direct observation method, indirect observation method, analysis method, induction method, deduction and selective, dynamic method, comparison and historical-geographical method.

## **3. THE RESULTS AND THE INTERPRETATION. STUDY CASE: THE CHURCHES FROM ROGOZ AND LĂPUȘ**

Lăpuș land is considered one of the most important area especially for wood architecture and artistic achievements, which have left prints for a solid faith and for skillful craftsmen of the past.

"Wooden Churches was the first cultural centers which have ensured the preservation and circulation of Romanian old qualities" (Bott, Marioara, 2014).

On the UNESCO World Heritage are eight wooden churches from Maramures, including "Sfintii Arhangheli Mihail si Gavril" Church from Rogoz village, Lăpuș Land. This place of praying was constructed in 1663, as the inscription at the entrance evokes, after the Tartar invasion from 1661.

Fundamental features:

- Architecture: elm solid wood beams concluded as mails with seven sides, the nave with aisles without the porch;
- An unique element is the ends of beams which supporting the eaves, having a "horse head" form (125 heads) and in the east is represented a gallop which symbolize the running toward eternity;
- The door frame has an ghotic element in the upper side in the form of accolade;
- The roof was made asymmetrically with the north side very expanded, having a meaning to protect the wood of ancestors called "the Mosilor table". This table is designed for official "alms" in the memory of that persons which are died or of that persons which were gone in the righteous and consists of two hewn beams and notched lines cross sectional;
- The tower has an rarely element found in the area, an almost conical coif with turrets at the corners;
- Outside, on the southern side, the median wall shows the twisted rope motif which symbolize the tree of life and the connection between earth and heaven;
- The picture made by Radu Munteanu and Nicolae Man is similar in style with the painting made in the church from Desesti, showing bright colors and thick limes.

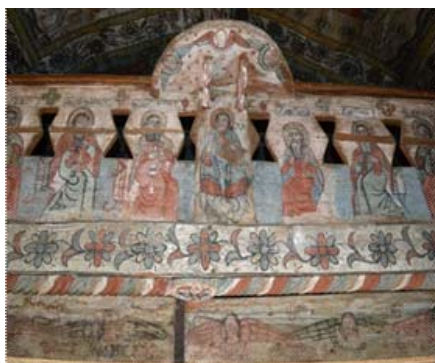
As opposed to church from Rogoz, the church from Lăpuș is registered on UNESCO Heritage List and was built in 1582 for nobles, being called “Nemesilor church” (Bott, Rozica,2014).



**Fig. 1.** The church from Rogoz (photo: author).



**Fig. 2.** Church catapetasma (photo: author).



**Fig. 1.** Painting fragment (photo:author).



**Fig. 2.** „Horse heads” and „the Mosilor table”(photo:author).

### **Fundamental features:**

Here, architecture preserves traditions of wooden churches from Maramures, so, the church was built of carved wood with the as and with a stone foundation. Like at church from Rogoz, also at this church from Lăpuș is ”The Mosilor table” but in this case yhe table is situated on the southern side, were is the entrance in the church.

- The tower is simply, in this case are no longer presented the turrets as in the church from Rogoz case;
- A remarkable piece with a great artistic value is the entry portal from pronave in nave. Thist door has geometrics motif such as triangle which simbolizing the mastery of the feelings;
- The entrance`s door is simple, having decorations only on hinges;

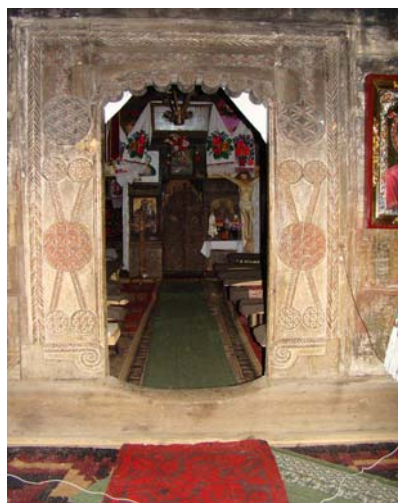
- In pronave are preserved some fragments of the original picture with episodes from "The Last Judgment" and "The Passion of the Christ";

- West wall shows a rarely seen scene, manely "The wheel world": a whell with eight spokes, on each spoke is a number and a phrase wich reveals man's age with the thinking at the age (25 years old – delight the world is, 40 years old – who's like me, 60 years old – a world like I was wrong);

- The painting was made by the same artist as the church from Rogoz (Radu Munteanu).

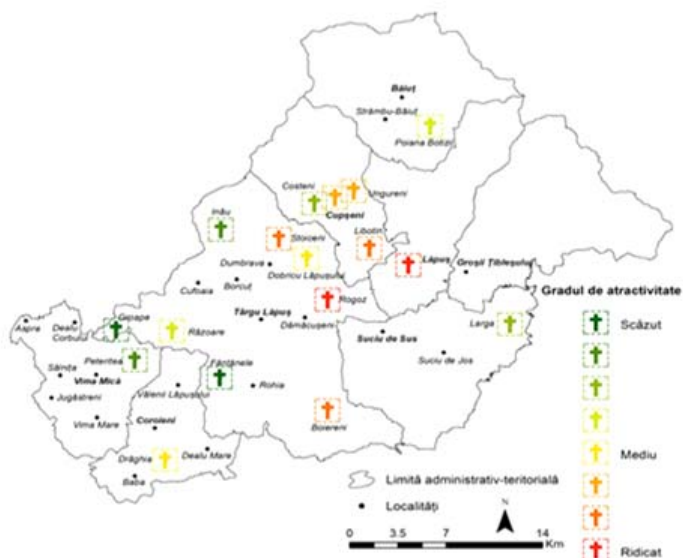


**Fig. 5.** Church from Lăpuș  
(photo:author).



**Fig. 3.** Entrance in nave  
(photo:author).

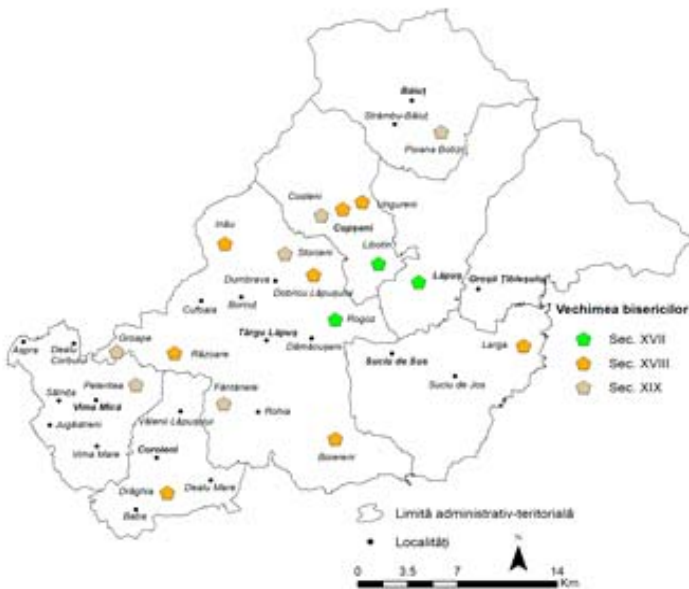
Arrived in front of this church you can't know what to admire first: the spirit of meticulousness and patience of the craftsmen villagers, the brilliantly mode in which they blended certain laws architectural "the artistic beauty of the entire sanctuary and the lonely parties, clarity of lines, the solidity building, groomed design, light changes and shadow, harmony with surrounding fusion power and grace of the entire (Ch. Steinbrucher)".



**Fig. 4.** The attractiveness of the wooden churches of Lăpuș (Source: Author).

In Lăpuș land geographical space, ancient faith and the culture of this people have left clear traces in these places of cults that lasts from unbridled human care to earth and country and also for soul and traditions.

In order to highlight the attractiveness of the wooden churches of Lăpuș, we have took into account: the age, degree of conservation, the distance till polarizing center and accessibility, thus resulting that the highest degree of attractiveness have churches from Rogoz and Lăpuș, followed by churches from Libotin, Stoiceni, Boiereni and Cuspeni. In the analysis of the maps we see that churches with a high conservation and attractiveness are the oldest of these, thus emphasizing sustainable development character of the wooden churches of Lăpuș.



**Fig. 8.** The map with wooden churches age from Lăpuș land (Source: author)

### Strategies of conservation and promotion of wooden churches in the studied area

General strategic objectives:

1. Ecclesiastical Heritage conservation;
2. Tourism promotion of wooden churches;
3. Sustainable maintaining of wooden churches.

Programs, measures, policies:

- 1.1. The renovation of facades;
- 1.2. Restoring the painting according to the specific authentic in the zone;
- 1.3. Their incursion in the built heritage of the area for their protection.
- 2.1. Creating promotional flyers;
- 2.2. Creating a website promotion;

2.3. Creating common tourist information points, represented by panels and information offices;

2.4. Making pilgrimage tours and cultural-religious tourism.

3.1. Rational use of funds for preservation of wooden churches;

3.2. Developing a climate of cooperation between locals, church and local government, whose purpose is to protect religious buildings concerned;

3.3. Developing access infrastructure.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ High number of wooden churches;</li> <li>➤ Important objectives in religious, architectural and historical terms;</li> <li>➤ An high degree of attractiveness based on seniority, conservation and accessibility;</li> <li>➤ An abundance of ornaments, sculptures and motifs;</li> <li>➤ Their classification on World Heritage List, respectively UNESCO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Poor infrastructure;</li> <li>➤ Insufficient/lack of promotion of local tourism (information points, boards, leaflets);</li> <li>➤ Distance from the polarizing center.</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Awareness and involvement of peoples in ecclesiastical heritage protection;</li> <li>➤ The development of local partnerships;</li> <li>➤ Installation of information boards and leaflets distribution;</li> <li>➤ The development of cultural tourism circuits and religious pilgrimage;</li> <li>➤ Insufficient promotion attracts a small number of tourists;</li> <li>➤ Lack of education and training systems to support sustainable development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Insufficient promotion attracts a small number of tourists;</li> <li>➤ Lack of education and training systems to support sustainable development.</li> </ul>

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# A CULTURAL-BALKANIC PARADIGM. NESSEBAR. THE PERENNIAL PREVALENCE OF CULTURE

ANGELICA PUȘCAȘ<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – **Nessebar. A Cultural-Balkanic Paradigm. The Perennial Prevalence of Culture.** Nessebar, a multi-millenary settlement (2000 years BC), synchronous to the period of maximum flourishing of the antique cities, a period approximately incumbent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennia BC in the Middle East, respectively to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> millennia BC in the Mediterranean hinterland, blends a diachronic succession of various cultures and civilizations (Thracian, Classical-Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Slavic, Ottoman, Bulgarian), a reality that will place it in the hierarchy of certain fabulous cultural topoi. **RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE.** Through its uniqueness, connected to the most significant spatial concentration of places of worship, related to the number of inhabitants, Nessebar is today a living legend. The unique cultural and religious heritage of Nessebar, intimately tied to the tumultuous history of the Balkan area, has essentially marked and determined the shape, size and value of the establishments. We can thus follow in a chronological perspective, through the churches, the rise and fall of the economic and political climate, these being “signs” strictly materialized up to the level of the force of the resources, competence and disponibilities the community had. **CIVIL ARCHITECTURE.** To this day, the city preserves more than a hundred private architectural ensembles from the period of the “*BULGARIAN NATIONAL REVIVAL*”. Built at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these belong to an original style of architecture, defining for the “*BLACK SEA STYLE*”. The pattern exposes an evolution on two levels, supported by a ground floor built of stone, with an irregular shape imposed by the trajectory of the streets - with which they are often in a homogeneous continuity. The upper floor, built of wood, had a much wider extension, generously cantilevered above the street. The conclusions highlight the fundamental cultural meaning of our approach, which traverses an ascending path from periegesis towards exegesis and afterwards, to hermeneutics.

**Keywords:** *balkanic spirituality, multicultural stratigraphy, sacred geography, religious architecture, civil architecture, tradition, belief, fresco, knowledge, vicinity, efficiency, UNESCO heritage*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

We will set up the page, within the context of the fabulous Nessebar, incursions from the millennial history and multiculturalism of this exceptional settlement, which exudes tranquility, freshness, and very importantly, the personality of a united community. Here, the belief set the human being in an upright position, has charged it with signs and meanings. Fortifications, churches, houses, landscape architecture..., everything contributes to the genesis of certain unique cultural itineraries, which fosters dialogues, openings, in a space befitted to universality. The preserving and perpetuating of the traditions for centuries, is exemplary, as in its whole, Nessebar is a living museum where people are experiencing normality, in an atmosphere charged with spirituality and traditional ethos. Confirmation is decisive. In 1956, Nessebar, as a whole, was declared by the Bulgarian

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Government, an architectural and archaeological monument, because in 1983 - at the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the "World Heritage Committee" - held in Florence, to be added on the list of cities belonging to the UNESCO heritage.

## 2. THE BALKAN SPACE. EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY. ETHNICAL STRATIGRAPHY, MULTI-CULTURALISM AND TOURISTIC POINTS OF INTEREST

There are certain places you are required to experience. Such places have revealed themselves to me. Not many, just a few, however, rhetorically, an interrogation occurs, is there a certain number?

Even so, such a listing in this context might be confused with a prize list, generally perceived as touristic targets, a somehow foreign understanding to me, echoes bearing other callings, hollow echoes of ancient and heavy bells.

There are places charged with grace, deliberately forged historically within the mystery of a profound spirituality, and Nessebar is rightfully placed, just like a module within "the Infinity Column" of Brâncuși, a universe in which the strong multicultural shades of the Balkan space (of the Medieval Age) are knit together, not without major disturbances, within a geospace specifically woven between identity and alterity.

Being a multi-millenary settlement (2000 years BC), synchronous to the period of maximum flourishing of the antique cities, a period approximately incumbent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennia BC in the Middle East, respectively to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> millennia BC in the Mediterranean hinterland, blends a diachronic succession of various cultures and civilizations ( Thracian, Classical-Greek, Roman, Byzantine. Slavic, Ottoman, Bulgarian), a reality that will place it in the hierarchy of certain fabulous cultural topoi.

An initial argument supporting the evolution of sedentarization within the territories bordering the western shore of the Black Sea, integrated geographically as "the Thracian trunk"<sup>1</sup>, it is generosity provided to us by the archaeological production, of the Neolithic Age (approximately 1900-1700 BC), exhumed during some phases of intense investigations, physical "documents" preserved until today, in the Archaeological Museum located in the ancient city. In favour of the dwelling units, it is important to point out the homogeneity of the traces of life present in compact territories, found in the immediate and/or average proximity of the habitat that is the object of this study, briefly addressed, but extremely eloquent from the paleo-stratigraphic-cultural (ethnic, linguistic<sup>3</sup>, socio-

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<sup>2</sup> In antiquity, Thrace stretched out from Mount Olympus, in the south, up to the Danube, in the north. Introducing here the phrase "maternity of the place", we can speak of legendary musicians such as Orpheus and Musaeus, or of Democritus, originally from the Abdera fortress, along with the sophist Protagoras, the poet Nikaenetus, of the philosopher Anaxarchos, or the historian Necateos. Regarding the evolution of continuity, Thrace takes up an important historical role, during the Roman and Byzantine periods, being a fundamental "embryo" of the latter. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a large part of Thrace was given up to Bulgaria, while another was taken by Turkey, at the end of World War I (see the Treaty of Lausanne, 1923). In the given geopolitical context, when nationalism in the Balkans became more prevalent, Greece inherited a small territory, in the regions of Evros, Xanthi and Komotini (a.n. – *author's note*).

<sup>3</sup> Speaking of the "Thracian branches" (including the Geto-Dacians), having its roots in the early stages of Indo-European migration, the historiography conveys us the fact that they were not formed of a single race or, in other words, from the anthropological perspective, they did not all belong to the same physical type. Archaeology has brought evidence that in the original cradle have been numerous

ethnographic, etc.) perspectives. On this path, the interrelation between the process of steadfastness of certain human communities, it is undoubtedly evidentiary, implicitly of the genesis of the settlements, subtly brought closer to the “protourban pattern”, an entire system favored both by the valences of the local geography, and by the anthropological particularities, transmitting a conscious assumption of the values of life by the “Neolithic man”.



**Fig. 1.** Enolithic pottery. The Archaeological Museum of Nessebar. *Source: the author.*

A sign of certainty is the brilliant presence of the “Clay Civilization”, whose refinement (quality, technique and a decorative aesthetics captured especially in perfect geometries) rivals over time, with known distinctions (ornamental, chromatic, shape, etc.), with the Minoan or Cucuteni pottery, and this under the terms of an imposed spatial limitation. By default, we cannot rule out a strong program of spiritual practices, of ancient rituals and polytheistic beliefs.

By grounding ourselves within the outlined parameters, even since the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, the establishing of the *city/fortress of Mesembria* appears to be a natural occurrence, in the southern half of the western shore of the Black Sea<sup>4</sup> - named after the

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tribes that, by living in close connections for thousands of years, they got to speak a common language, the Indo-European language. By giving further information, we find that Indo-European peoples were divided in two different branches, according to term they used for the number 100: *centum* (the Celts, the Germanic tribes, the Latins, the Greeks and the Illyrians) and *satem* (the Indians, Iranians, Armenians, Slavs, Thracians and the Baltics) (a.n.).

<sup>4</sup> “When referring to the Black Sea, its ancient Persian name was Axaena (“benighted”). The Greeks interpreted this name by a folk etymology, into Axenios, namely “the unwelcoming sea”, hence the

Thracian founder, *Melsa*, followed by the suffix *bria* (meaning city, in the Thracian language). The selection of the location - not at all coincidental - was conferred by its strategic parameters, a well sheltered bay, with predominantly quiet waters, out of which a lilliputian peninsula emerges (850 m long/300 m wide), with an average altitude of 15 m and linked to the continental mainland by a frequently flooded narrow isthmus (about 400 m long/30 m wide). The laced shore allowed the development of two small harbors, in the western extremity of the peninsula, located roughly parallel on the northern, respectively, the southern fronts. Likewise, the climate, moderately temperate, with Mediterranean influences, imposes itself as a progradation factor of inhabitation and development of certain specific activities.

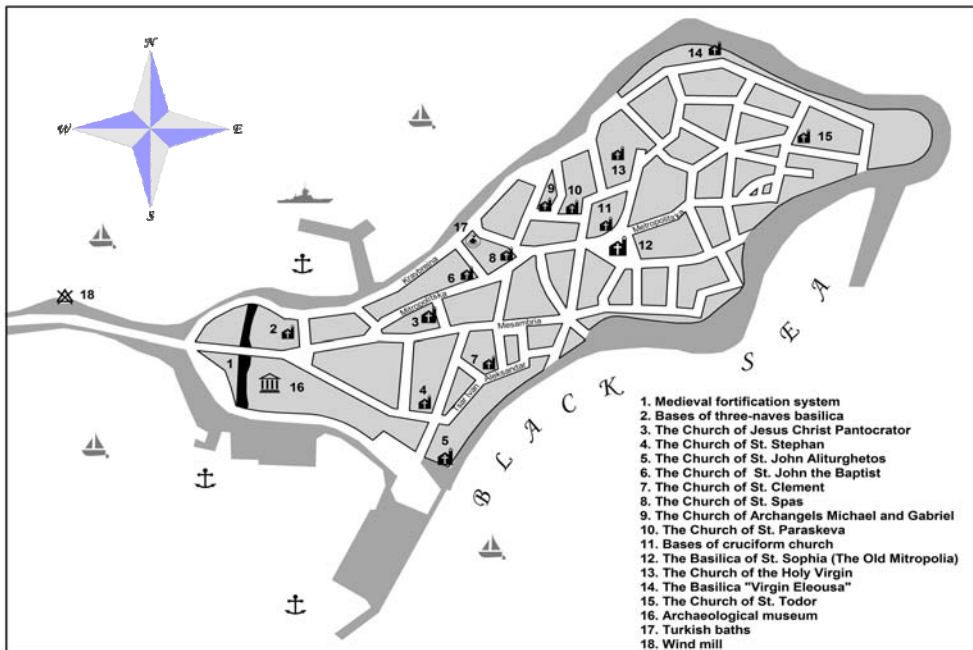


Fig. 2. The map of Nessebar Peninsula; cca. 1:10.000.

Regarding the economic practices, we can view this early stage of social organization from the perspective of the farming activities (the cultivation of cereals, grapes, vegetables), to which fishing in the coastal areas, as well as handicrafts are attached, though in an “early stage”, and very possibly trading, either on the dry land or on water. The two ports represent clear evidence and reliability in this respect.

It is likely enough, after considering these factors as functional, we should grant the Thracian fortress, a predominantly residential status (see in the modern era “chamber cities”), or, by approaching a more daring thesis, the function of the command center: military, commercial and spiritual. Implicitly, *Melsa* leads us to this conclusion, a skilled

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subsequent hydronym of wider popularity, Pontus Euxinus. The local populations kept instead, the epithet “black”: Romanian - Black Sea, Bulgarian - Cerno More (according to Peter Dan Idu, p. 16, Dimitrie Cantemir Publishing House, 2000).

strategist, a certified fact, along with the diversity of archeological artifacts and the presence of fragments of the first fortresses.

Active movements of population (since the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium), from the east or north of the Danube, will cause severe conflictual states, either with the Persians led by Darius, or with the Scythians - from the northern steppes of the Black Sea. A special moment is recorded in the year of 326 BC, when an open conflict takes place with the great Empire of Macedonia. The death of Alexander the Great (unexpectedly occurring on July 13, the year of 323 BC) will leave one of his generals – Lysimachus – as the King of Thrace, defeated during the years of 300 BC by the king of the Getae, Dromichaites.

Beyond these selective notes regarding certain war related events, waged due to “imperialist”, political and economic reasons, our interest focuses on the processes of acculturation unfolded within the Thracian geospace, and not only there, metamorphosed into a compound of cultures and civilizations suitable for the implantation of higher values.

In periods of time overlapping many of these events (1400-1700 BC), significant events of great impact occur with “the Aegean civilizations”. The destruction of the Minoan Civilization under the Achaeans, the invasion from the north of the Dorians (around 1200 BC, etc) will cause, on many levels, irreversible cultural decreases, surmounted by new paradigms<sup>5</sup>.

For instance, the contact they had with the Dorians, the bearers of an austere, militarized mental behavior, viewed as aggressive by the autochthonous society, already structured according to certain canons and values, will be balanced by a “long shot” dynamic, structured on programs - that attaches progress to itself, in a *sine-qua-non* manner. Under these auspices, we are able to designate them as bearers of the Iron Age, the artisans of certain strong fortresses, as well as bearers of certain sociological precepts, scientifically acknowledged of Spartan origin.

Another landmark of geo-demographic importance and of extraordinary habitat, is the triggering of the great Greek colonization (8<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), a movement that will place the expansion of urban planning in the Mediterranean western coast of the Black Sea to higher quotas, where we can appeal to the genesis of the *Pontian Civilization*, imprinted by specific features, given the likely mix of Thracian-Getic mental geography, with Greek patterns, see the metropolises of *Miletus*, Histria, Tomis, Dionysopolis (Balchik), *Megara* – with Callatis and Mesembria (Dorian dialect); respectively the Ionian Archipelago with Odessos, Anhalo and Apollonia. The fact is that this backbone of Greek city-states<sup>6</sup>, will take the organic leap into the horizon of a universal culture and civilization, either the classical Greek or the Hellenistic one.

Given the topic of this research and leaving aside Callatis (nowadays Mangalia), also founded by the Dorians, we focused our attention on the fortress city of *Mesambria*,

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<sup>5</sup> The first invasion of the Achaean in Crete (around 1400 BC), temporally synchronous with the Arian invasion in the Northwest Indian subcontinent, will result in the extinction of the Minoan Civilization, a process followed by the consolidation in the Peloponnese of a new central pole, Mycenae, surrounded by powerful city-fortresses: Argos, Pylos, Athens (founded by the Ionians), Thebes, Sparta (a.n.).

<sup>6</sup> The fundamental particularity to define the polis, beyond the territorial and political unit, or the demographic one (in most situations, the population being concentrated in the limit of a few thousand inhabitants), is the “lineage” unity, synonymous to the “intimate community” of origin, respectively of an anthropogeographic cultural system (a.n.).

which marks out at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC (510), the coming of colonists from Megara, Byzantion and Kalhedon, a feature that will singularize it as the only urban Dorian settlement, circumscribed by the Ionian cities: *Odessos-Varna*/, *Anhialo/Pomorie*, *Apollonia/Sozopol*.

Extremely fast and efficient, Mesambria synthesizes the entire classification of attributes of a polis by excellence, which for centuries and in a state of geo-political tranquility, will invest it with the status of a powerful city, with an exceptional economic dynamics, doubled by a pleasant architectural aesthetics, a way of living in which training was honoured, and the *agora* (see the western city centre, marked currently by the church of Jesus Christ Pantocrator), with highly important philosophical, literary, urbanistic, administrative, political, etc, debates, represented the central pole of the community.

In order to decipher, somewhat in detail, the coherence of this ensemble, we emphasize the edification, in the initial phase, of a system of fortifications with defense capabilities both onto land, and sea.

The urban landscape breathes comfort, relaxation and a, we might say, valuable architecture. It is mandatory to build an amphitheater, the temples enhance the sacredness of the space (see the Temple of Apollo), the Greek statuary (an artistic creation of balance and clarity) is ubiquitous; figures of mythological gods and heroes adorn the corners of markets and narrow streets, paved with large slabs of stone, marble columns, built in the Doric style, decorating civil edifices, either public or private, gardens and parks rich in vegetation have the purpose to cool down the hot summer days, conferring a certain status of unique beauty and tranquility, of which the Greeks were very much fond of.

On the economic level, handicrafts and especially metalworking - encounters a tremendous growth. The inventory of the workshops specialized in the production of iron, bronze, silver and gold is extremely varied, ranging from technical and utilitarian tools, to decorative objects of worship and ornaments, their crafting reaching astonishing detail and refinement parameters<sup>7</sup>.

The magnitude and diversity of their handicrafts (the ongoing ceramic<sup>8</sup> production, stone carving and in other materials, the processing of textile fibers and of wool, of animal skins, the preservation of fish for export, the manufacture of ornaments and weapons, etc.), the existence of a heavy-industry – the ports serving as bases for the construction of ships, but particularly, the advent, beginning with the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, of the first silver and bronze coins, and later of the gold ones (found at the archeological sites from Haskovo, Šumen, Veliko-Târnovo, Silistra...) certifies stable commercial relationships with all the cities on the Black Sea, in the Mediterranean Basin: Athens, Delos, Pergamum, Tanagra, Corinth, Miletus, Megara, and so on, up to Egypt.

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<sup>7</sup> The series of exhibits, housed by the Archaeological Museum of Nessebar is absolutely explicit, for both of these eras, as well as for those that will be attached later, during the Roman, Byzantine, Bulgarian, Ottoman periods of invasion...The carefully spent steps through the halls of the Museum and the “eye to eye” lingering, with each one of the objects, is the most efficient way of accessing cultural perennality (a.n.).

<sup>8</sup> On shore, as well as in the vicinity of the Sea, amphorae of various sizes and shapes were discovered, with seals dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. This is a confirmation of the fact that the dynamics of the trade (especially with grain, oil, wine, products of bee-keeping, etc.), indicate superior parameters, and from this point, the ennoblement with the attribute of *merchant center* or in other words, of *commercial agency*, becomes a natural enterprise.

Moreover, the prosperity of the polis, most likely associated with a demographic growth, leads to the establishment of a satellite colony – *Novlohos* – currently called Obzor.

As such, for centuries, the Dorian Mesambria enrolls in an ascending evolution, even when during the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC – on the background of the restructuring of the Center-periphery relations in the Mediterranean, the Roman hegemony will impose itself as the supreme authority throughout the entire Mediterranean world, thus instilling the universal empire of Rome.

In these circumstances, the Greek colony will consume a time threshold, the year of 72 BC, representing the pacifical establishing into the conquered territory – of the Romans, a first linguistic resonance, being consecrated under the name of *Mesemvria*, the Latin term which under the autochthonous Thracians was *Mesembria*, and later, under the Greek occupation, *Mesambria*.

At least locally, on the “chessboard of history”, the same game is being played with delicate moves.

Philo-Greek, by culture, the extra added value is predominantly urbanistic. Under the Romans, the communications system becomes refined and is expanded, the fortifications are consolidated, aqueducts are built – a sumptuous system of public baths with heated pools is inaugurated in the north-north-west region, representing much needed water adductions from the continent. The anteroom, generous and elegant, was supported by columns, a central space plated with polychrome marble, fitted with a hipocaustum heating system - the accessories destined for long debates and banquets were considered agreeable, without depriving them of luxuries. The capacity of the complex, imposing, in relation to the reduced geometry of the city, and the manner of organization may be easily deciphered through the consistently kept traces.

The gambling arenas, part of the customs of relaxation specific to the Romans, were hosted by the Greek theater, often accompanied by street events, public square meetings and the practice of rituals in the newly built temples and altars.

The basic interest remains focused on the strategic values of the place, reconsidering it as an important outpost in Rome's military strategies, targeting new conquests, by default those found north of the Danube.

From the commercial point of view, the practices of the city remain the same, but somewhat in the shadow of the new center powered by the Romans, *Anhialo* (Pomorie).

The death of Emperor Theodosius I, in the year 395 - followed by the division of the Empire between his sons<sup>9</sup> produces balance rupture, triggering the economic, cultural and demographic forces – in the favor of the Oriental branch of Constantinople - a sphere of influence where *Mesemvria* will integrate in a most natural way.

A tremendously flourishing period follows next, set on a matrix well articulated in opportunities, under the Byzantines, the city, more than ever, developing its economic and strategic personality. By virtue of their advanced engineering, fortifications are rebuilt, using bricks manufactured in a special manner in Constantinople, bricks used alongside local building material (conchiferous limestone, sandstone etc.), and in the walls of the first orthodox places of worship.

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<sup>9</sup> Flavius Arcadius - emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire (the capital - Constantinople); Flavius Honorius - Emperor of the Western Roman Empire (the capital - Ravenna) (a.n.)

The water drainage system is also restored, and new volumetric analyses are applied to the ports, able to deal with some higher tonnage vessels - engaged in major trade, the favorite routes targeting Constantinople and Venice.

The fact is that for nearly a thousand years, this rich town, altogether, through its merchants, will mark ups and downs closely connected to the great Slavic migration (the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD); the founding of the first Bulgarian State in 681 (by the populations coming from the central Asian steppes); endless battles between the Byzantines and Bulgarians (see the chronological table); the conversion, in the year of 864, of the Bulgarian Tsar Boris to Christianity; the individualization of several strong leaders, on the stage of the Balkans, founders of political formations, responsible for radical mutations – see the Bulgarian-Wallachian Tsardom of the Assen dynasty (at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century) or the Serbian Nemanid dynasty.

We cannot leave out, even if we mention it in passing, the contribution to the articulation of a specific cultural identity in the Balkans, of the Wallachian populations (the Aromanians), bearers of a lifestyle marked by a transhumant semi-nomadism (“*everywhere and nowhere*”), as well as by their history, during which they were spread (Greece, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, Wallachia, etc.), and later regrouped, according to their pastoral, craft, commercial occupations, to which we associate the financial, intellectual, and last but not least, the one of being the founders of settlements such as: Muscopuli<sup>10</sup> (Voskopjë – Albania), Kruševo<sup>11</sup> (in Western Macedonia), Vlacholivadi<sup>12</sup> (Livadia – in Central Greece). These are eloquent examples, due to the

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<sup>10</sup> Voskopjë (present day Albania), Muscopuli or Vuscopoli, a Balkan metropolis, founded, animated and inhabited mainly by Aromanians, represents a strong argument that proves a spectacular development in the 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, but a steep decline, paradoxically, occurred in 1769. Located at 1248 m altitude, in an optimal geographic position and at a distance of about 95 km in relation to the port of Valona (Vlorë), respectively 120 km from Durazzo (Durës), valorizes the most important and prolific trade connections with Venice, Constantinople or with other large cities from Spain. They were exporting, in large quantities, sheep wool, goat hair blankets, various skins (of sheep, cattle and caballine) – acquired from their brethren from Pind and Thessaly - wax, tar, tobacco, from Albania) coffee, oil etc. They were returning from mighty Venice with silk embroidered with gold thread, various fabrics, glassware, ornaments and Murano glass mirrors, weapons, maps, books etc. In time, the masters of Muscopoli started manufacturing fabrics, carpets, weapons, and so on, by themselves, which they used to sell at high prices, especially on the markets of the Ottoman Empire. It is a highly faithful illustration of fair trade practiced by the Nessebarians (a.n.).

<sup>11</sup> “Since the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Venice and the German universities will become privileged destinations for the Aromanian students of wealthy families. Aromanian folklore reflects the links with the Venetians, whose echoes can be found in poems and proverbs. *Ntunicai Anadol, Njapirii'n Venitie* [At sunset, we were in Anatolia, at midday – in Venice], became a most popular saying a century later in Kruševo. The development of this city, baptized “the Venice of dry land” by a gentleman called Weigang, is due mostly, to the refugees from Voskopjë” (Nicolas Trifon. *The Aromanians - everywhere and nowhere -*, 2012, Cartier Publishing house, p. 179).

<sup>12</sup> At approximately half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the archaeologist Léon Heuzey, during a trip, makes the following observations regarding the inhabitants of Vlacholivadi, implicitly regarding the state the city was found in. “...the Vlachs, the descendants of the nomadic tribes, are a curious population. They built houses, formed villages and even a city (Vlacholivadi), but deep down in their soul, they remained shepherds... Work and gain haven't made these Vlachs entirely sedentary and haven't crushed the fickle nomadic spirit inside them”. He also mentions the state of abundance of the city, and the presence of five large churches as well, decorated with quite beautiful paintings, of Byzantine taste (Nicolas Trifon. *Aromanians - everywhere and nowhere -* 2012, Cartier Publishing house, p. 175).

magnitude of their importance. Many other fairs and cities from Greek Macedonia (Veria, Kastoria, Kozani, Siatisia, Florina, Serres), Thessaly (Volos, Trikala), Epirus (Metsovo...) etc., share either the same origin, or from the geo-demographic view, they had a majority of Aromanian population.

The reason I analyzed these specific settlements in this study, is the multiple similarities (primarily the commercial and architectural ones) with the city of Nessebar, but also the actual presence of the Vlachs on the northern coastal pastures, where they used to descend in order to spend the winters, in the valleys beginning from the eastern extremity of the Stara Planina Mountains (the Balkan region).

In the same context of the ethnic origin, we must greatly emphasize several categories of people so called *chervangii*<sup>13</sup> or *cărvunari*, surnamed in oral history as “*bands of predator soldiers*”. Truly, the historical records confirm the participation of the units of Vlachs from the Byzantine campaigns (actions rewarded with a series of privileges), but, above all, their main mission was the securement of trade on great distances, with caravans on extremely difficult routes, both orographically, as well as in security related terms - in a vast geospace, consolidated in “pre-national geodemographic assemblies”. The understanding of these *roads* is highly important, either of transhumance, or of the merchants, as roads or cultural beltways, spread out between the Mediterranean, the Adriatic and the Black Sea.

### 3. ECCLESIASTIC HERITAGE. RELIGIOUS CONFIGURATIONS. A COMPILATION OF STONE CARVED IMAGES OF THE BYZANTINE-ORTHODOX HERITAGE

Perhaps, for starters, we should talk about the Christian state of mind of *the place and of the inhabitants*, which in itself represents a spiritual and historical background for nearly two millennia. St. Andrew must be mentioned, nicknamed the *Apostle of the Wolves*, who in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, “labours” in evangelizing a geospace formed of cognate lands, the Pontus Euxinus and the Aegean Sea: Bithynia, Scythia Minor (present day Dobruja), Thrace, Hellas - reaching the Peloponnese - where he will be crucified in Patras. Following his footsteps, doubled by those of St. Philip, archeology comes to meet us with the prints of dozens of basilicas (without mentioning here the places of extreme hesychastic harshness), evidence that can also be unfolded at the origins of the legend of the 40 basilicas of Nessebar.

However, through its uniqueness, connected to the most striking spatial concentration in places of worship, related to the number of inhabitants, Nessebar is a lived out legend and you, dear traveler, lost in wonder, on the narrow streets, fascinating, by far, through their rich embellishments “with all sort of things”, the feeling is that you do not even take steps from one to the other, but that you “*sweep from one to the other*”.

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<sup>13</sup> “Vasile Borgea brings the word closer to the Serbian term *kelatori* (from the Romanian word, *path*, way). The mentioning of the Prespa and Castoria localities, indicate their presence on the lake shores of Greece and former Yugoslavia, along the famous Via Egnatia, an artery traversing the peninsula, connecting Constantinople with the Adriatic Sea, with the ports of Dyrrachium and Apollonia” (Neagu Djuvara. Aromanians. History, language, destiny. 2012, p. 64). Also linked to all of these travelers, weapon bearers, respectively to significant riches, written history, but also cartographic sources point out the existence in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century of the so-called “Cărvunei Country” (see “The Order of the Knights of Malta” - 1247), spread as a territory approximately between Mangalia and Varna, its sphere of influence being one of a broad geographic extension. (a.n.).

Returning to the practical side of history, it is mandatory and objective to appeal to a bundle of stimulating factors, such as: the institutionalization of Christianity under Constantine the Great (see the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, in 325); the great basileus personality of Justinian (527-565), the author of the revolution in the art of Byzantine architecture (see St. Sophia); the stage of economic and cultural revival during the time of Tsar Ivan Alexander - followed by the exceptional period of prosperity associated with the 13<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> centuries; The housing of the old town by the local seniors - especially the merchants - well situated financially; also the safety ensured by the geographical place - a thread that will permanently coordinate us in this endeavor.

Less favorable centuries are those from under the Ottoman rule. Part of the fortifications and aqueduct systems are destroyed, the effervescence of the Christian architecture clearly fades, this specific situation being applied to the civil constructions as well. The lifestyle traverses other paths, if not symbiotically, at least in acceptance with the established oriental civilization.

Historically, politically, anthropogeographically, we are dealing with another threshold moment. Least watchful, we could negatively extrapolate the entire essential complex configured in those particular centuries, or the reality was not only in the shadows.

It is still being built, but more modestly, in the local style, and with more improvised raw material. A truthful warning is, by far, the *Church of St. Spas* (the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century), built by a wealthy merchant. The appearance is of a “*poor virgin*”, yet altogether pure. One small nave, with smoky walls, deprived of any decoration and with a barely sketched apse, is encased with a low roof in two apses. However, the interior is decorated with fresco paintings, in the late Byzantine style. The vivid colors confer privacy and a special brightness to the space.

Related to this aspect, we should keep in mind, the extremely important rich fresco adornments of the Church of St. Stephen, according to the Byzantine iconography, (15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> centuries) or the spiritual rounding of other places with icons, pulpits, iconostases, frescoes, and so on, all holding a profound orthodox depth.

Another reality, that we cannot surmount, is the perpetuating of Christian symbolism in favor of the ecclesiastic architecture, during the entire Ottoman rule. No Church has ever been converted into a mosque, a nearly ubiquitous practice, and understood in a natural manner of decisions related reversal of poles.

In this direction, we should extend a special analysis, extremely cautious and delicate and in terms of a certain exactness of high moral altitude.

Therefore, the unique cultural and religious heritage of Nessebar, intimately tied to the vicissitudes of the Balkan area, has essentially marked and determined the shape, size and value of the establishments. We can, thus, follow in a chronological perspective, through the churches, the rise and fall of the political and economic climate, these being strictly materialized “signs” on the level of the labour resources, of understanding and availability possessed by the community of Nessebar.

By virtue of these annotations, we specify that, at present, the existence of 15 ecclesiastical monuments, of which 13 are fully preserved, the traces of time, however, allowing themselves to be decrypted, while two other (St. Sophia and the Blessed Virgin Mary Eleousa churches – 5<sup>th</sup> century, respectively the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD), imposing through the monumental imprints, everyone's imagination being able to work on visualizing them as they were originally.

In terms of timeline, in conjunction with the architectural unit, an examination of the churches of Nessebar emphasizes three distinct phases. A first period, corresponding to

the 5<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, which we may call the *early-Byzantine* period, presents basilicas with a central nave, flanked by two or even three pronaoses. *The Old Episcopal Residence* (St. Sophia) together with the foundations of the *Basilica with three naoses* from the proximity of the isthmus, respectively the *Basilica Virgin Eleousa*, located on the northeastern coast, are very illuminating in this matter, absolutely impressive through the generous size of the proportions, an aspect that closely verifies the exceptional dynamism of the Justinian Era, when the New Eastern Empire reaches its first peak of territorial development and extension.

Maintaining the correlation with the highest levels of flourishing of Byzantium, the second stage – defined by the *medieval architecture*, is synchronous to the Macedonian Dynasty (9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> centuries AD).

The state of mind, perceived in a higher register, is conducted by clear architectural reliefs and concurrently nuanced. The nave of the basilica, whose structure preserves it - through a double leveling – the Church of St. Stephen, also known as the New Episcopal Residence (10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries), is accompanied by the austere priory, yet elegant of the Church of St. John the Baptist (9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> centuries), built on the plan of the cross type basilica and which is distinguished by its high cylindrical dome.

A particular observation, both for this period, as well as for the later, is the lack of edifices built with a dome, the elongation being given by the cylindrical spires, or octagonally faceted, shaped on the top level with splendid arcades, an aesthetic created using various dimensions (height, aperture) and by the chromatic game granted by the alternation between the red color of the bricks, the white color of the polished limestone and the emerald green of the enameled discs.

The third stage, developed between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, completes plenary, the artistic culmination. Is the most fertile period in the building of churches in the so-called pictorial style. Also now, within the geospace of continental proximity, monastic complexes appear involved intellectually in the formation of the future patriarchs of Bulgaria.

Magnificent establishments appear on the small peninsula, one after another, all religious monuments currently of great emotional impact. The ornamentations of a subtle refinement, inspired from the art of the mosaic, generate in this way, surprising metamorphoses.

Among the most brilliant achievements we nominate the following churches: of *Jesus Christ Pantocrator*, *St. Paraskeva*, of *Archangels Michael and Gabriel*, of *St. John Aliturchetos* and of *St. Todor*.

Hereinafter, by leaning on a complex of causative factors (chronological, spatial, economical, historical, architectural, local diligences, etc.) we selectively continue with a succinct-descriptive presentation regarding the elements that singularizes them as component parts of these monuments.

*The Church of St. Sophia*<sup>14</sup> – *the Old Episcopal Residence or the old Mitropoly Church (the 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD)*.

No matter how compressed the built space of old Nessebar proved to be, you won't find it hard to distinguish the two markets of "command" that polarized the early urban. One of them, geometrically positioned in the center, houses the most impressive local religious edifice and among the most important ones of the Byzantine-Balkan territories.

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<sup>14</sup> No more than two steps away, you'll be able to notice the traces of another sacred "nest". It was the tiny church of St. Dumitru, small just as a modest peasant house. The contrasts are astounding (a.n.).

As a matter of fact, the time when it was built and the worship of the “Righteous wisdom”, surmounts a simple coincidence with the valences of the Justinian Era, marked in its identity by the millennial symbol of the “Christian world”: the Cathedral of St. Sophia from Constantinople.



**Fig. 3.** The Church of St. Sophia. *Source: the author.*

Another aspect that reinforces the high social alleged values, even if it comes from the field of civil built heritage, are, not far - in Nessebar nothing is too far away, but everything is found nearby – the public thermal baths, used during the 5<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, a period when the “calligraphy” of St. Sophia is also perfected.

Today, still, although truncated, the building is relatively well preserved, in its original form. The Basilica, presenting one nave and two wings (about 25-26 m wide) was used not only as an ecclesiastic residence, but also as a decision-making space regarding the administrative and social issues. We may opine that before us we have an establishment with central functions, fulfilled, identically, a few centuries later, by the great cathedrals of Medieval West.

The central nave is twice as large as the size of the wings, being separated from them by massive columns, interposed by semi-cylindrical arcs. The building made of stone and brick presents five large registers, bound with mortar mixed with crushed brick, also adding that during its glorious days it breathed with piety through the paintings that covered its walls, but also solemn boldness through the pavement covered with mosaic, made of colored stones. Massive, yet elegant in daylight, during the darkness of the night, however, it used to metamorphosize into a fiery mountain “temple”, just like the “burning bush on Sinai”.

*The Church of St. Mary Elousa (the 5<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD).*

Built on the north coast, today in ruins, and reiterating, I don't know how many times until now, the ergonomics of the space - perceived as a way of living - is organically integrated within the system of fortifications, a feature setting it aside being that it belonged to a monastic ensemble. With a length of 25 m/18 m wide, the construction presents three longitudinal naves, the northern one, barely perceptible, due to the periodical landslides. Several brick tombs were found in this place, archaeological research arguing on the other hand, about its longevity, due to the repeated interventions of restoration.

The renowned echo of the name *Virgin Mary Elousa* (in Greek, the loving one) resounds from the belief in a miracle-working icon of the Virgin Mary.<sup>15</sup>

*The Church of St. John the Baptist (9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> centuries).*

It is the best kept, close to perfection, medieval Basilica. From an architectural perspective, it makes the transition between the early Christian basilica and the cross plan with a central dome. The river stone is the predominant material of construction, in eclectic alternance with the limestone blocks, carved out in various shapes and sizes. This pattern of building in itself seduces by breaking the monotony. A third participating element is the brick, its role being almost exclusively a decorative one.



**Fig. 4.** The Church of St. John the Baptist. *Source: the author.*

<sup>15</sup> The icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary Eleousa is found in the National Museum of History in Sophia, while its impeccable replica, may be admired in the Museum of Archaeology from Nessebar (a.n.).

The reasons are austere, yet not lacking elegance, an attribute developed out of a nuanced disposal. The main arch is well shaped, set up very high, above the entry, as well as the gullets, disposed also in flexible arches, at the base of the cylindrical tower. In the upper register, the tower appears marked by low semicircle openings, poignantly highlighted, wrapped by a roof platform. Also at the level of the highly expressive tower we can find two circular brick belts, fitted in horizontal layers, separated by stone rings. The windows, aligned only in the upper part, rather like narrow gaps, split in the thickness of the walls, are also discreetly contoured by the redness of the bricks.

Inside, on the southern interior wall, shaded, yet still preserved, the portrait of the founder can be found (14<sup>th</sup> century), as well as a scene with the figure of St. Marina (17<sup>th</sup> century).

Inside the altar apse, an old column trunk is what is left of the cross, and in the walls, here and there, you can still observe delicate fragments of Greek art. A special presence is also represented by several icons of patrimony, remarkable due to their age (15<sup>th</sup> century), the clarity of the colours and the tranquility that is radiated through the icon of St. Hierarch Nicholas. Another religious image that, on the other hand, awakens inner unrest is the one of St. John the Baptist holding his head under his arm.

*The Church of St. Stephen – the New Episcopal Residence or the New Mitropoly (10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> centuries).*

It is built out of registers of carved stone blocks, alternating with bricks - which



**Fig. 5.** The Church of St. Stephen. Pulpit.

*Source: the author.*

here have an exterior decorative role as well. It has a Byzantine basilica plan, with a high central nave in relation to the lateral wings, which confers to it, in addition to its massiveness, the appearance of a civil edifice with two floors. The fence <sup>16</sup> – contributes to the completion of the said particularity – entirely from massive stone, built in the local style – the existence of a private garden, and especially the unfolding of a wide “porch” (pronaos), also painted, that in a way retains you in a sort of “pious obedience”, but also in preparation for the royal filling with the sacramental harmony awaiting for you, after opening the heavy wooden gates of the inner “assembly room”.

In this context, we emphasize the fact that, it is one of the very few monuments of Bulgaria who kept its frescoes in an exceptional state, dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the beginning, it was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, hence the

<sup>16</sup> It is the only religious monument from Nessebar, where there is a traditional wall of enclosure, covered with a double layer of semicircular tiles resembling to the ones found in the roof of the museum building. The available garden ambient space is also unique, where fig trees, wild grasses and flower beds unfold into a spontaneous, mysterious and refreshing appearance (a.n.).

meaning of the scenes found inside the church, with the image of the Virgin as a mediator between Man and Christ.

The analysis of the stylistic particularities reveals that these frescoes were painted by three craftsmen, two of them completing the central and eastern parts, while the western was carried out by the third one. A later work, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is the emotional scene of the “Doomsday”, created in the traditional iconography of the period and that makes close references to the frescoes having the same topic, which brighten the exterior walls of the monumental churches of Bucovina.

Another pictorial work, which draws much attention, is the 16<sup>th</sup> century iconostasis. In the geometric centre of the superior register of the temple, one can observe, through its size, the icon of Jesus Christ Pantocrator, carrying on his head, in an angle, a Baroque style oversized cross, with the crucified Christ on it.

Inside the church, the wooden carved *Episcopal chair*, as well as the ceremonious *pulpit*, also chiseled in wood, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, are still preserved. The few graves covered with large slabs of marble are also of great importance, as well as a magnificent column (the symbol of continuities) - based on a Corinthian chapter, having on top another long chapter, designed with Renaissance subtleties.

Instead of a conclusion, St. Stephen is, certainly, one of the most significant religious monuments of the religious Bulgarian culture, and fresco painting, with hundreds of registers, portraits and icons, require many hours to exhaust the entire iconographical richness.

At the exit of the church you acknowledge the spiritual necessity of the garden, which similar to “the porch”, allows some time out for “settlement”, necessary for stepping out of the sacred, towards the mundane.

Likewise, the presence of a small lapidarium (heads of columns, chapters – created in different styles, carved inscriptions, tombstones - among them, some encrusted with Arabic calligraphy, etc.) adds to the sacred, the wisdom to preserve at any scale, the multiculturalism of the place.

#### *The Church of St. John Aliturghetos (14<sup>th</sup> century AD)*

Located in the immediate proximity of St. Stephen, the Church of St. John Aliturghetos is structured according to the cross shaped basilica, crowning (even unfinished) the absolute excellence of the late medieval style. Still svelte and stylish, with its supple temple-like columns, with elevated domes and large openings with the purpose of filtering the light, it can be compared (keeping the proportions), with the blossoming of the late Gothic style. Built on the southern shore, with generous perspectives over the sea, it captures the entire light, and the decorative components (arcs, domes, consoles, etc.), shaped with great craftsmanship and accuracy, mastering the purity of the fashioned stone and the ornamental ceramic elements. The floor, fashioned in the mosaic style, alternating rhombic shapes, squares and triangles of polychrome marble (white, red and green), and the altar apse is set within a marble frame, carved with vine leaves. In 1913, it was partially destroyed by a powerful earthquake, but until the present day, it is kept as an exceptional monument of the Bulgarian architecture.

#### *The Churches of the “Archangels Michael and Gabriel” and of “St. Paraskeva” (13<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> centuries)*

From the central square, dominated by the imposing silhouettes of the ancient Mitropolia, you sneak up slightly (a few tens of meters) toward the northern coast, where, almost twinned, you are greeted by two other places of worship, of an ecstatic beauty. Their matching goes beyond the close territorial annexation in a temporally synchronous genesis

(13<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> centuries), as well as in architectural similarities, evident in the first half, composed of a string of cylindrical arches. The major differences occur in the upper part, with the *Church of St. Paraskeva*<sup>17</sup>, having a rectangular plan, of naval type, with a slightly tilted roof, while the *Holy Archangels*<sup>18</sup> expose a magistral dome.

*The Church of “Jesus Christ Pantocrator” (the 13<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> centuries).*

This edifice occupies a special place within the sacred geography of Nesabar. Located in the southern market of the city, the old Greek agora is revealed through its superb monumentality, leaving the impression that everything “spreads out at its feet”.



**Fig. 6.** The Church of “Jesus Christ Pantocrator”. *Source: the author.*

Specifically, it is one of the best preserved churches, in its original form, of the entire Bulgarian heritage. The establishment, as a whole, is defined by a distinguished decorative style, which blends, in select harmonies, the white limestone with various types of brick, presenting from the bottom up, no less than 15 pictorial registers. The merging of the rectangular and triangular and semi-cylindrical motifs, but also with the girdle that imposes

<sup>17</sup> The exceptionally decorated facades, enclose on the inside a space of 15 m length/6 m wide. The most spectacular part is the outer decoration, built of limestone and decorative brick combinations. Geometries and solar symbols, a chessboard, a fish tail, and the miniature green enameled ceramic bowls, are all combined together in a genius composition (a.n.).

<sup>18</sup> Built subsequently, it resumes and develops a superior pictorial decoration style on a higher level. With a slim silhouette, given by the high arches, it is covered by a dome built by means of a cylindrical intersection, which encases the entire edifice. It is most definitely, a testimony to the craft of high class and of the wealth invested in the value of the church (a.n.).

the ancient symbol of the swastika, alternating with enameled ceramic rosettes, creates a fabulous complex of great brilliance. Same as a sovereign, it is “crowned” by a main dome, where the decorative subtleties achieve perfection.

In closing this part, consecrated to the religious identity, we specify that currently, services are still performed inside the church dedicated to the “*Blessed Virgin Mary*” (1884), honored as the protector of the city, the day of August 15, overflowing with vitality, colors and splendor.

#### 4. CIVIL ARCHITECTURE. THE HOUSES OF NESSEBAR

We cannot speak of the vibrating identity of Nessebar in the absence of its houses and everything relating to the aesthetics of the secular civilization. A specific graphics is indicated by the narrow, short streets, paved with large stone slabs, the risk of getting lost, quite predictable, constantly enjoying new surprises. The solid fences also convey a sense of safety and relaxation – where the stone structure is blended with the warmth of the wooden planks, as well as by the reddish-brickly tiles of the roof – and which, viewed from the open sea, lends the illusion of a huge suspended canvas, that ruffles shadows and lights of ochre.



Fig. 7. Traditional House from Nessebar. *Source: the author.*

Despite the noise, their silent governance confers relief and detachment, increasing your enjoyment of being there, a state that is magnified on certain narrow streets, often blocked by stone walls and where you feel rather solitary. These are paradoxical moments in time, granted by the same city, the peace of retreating or the sense of freedom of being anonymous in the midst of the crowd. These are components drawing clear particularities to the city of Nessebar, but what makes it unmistakably unique, is the stylistic unity of the homes. Built from so many different materials (as a matter of fact, in themselves they represent a core feature), stone and wood entering a complementarily of great intimacy and fascination.



**Fig. 8.** Street from Nesebar. *Source: the author.*

Up until now, the city preserves over a hundred private architectural ensembles (we are not mentioning here the public civil buildings) from the period of the “BULGARIAN NATIONAL REVIVAL”. Built at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these belong to an original style of architecture, defining for the “BLACK SEA STYLE”.

The pattern exposes an evolution on two levels, supported by a ground floor built of stone, with an irregular shape imposed by the trajectory of the streets - with which they are often in a homogeneous continuity. The upper floor, built of wood, had a much wider extension, generously cantilevered above the street. That structure integrates multiple valences, resulting from the common need regarding the efficient organization of the space. The freeing of the roads is therefore obtained - a necessary action to achieve traffic fluidity, the comfort of the shade, and also a decorative graphic effect, occasionally emphasized by the presence in the console, of the massive wooden beams, which articulate the two compartments in a superb consistency. This vertical arrangement and the combination of stone and wood, represents the essence of stylistic unity, a reality that does not justifies an absolute uniformity. There are details, such as the size of the building, the more pregnant or secluded output of the upper front, the opening of the windows, certain elements of decor, etc., that bring surprising nuances of diversity into the scenery.

Returning to the traditional house plan, we point out that the first level, looking like a small fortress, is intended for crafts, trade or storage activities. The fishing gear was kept here, or the agro-vinicultural, artisanal tools, as well as wine barrels, vegetables and fruits. Where possible, outbuildings were built for various uses, or indoor kitchens, for

instance having dinner on an improvised table, in front of the gate, alongside the closest people (neighbors, friends, guests...), configures a flexible mental geography, of strongly built community, specific to the coastal areas, and here we make a step forward toward the Mediterranean culture and civilization.

The access to the second level is made on a narrow and steep staircase, an aspect that lends an added flexibility to the edifices. Made of wooden beams, is intended, par excellence, for habitation. In relation to the monolithic ground floor, the first floor displays a completely different aesthetics. The windows are large offcuts, with shutters, showcasing both austere plainness, and stylized decorations, yet never excessive. The space of maximum polarization and functionality (the soul of the house) is represented by the main hall, destined for the entire family and every day household activities. It was the most preferred space for eating, for communion or even pursuing certain activities performed mainly by women: sewing, embroidery, needlework, knitting, weaving, etc. The interior decorations, both of textile, of great variety, and of furniture (some parts carved with Oriental motifs), were seen as reference points for discerning social hierarchy. Clothing had a similar role, but with a much wider exposure, especially garments worn on holidays and special occasions, and it is required to emphasize, at this point, the degree of impact of the female costume (be it civil or traditional), where the quality and price of the fabric, along with items of adornment, reflected the degree of the social status of the “head of the family”.



**Fig. 9.** Turkish baths. *Source: the author.*

The upper level contained the bedrooms as well, the main kitchen and the smoke house for fish and meat. The interior walls were covered with alcoves and niches, intended

to preserve tableware, household instruments or valuable objects of adornment. In smaller niches there were candles for lighting. A special place is occupied by the icons, and sometimes a miniature altar. The manner of arranging of this entire system denotes a common concern for functionality, elegance and harmony.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to these notes, that are adding maximum visual intensity to the city of Nessebar, there are other elements whose picturesque features capture the attention, moreover, through their originality, they enclose certain attributes that identifies them as unique objectives. This category includes the “*Turkish Fountain*” (currently functional) and the “*Hammam*” (Turkish baths), both of them monuments (of 17<sup>th</sup> century), representatives of the Ottoman architectural style. One hundred years later, the built heritage grew richer with the addition of three windmills. The best preserved of them, lying in the middle of the isthmus, of a remarkable expressiveness, is the main subject of illustrations and photographic albums. The second one is integrated within a hotel resort of the New Nessebar. It is a good example of restoration and valorization of traditional architecture, this edifice magnetizing the vision through this element designated as the crest. The remains of a third objective can be recognized on the northeastern coast, near the Basilica of St. Mary Eleousa.

We conclude this part dedicated to civil architecture, pointing out that the list of monuments is much wider, and the analyzed selection, aimed to outline the personality of a unique and romantic city, established in eternity.

## 5. INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS. PERIEGESIS, EXEGESIS, HERMENEUTICS, OR ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CULTURAL MAN

From a different perspective, we could do a turn - in relation to these paradigms - towards other meanings such as *journey, knowledge, understanding* – meanings that are being fashioned within each and every actor, in individualized contents, which, in turn, allow themselves to be shaped into a syncretic formula of levers interconnecting the scientific rigor with the balm of affective emotional character.

***The Journey or the Periegesis***<sup>20</sup>, as the manner or way to knowledge, has always been consciously present within the human spirit; especially in the major civilizations, shaped by means of absorbing within their inner being, places, monuments, achievements that weren't available at home. It is **the dialogue of the Self with the World**, through

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<sup>19</sup> The information related to the image of a traditional house are easy to obtain, by visiting the ethnographic museum housed inside the Panayot Muskoyani House, built by the rich merchant in the year of 1804. Here, collections of objects and tools used in daily life are preserved, as well as an exhibition of traditional regional costumes. The houses converted into dining places are also promising, these being authentic “gastronomic clubs”, and which, the least altered, keep the atmosphere and the subtle fragrance of the solemn houses of Nessebar (a.n.).

<sup>20</sup> The periegesis derives from the Greek term *periégēsis*, which in Antiquity referred to a “*journey*”, “*a guidance around something*”, the verb *periegeisthai*, “*to direct around*”, “*to indicate around*”, consisting of the adverb *péri*, “*about*”, “*around*”, “*beyond*” ... and the verb *hegeisthai*, “*to direct*”. The *péri* particle – has its roots in the Sanskrit term *pari*, “*all around*”; the Latin *per*, “*through*”, “*across*”; the Gothic *fairra*, “*far away*”. Has variations like *periago*, “*to direct around*”, or the more usual *periplous*, “*periplus*” (see Robert Beekes, *Greek Etymological Dictionary*, vol. I, Brill, Leiden/Boston, 2010, p. 1176).

which it empathically absorbs images, sounds, songs, dances, flavors and cuisines, adornments and costumes, tools, weapons and stories enriching the soul in the act of living.

**Knowledge or Exegesis** already requires an active attitude of “recognition” of the cultural paradigms, born in other lands and generated in cultures forged in particular, specific circumstances. It is **the dialogue of the Self with Itself**, for in order to know, this always means to have a dialogue with the Other, in order to find out who You really are. No less than this, it requires necessities and scientific paradigms, because knowing the Human Geography is always a methodical, professional and perennial research with regard to Culture and Human civilization.

**Understanding or Hermeneutics** is the next step in that climb towards the Spiritual. Nothing lasts forever: states and empires, monuments and cathedrals, armies and brilliant generals, kings and emperors, borders and frontiers will be moved or become useless, everything is perishing and will fall into dust in the perspective of History. The only absolute nobility of Man is represented by Culture, that in its universal aspects, is living and it is complete, giving meaning to the existence. It is **the dialogue of the Self with the higher Principles**, in an attempt to find, as much as we are able to understand, the meaning of existence and our mission in this world. No Journey that is experienced (Periegesis), is complete without the lucidity of Knowledge (Exegesis), and both must soar towards Understanding (Hermeneutics) on behalf of the edification of the Cultural Man.

There are certain situations which set the following phrases into distinct dimensions: *to practice tourism*, respectively *to travel*, able to vibrate, depending on the one involved in the act, considering its own cultural meanings, in more or less amplified waves. The cultural journey always generates dialogues with people and places, acceptance on both sides. It refines the soul, the spirit and lucidity, placing you in the condition of conscious, responsible freedom. Similarly, the journey seen in a wider spectrum (religious, for the sake of information, artistic, commercial, warlike, pastoral... oftentimes even unnecessarily - see “*dusty feet*” or “*walk about*”), assumes, since the early antiquity<sup>21</sup>, values of documents, memoirs, historical knowledge, geographical, ethnographic, mythological, etc.

Therefore, we can opt in favour of the quality of the journey, which shapes the human behavior according to comprehensions and meanings, just as an illuminating orphic trail. The periegesis and exegesis enter a successful relation of complementarity, in a geography where the cultural perenniality prevails, becoming quite significant and the need for interpretation and exposition becomes imminent.

The journey often transcends from the known realm, or what we think we know, to a world of mysteries, the unknown, which imperiously demands deciphering, but also the ability to select cultural values, the only ones that remain and whose awareness transforms the quality of the lifestyle and sets the self in its mental and emotional ambivalence. We draw to an end with a simple equation: access to and the art of understanding the concepts

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<sup>21</sup> The “journey” denotation of periegesis can be observed in the works of several ancient writers. Pausanias (110-180 AD), an ancient geographer, invited his readers to an imaginary journey through his work called “*Heladas periegesis*”, “A Tour around Greece” - an “ancient traveller’s guide”. A few centuries before Pausanias, an Athenian philosopher called Polemon of Ilion, earned, as a result of his journey, the reputation of *Polemon the Geographer*, or *Polemon Periegetes*, see (L. Preller [ed.], *Polemonis Periegetae Fragmenta*, Sumtibus Guilielmi Engelmanni, Lipsiae [Leipzig], 1838); Maria Pretzler, *Pausanias Travel Writing in Ancient Greece*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London/NewYork, 2007, p. 2-5.

of periegesis and exegesis, - which we have placed at the service of knowledge through culture and the formation of the state of conscious liberty – is refined by hermeneutics, which forges you into the universal splendor of the spirit.

To travel, to know and to understand what is still revealed, spoken and lived by the present-day city of Nessebar, are just as many steps taken on behalf of the edification of the Cultural man.

### *Chronology*

- 395: Theodosius's death
- 527: Justinian is next in line after Justin
- 532: the revolt of Nika; the beginning of the reconstruction of the Cathedral of St. Sophia
- 537: consecrating the Cathedral of St. Sophia
- 565: Justinian's death
- 580-581: the first major Slavic raid in the Balkan area
- 586: the first Slavic siege of Thessalonica
- 587-588: the Slavs besiege the Balkans until the Peloponnese
- 658: the first Slavic displacement in Asia Minor
- 679-680: creating the theme of Thrace
- **681: the creation and the first recognition by the Byzantines of a Bulgarian State in Moesia, from the Danube to the Balkan Mountains**
- 688-689: a campaign against the Slavs in the Balkans, allowing the reopening of the terrestrial path towards Thessalonica; displacements of Slavs in Asia Minor
- 732-733: Leon III puts the Balkans as a whole, under the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople, breaking with the Papacy, which refuses iconoclasm
- 756: restarting the war with the Bulgarians
- 763: the Bulgarians are crushed at Anchialos
- 764: Constantin V displaces 208.000 Slavs in Bithynia
- 792: the great defeat of the Byzantine armies by the Bulgars at Markellai
- 811: the Byzantine army, which just destroyed the Bulgarian capital Pliska, is crushed by the Bulgarians of Krum; Emperor Nikephoros I dies on the battlefield, his son Staurakios, is seriously injured; Michael I is next on the throne
- 813: the defeat in front of the Bulgarians at Versinikia: Anatolikon Leon the Armenian strategist seizes power
- 814: Krum besieges Constantinople, but is killed by a cardiac crisis
- **864: the Bulgarian Tsar Boris's conversion to Christianity**
- 885: the arrival in Bulgaria of the Byzantine clergy banished from Moravia
- 894: the promulgation of the novels of Leon VI, the displacement to Thessalonica of the Bulgarian trade; Simeon's Bulgarians enter the war
- 896: the Bulgarians of Tsar Simeon crush the Byzantines at Bulgarophygon
- 926: the victory of Roman Lekapenos over the Bulgarians
- 927: the death of Simeon of Bulgaria, who brings forty years of peace between Byzantium and the Bulgarians

- 969: Nikephoros Phokas attacks Bulgaria with the help of the Russians
- 971: a campaign against the Russians who were deployed to Bulgaria
- approximately 980: a Bulgarian uprising, who claims to be independent; the beginning of the reign of Samuel
- 986: Vasile II defeated by the Bulgarians at the Gates of Trajan
- 991: the beginning of the continuous war of Basil II against Samuel of Bulgaria
- 1002: Vasile II invades Sophia and the eastern half of Bulgaria
- 1004: Vasile II invades Skoplje
- 1014: the defeat of the Bulgarian army at Kleidion: 15.000 Bulgarians are blinded, just one in 100 being left with one removed eye, in order to be sent back to Samuel, who dies when seeing them
- **1018: annexation of Bulgaria; the Bulgarian-Vlach Empire is conquered by the Byzantines of Vasile II the Macedonian**
- 1085: the Normans are banished from the Balkans
- **1186: the independence of Bulgaria**
- 1364: Ștefan Dușan proclaims himself as the basileus of Serbia and Romania
- 1355: the death of Ștefan Dușan, at that time the ruler of the half of the Balkans
- 1385: the Turks conquer Sophia
- 1387: the Turks conquer Thessalonica
- 1389: the defeat of the Serbs at Kosovo
- **1393: the fall of the city of Târnovo; Bulgaria becomes a vassal state of the Sultan**
- 1453: the conquest of Constantinople by Mehmed II
- 1878: forming the modern independent State of Bulgaria

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# THE IMPACT OF RURAL TOURISM ON THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF MARAMUREȘ LAND

ALINA SIMION<sup>1</sup>, MIHAI HOTEA<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – **The Impact of Rural Tourism on the Cultural Heritage of Maramureș Land.** Social and economic fast transformations of the last two decades marked the evolution of all ethnographic regions of Romania, gradually shaping a new behavior, negatively influencing their cultural heritage by introducing modern components in economic and social activities of the population. Attention to the traditional elements of the new generation began to decline gradually including Maramureș, due to a number of factors (political changes, economic and social transition of the country, learning migration, emigration and contact with new cultures, unemployment). However, Maramureș County, a region with a rich history and impressive cultural heritage, he managed to keep the elements that given identity and authenticity to the region. An important factor in this respect tourism has developed in this region. Through rural rourism traditional elements have been promoted and known worldwide. The region is considered as a "living museum"(Dancus, M., Cristea, G., 2000) preferred by modern tourists who looking authentic cultural destinations. This was understood by the local population began to slowly develop small entrepreneurial business based on cultural heritage from Maramureș. The material presented aims to highlight the role that tourism plays in perpetuating or authenticity of the items that make up the cultural heritage of Maramureș History.

*Keywords:* rural tourism, cultural heritage, authenticity, Maramureș Land

## 1. INTRODUCTION

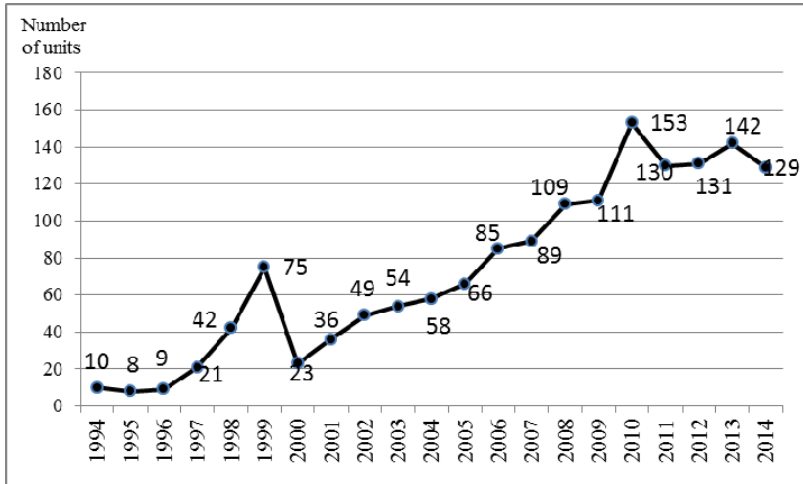
Tourism has been practised for a long time in our country. Its most recent form is represented by rural tourism which is developing rapidly on the whole Romanian territory. This is due to the importance of agriculture as the main activity from rural areas even long after the political changes of 1990. The governmental programmes from 1994 (Law no. 145/31.12.1994) and 1997 (OG no. 63/1997) triggered the emergence of tourism in rural areas, initially in a modest form. This was visible in Maramureș County as well. (Fig. 1)

Tourism, through its various forms and activities, can significantly contribute to the development of rural areas. Here, tourism requires relatively low costs and the tourist's preference for rural areas relies on both the contrast to urban areas and the wish to discover the most authentic things. Following the evolution of tourism in rural areas can express the impact of tourism on the rural environment and the communities, both from an economical and a social point of view. In most of the regions where a self-aware and sustainable development has been implemented, the impact on the rural environment is a positive one at the level of all its components.

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**Fig. 1.** Evolution of accommodation units from rural areas in Maramureș  
*Source:* INSSE/serii TEMPO-online.

The development of rural tourism in Maramureș relies both on the natural environment and on a diversified cultural heritage, which are in their turn influenced by tourism. Empirical research points to the fact that rural areas with an attractive natural potential associated with cultural and architectural elements are the most preferred by tourists (Rid, W., Ezeuduji, I. O., & Pröbstl-Haider, U., 2014, Pesonen, J. A. 2012). Starting from these observations and analysing the tourists' movement through Maramureș over the last years (tab. 1.) one can state that tourism in Maramureș finds itself on an ascending trend based on its diversified capitalization of its potential.

#### Arrivals in accommodation units from rural areas in Maramureș

**Table 1**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Touristic pension</b>	11235	13185	16374	19578	20921
<b>Agrotouristic pension</b>	7785	10114	12324	12519	13458

*Source:* INSSE/serii TEMPO-online.

The Maramureș region is renowned for its authentic cultural heritage, which includes its brands - wooden gates and traditional wooden churches- together with traditional clothing, regional traditions and customs. The entire Maramureș County is being associated with these elements of cultural heritage, however, only the Maramureș Land has preserved its fundamental characteristics for a long time, which has endowed it with a special identity at national level and has contributed to the development of tourism in the region.

As the title suggests, the present study aims at analysing the impact of tourism on the elements of cultural heritage from the Maramureș Land.

## **2. DATA AND METHODS**

In order to highlight the influence of tourism from a specific region, observation on a long period of time must be applied. In this case, the period of observation has been of 5 years, between 2010-2015. Observations were made in the field and were eventually completed with statistical data analyses. The official databases from the regional and national level are changeable and sometimes inconsistent with reality, therefore they were used together with data from interviews and field investigations.

Each component under analysis requires specific methods of data acquirement and analysis, individual or combined. Thus, in order to obtain the data for the accommodation units we used the sources provided by the Ministry of Tourism, by the Maramureş County Department of Statistics, the National Institute of Statistics, national censuses, correlated with the data acquired through questionnaires and unofficial sources (specialized web sites). As a result many discrepancies were identified. However, databases analysing elements of cultural heritage and including information about the impact of tourism upon them do not exist at an official level, only through empirical research and analyses, as done in the present study.

The graphical and cartographical method is used in this study in order to statistically and spatially highlight the role of the elements which form the cultural heritage of Maramureş.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In order to better understand the elements of cultural heritage from this area, a diachronic analysis is required, following the historical events which have laid their print on the Maramureş society. Beside these events, the natural environment also plays a predominant role in the construction of identity.

In both historical and bibliographical sources, Maramureş is known as “the land of wood”, due to its large forested areas and the woodcraft. The most renowned products of the latter are the traditional wooden gates and churches, which also became the brand elements of the region.

### **3.1. Traditional wooden gates**

The wooden gates initially appeared as a privilege endowed upon the owner by the state leadership, when the former has proved bravery and patriotism. They used to show the social and economical status of the citizen in the community. Progressively, the phenomenon of “cellular multiplication” occurred in the communities and the number of gates increased significantly (Fig. 2), as well as the number of craftsmen.

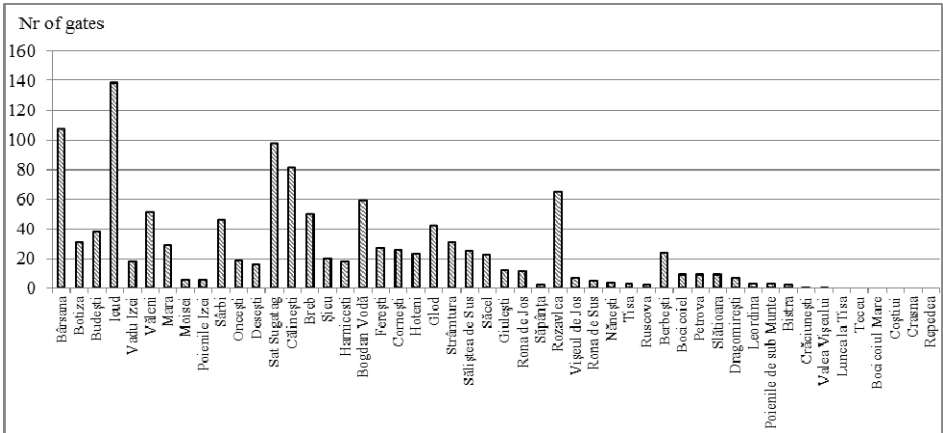


Fig. 2. Number of traditional wood gates in Maramureș Land (Source: field research).

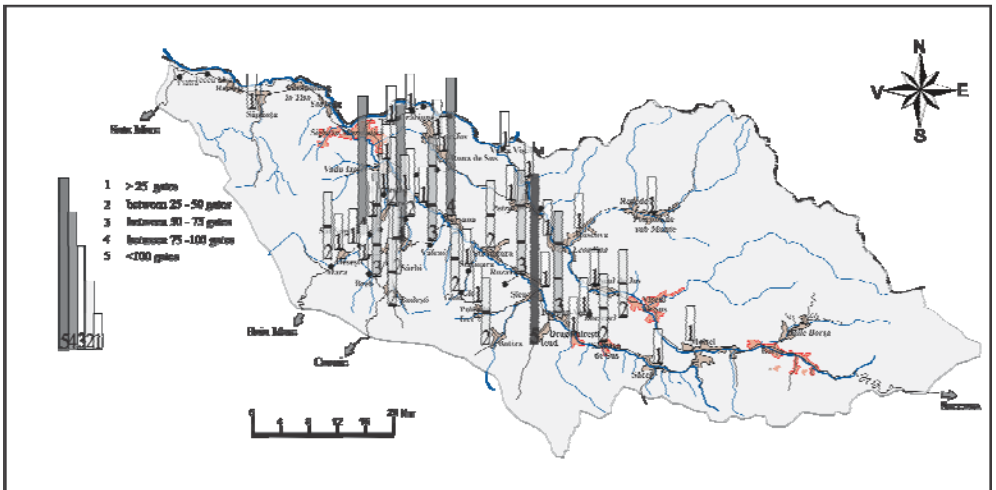


Fig. 3. Repartition of traditional wooden gates in Maramureș Land.

A change of the types and ornaments of the wooden gates also occurred progressively. The oldest gates, the most numerous in the rural environment of Maramureș, are built on three poles (Francisc Nistor 1977) and have few ornamental symbolic elements carved upon them, in comparison to the more recent ones which vary between 4-8 sustaining poles and are ornamented with an abundance of elements.

The most recent traditional wooden gates crafted after 2000 introduced other carved ornaments like the national coat of arms, verses or symbolic images.

After the field research performed in the analysed period, an increase in the number of gates was recorded, more prominently in the settlements with a more developed rural tourism. Many of the new gates are crafted by local inhabitants who also own an accommodation facility. Our research has highlighted the awareness of the rural population, both pension owners and simple inhabitants, that the authentic traditional elements increase the attractiveness of the region and therefore they wish to preserve them in order to preserve the local identity. One can state that the preservation of this representative element

from Maramureş is also a contribution of tourism. Another reason for crafting traditional wooden gates is the fact that, at a mental level, the grand traditional gates are being associated even today with the owner's social and economical status.

The pension owners who built new gates mentioned that the number of tourists has increased since the construction of the gates. All new pensions own traditional gates, including the pensions outside Maramureş Land as the owners have become aware that this is an element of regional identity, a cultural component of great attractiveness.

No matter the reason underlying the crafting of new traditional gates, the appearance of the Maramureş village is a magical one, due to the presence of these grand constructions along the roads, and the tourist, even just passing through, is marked by this image of the traditional village.

### 3.2. Traditional wooden churches

The most valuable component of the Maramureş cultural heritage, both from a historical and social point of view, is the church. The traditional church is also made of wood, specifically of oak, a hard fessence which lasts for a long time, usually used for the wooden gates as well.

The wooden church from Maramureş has been endowed with a high value especially after 8 churches were included in the UNESCO world heritage and also due to its history in the Maramureş area. The wooden church is present in almost all the settlements of the region with the exception of ethnic minority settlements (Teceu, Remeţi, Câmpulung la Tisa, Bocicoi, Lunca la Tisa, etc.)

A longer period of time is necessary in the building of a wooden church, therefore the present study has also considered the churches which were completed or began in the period of analysis. Some settlements which had one wooden church built one or more in addition, for example Ieud, where there are 7 wooden churches, or Budeşti, with 3 wooden churches. The main reason in building a new wooden church is the preservation of tourist attractiveness as well as the regional identity. Another reason is that the local population is numerous and a large number of churches are necessary to accommodate them. In addition to these, both the local population and the church representatives prefer the traditional wooden construction.

Keeping the traditional architecture in the region has direct effects on the local economy. For example, the development of the building complex from Bârsana monastery triggered a multiplying effect in the whole settlement by increasing the number of accommodation facilities and leading to the construction of a carving craft museum. At the same time small craftsmen sell souvenirs and local products. Such a multiplying effect determined by the development of the cultural heritage can also be identified in Săpânţa, Vadu Izei, Mara and other settlements.

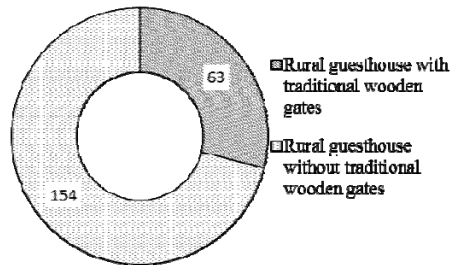


Fig. 4. Traditional architecture supporting by rural guesthouse.

### 3.3. Architecture of traditional houses

By analysing the architecture of the houses from rural Maramureş one can easily state that there is a decay of traditional architecture due to a variety of factors. The first and the most obvious factor is the use of architectural models brought from the countries where the local population has migrated for work, namely the process of acculturation. Another reason is the necessity of a larger space in a house, due to the progress of the daily life.

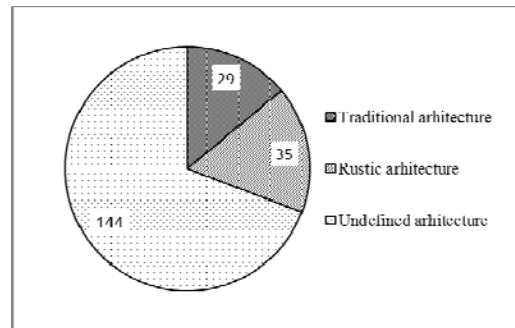
Similarly to the wooden gates and churches, the traditional houses from Maramureş were built with timber but of softer essence which degrades rather quickly in time. The development of more effective building materials determined the beginning of a new period in the building practice and architecture of the Maramureş houses.

Currently, the houses with traditional architecture which can still be found in Maramureş Land are inhabited by elder persons.

Through the various programs of rural development there has been an attempt at making the local population aware of the importance of saving the traditional houses, an attempt which was partially successful. Some houses have been restored and transformed into pensions or holiday houses, others in small museums or souvenir shops. The new dwellings preserve nothing from the regional characteristics. However, the architecture of the traditional houses is not endangered. Most of the new pensions built in the rural environment keep this essential element of the regional culture. Out of the total of 238 pensions recorded in the whole county by the Ministry of Tourism, over 200 are found in Maramureş Land and almost half of these have a traditional and rustic architectural style on the exterior (Fig. 5).

In order to save the traditional household architecture from Maramureş a group of architects has created a catalogue of dwelling models which would respect the traditional style and include enough space for the necessities of a family (Enache, C., Enache, M., 2009).

The cultural heritage of buildings is completed by technical peasant appliances which were also preserved through the rural pensions which developed complexes of technical appliances in order to differentiate themselves from the competition.



**Fig. 5.** Architecture of rural guesthouse in Maramureş County (*Source:* field research).

### 3.4. Diversification of traditional crafts

Activities and crafts represent the way by which the populations earns its existence but also an important attraction of rural tourism. For centuries, the people of Maramureş have proved their skills in carving wood, making pottery, weaving, making ornaments for the traditional clothing, making straw hats and allegorical masks. Among all, wood carving has reached the peak of national and international notoriety through the creation of the majestic wooden churches and the symbol-rich wooden gates. As tourism developed, these crafts have adapted to the tourists' requirements and diversified themselves by making

souvenirs with local specificity. This has triggered an increase in the number of craftsmen from the rural settlements and special workshops were built for tourists to have the possibility of watching the crafting of a product or to become directly involved in the process.

### **3.5. Traditional clothing**

The most frequent crafts from Maramureş Land are carving and weaving. The traditional clothing includes several elements of originality which were inherited from the Dacians who lived on these territories, which demonstrates the long-lasting preservation of the Romanian population in Maramureş. However, the clothes have suffered several transformations over the years at the level of the materials being used, the way in which they are created and the ornaments being used. Nevertheless, the traditional method, the manual one, is still used, but requires a longer period for making the pieces of traditional clothing. The traditional clothes are proudly worn by the younger generations especially around Christian holidays or on the occasion of specific customs and traditions from rural life. Tourists from the area also manifest the wish to wear the traditional clothes during their holiday stay, in various circumstances. Some tourists even buy pieces of traditional clothing as souvenirs.

However, the traditional clothing is preserved due to the conservative mentality of the population and less due to the tourism from the region.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Tourism is an activity which can have a significant impact on the economical, social, functional and physiognomic structure of rural areas, but there is also a growing need for research into the impacts of globalization. Understanding the meaning of authenticity and cultural heritage is important for the management of tourism in a region.

Rural tourism has become a flourishing business for the contemporary Romania due to the fact that in the strategy of developing the Romanian tourism, the rural tourism occupies a central position, as it determines the economical and social development of the rural area, an obvious aspect in the Maramureş Land as well.

All the components of the cultural heritage represent tourist attractions. In this respect there is a wish of the community to preserve local values. The cultural value has a correspondent in the financial value. Depending on the availability of financial resource, the local population becomes more or less involved in the preservation of cultural elements. The easiest way is through the preservation of the traditional clothing, the costs and the time required for it being reduced in comparison to the making of a church or a traditional gate. The most important factors in the preservation of the cultural heritage are the accommodation facilities and the religious institutions which have the most consistent financial resources and the capacity to invest in major cultural elements.

Sustaining the development of the cultural heritage contributes to the economical development of the local and regional community. In the region called Maramureş Land, the future of tourism looks promising. The authentic cultural values are not endangered and this is due partly to the development of tourism and partly to the conservatory character of the community.

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# THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS IN VRANCEA DISTRICT BY MEANS OF ECO-TOURISM

STĂNILĂ ANDREEA<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** – **The Development of Protected Natural Areas in Vrancea District by Means of Eco-tourism.** Vrancea District, due to its physical-geographic features, is one of the regions in Romania which abounds in unique natural elements. The diversity of species and natural habitats, the high density of big carnivores are the main reasons leading to the establishment of protected natural areas. These brought about touristic activities, becoming popular attractions for nature lovers. The presence of tourists in a protected natural environment is a threat, but if it is treated carefully and responsibly, the tourism can become beneficial for local communities. From this point of view, Vrancea remains underdeveloped in terms of tourism, therefore economic, because of the lack of advertising at a national level and due to insufficient investment. All things considered, this region has all the possibilities of development at an eco-touristic level.

**Keywords:** *Vrancea District, protected natural area, eco-tourism, sustainable development, touristic infrastructure, touristic circulation*

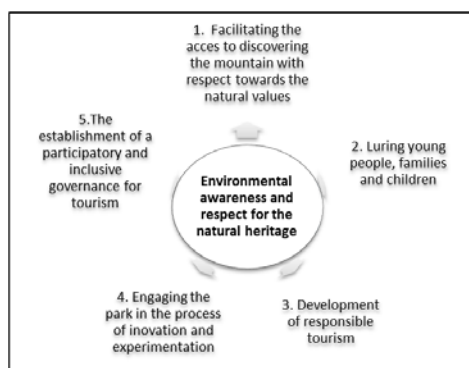
## 1. INTRODUCTION.

### 1.1. Current tendencies of eco-tourism

In the preamble of a document referring to the European system of indicators for tourism, released in 2013, the vice-president of European Commission, Antonio Tajani, claimed that “*by handling tourism in a durable manner, we are trying to make sure that we know the limits and capacities of touristic resources available to us and that we are encouraging a way of developing tourism in order to create a balance between optimising immediate economic, ecologic and cultural benefits and the guarantee of a long-lasting future for the industry of European tourism*”.

Protected natural areas have the role of keeping the natural environment as far away from dangers coming from human activities as possible, accomplishing the role of durability.

At the same time, tourists wish to visit in the protected areas natural landscapes, unaffected by humans, creating thus a vicious circle “necessary” in our times. Frequently associated to the scenery, the natural environment is the one to generate



**Fig. 1.** Main strategic axes in tourism development in protected areas. *Source:* adapted after the Tourism Development Strategy in the Vanoise National Park, France (2013).

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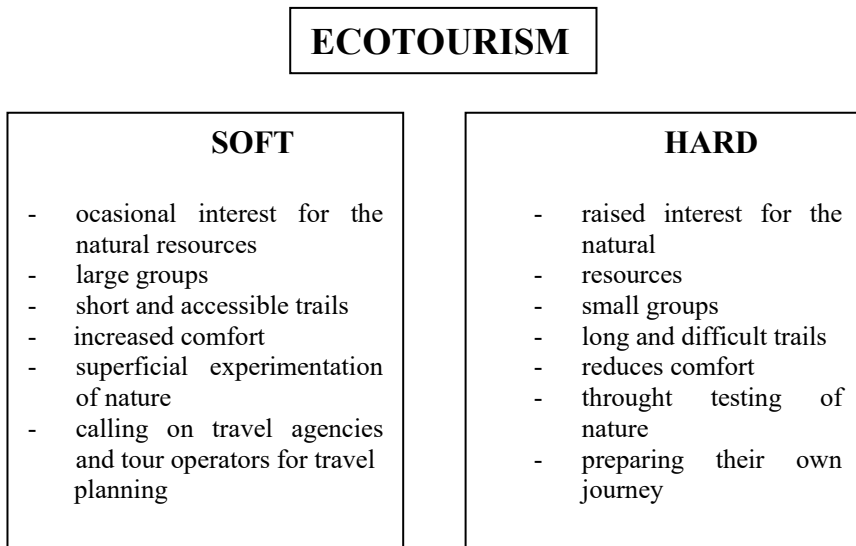
the touristic phenomena. What's more, the protected areas appear to be, in some researchers' view, "a formula adapted to experiment the concept of sustainable development" (L. Laurens, B. Cousseau, 2000).

Protected areas are meant for those forms of tourism that respect the principles of sustainable tourism, placing the accent on the protection of environment and natural resources.

Eco-tourism appeared and has developed during the last few decades as a response to the alarm signal raised as a result of the progressive degrading rate of the environment and the heightened interest for getting acquainted with more or less accessible natural areas. Due to the numerous benefits in the economic and social plan, but also the high degree of scepticism, eco-tourism represented an area of interest for numerous researchers from all over the world and for the international tourism organisations as well. Common traits emerging from the definitions elaborated in the study of this aspect of tourism refer to the fact that:

- it is a form of tourism which can harness untouched eco-systems, preserve them and generate incomes at the same time;
- it is one of the few economic services which can lead to the growth of the financial sources of a community based on a nearly inexistent use of resources;
- it combines the creative activities with those of recreation and education, in order to respect the nature through actions of preserving the environment under human pressure.

The key word which differentiates this type of tourism of other is "responsible"-it is included in the definition of eco-tourism offered by the International Society of Eco-tourism: "responsible journey in natural areas which preserve the environment, sustains the



**Fig. 2.** Hard and Soft dimensions of ecotourism.

*Source: Adaptation after D. Weaver and L. Lawton, 2001.*

well-being of locals and implies interpretation and education"(TIES, 2015).

Having become a niche in the tourism to protected natural areas, eco-tourism has as a guiding mark in building the profile of a tourist the age of 35, the high level of education, his preferences for learning visits, active and profound engagement in the middle

of the nature, the need to escape the professional and urban routine, as well as the need to enrich his life experience. Some authors have identified some features referring to the degree of comfort the tourists would like to come across at the chosen destinations, the tourists' availability for making physical effort and using natural resources in one destination. According to these criteria the soft and hard dimensions of ecotourism have been established (Fig. 2.)

## **2. THE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR WELCOMING AND RECREATION IN THE PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS IN VRANCEA DISTRICT**

Planning a protected natural area for a touristic purpose lays down special measures of intervention on an environment through the constructions available to visitors. The theory of planning the territory recommends that the practice should follow a series of basic principles regarding the creation of new instalment systems or the improvement of the existing ones.

Including services and touristic infrastructure in the natural environment in a harmonious manner is a basic requirement in this direction. Fitting the touristic structures in the scenery doesn't only offer a pleasant design for the place, but also emphasises the natural and cultural resources, helping enrich their originality.

Sustainable planning will generate beneficial effects on the environment, local community and tourists. The flexibility of touristic buildings offers the possibility of improvement, progressive evolution of a touristic area without jeopardising the elements belonging to the natural environment or the touristic activity. Another principle places the accent on the recreational aspect of a touristic site, together with basic touristic services (accommodation, food service and transport).

At an overview analysis of specific equipment regarding the accommodation, food service and recreation in the natural areas from Vrancea, some inadvertences regarding their projection clearly stand out. The strictness regarding the prevention of the negative impact of touristic activities on the environment is reduced, taking into account the location, place, dimensions, architecture and the design of the named equipment. The uncontrolled spread of accommodation facilities has led specifically to the formation of an attraction pole for tourists, being detrimental to the underdevelopment of other areas with a high potential. Tulnici area (Lepsa)-belonging to Soveja area. It wasn't long ago when Soveja resort, considered Vrancea's Pearl, used to attract tourists from all the corners of the country for the ozonized air coming from the coniferous forests, which has currently been neglected and abandoned as a result of the disappearance on the main accommodation facility in the area, Zboina Hotel. Although the touristic phenomenon seems to flourish in Lepsa, tourism is far from being as developed as the standards require. If this area is remarkable in the district for the large number of tourists it attracts, at a national level is far beyond other touristic destinations of the same type, as a consequence of tourists' preferences. If we turn out attention to other natural or national parks from our country, such as Retezat, Cheile Bicazului-Hășmaș, Călimani, Bucegi, Apuseni, Vânători-Neamț it becomes obvious that Putna Natural Parks is among the last one in terms of tourist attendance. This fact can be in itself a consequence, but it can also be the result of poor touristic infrastructure.

According to the Institute of National Statistics (INS), in the year 2014, the touristic structures with accommodation facilities from Vrancea were as high as 52 units, with a total capacity of 1760 places. In the topology of accommodation structures boarding

houses are predominant (14) in Tulnici parish. The following in the list is Soveja parish, due to its hotel, Zboina, which has been removed from the touristic circuit in 2005 but still wrongfully influences the real statistics.

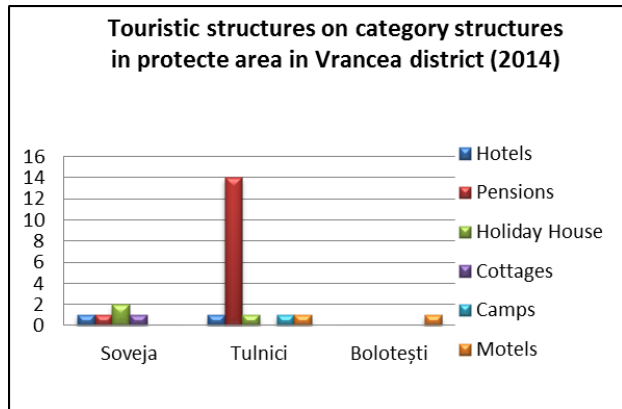
Having inventoried all of these based on questionnaires given to the administrators of the accommodation units in the endorsed area (2014-2015), it is obvious that most of the accommodation units are in Lepşa locality from Tulnici parish, which are 61 units with a total of 1383 places, among which predominant are touristic villas (26) and boarding houses (26). The administrative units presented in the graphic are at the parish level, since many of the accommodation structures belong to Tulnici with its related villages, Lepşa, Tulnici, Greşu, representative from a touristic point of view.

The difference between inventorying on the field and the data base offered by the INS emerges from the fact that some accommodation units are not included in the touristic circuit and accommodate tourists without a functioning authorisation, or, in other words, which function illegally. To these we should add the holiday houses with a private property status which usually don't only receive the owners during the holiday seasons, but also the tourists. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to put together an exact and accurate statistics of accommodation facilities that correspond 100% to the conditions imposed by the tourism.

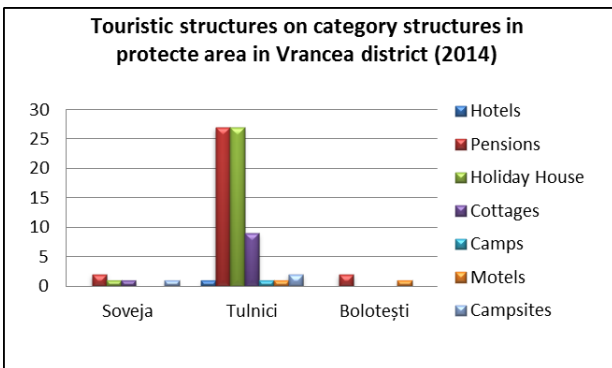
Referring to the 3 administrative unities where the accommodation facilities inventorying took place, the number of units was as high as 1375 in 2014, to which 200 positions from Gălăciuc Camp are added. Out of this total, 952 positions can be found in the accommodation units from Lepşa locality.

The environment politics recommend placing

the accent on quality and not on quantity when the aim is to develop recreation facilities and services in a protected area. It is not desirable to have a protected natural area „suffocated” by recreation equipment meant to service a large number of tourists, but to design them in order to cover the existing or potential touristic demand of an area. By quality it shall be understood enhanced capacity, efficient functionality, strategic localisation so that this type of establishment to be in accordance with the objective



**Graph 1.** Touristic structures in protected areas in Vrancea.  
The source of dates: INS.



The source of dates: questionnaires.

of protection and preservation of natural environment.

In year 2014, touristic establishments with a leisure and recreational purpose from protected natural areas from Vrancea are reduced to those offered by those offered by the accommodation units (tennis and pool tables, SPA centres, indoors or outdoors pools, sleighing slides, special arranged camping fireplaces) and some marked hiking trails where tourist circulation doesn't have an organised character. If we're referring to the meadow area, along the river Siret pools are arranged for recreational fishing, while the forests belonging to the protected area, as well as the mountainous forests, offer the possibility of practicing hunting.

According to a classification of recreation activities based on the period of time they require for being accomplished, the activities characteristic to the protected natural areas from Vrancea can be included in the medium duration period of time, corresponding in other words with the tourism taking place during the weekends. This means that apart from satisfying the need for accommodation and food, there is also a need to arrange some spots for recreation, as well as camping area with fireplaces, paths for hiking, special means of transportation (V. Surd și colab., 2005).

Paradoxically, the locality with the most tourist arrivals during the year, Lepsa, does not have its own terrain for sports activities and no swimming pool. This may be due to the haste that the owners of villas and boarding houses have showed for becoming part of the touristic circuit, based on little investment and a short time to cover their debts. Therefore, the local touristic offer is limited to the minimal admitted standards, and the natural environment remains the central element in terms of touristic attraction.

Some hint of dynamism is given by Lepsa's trout farm, which dates since 1955 and represents the main supplier of fish for the local restaurants, but also for other restaurants in the district or the country. In the central area there are few souvenir shops properly stocked for the buying potential, but few of the objects meant to be sold are specific for the local tradition.

As a result, the fittest alternative for accomplishing the recreational function of the protected areas is represented by long strolls in the nature, on marked hiking trails towards points of major interest. In this respect, different types of trails have been marked in the area, especially in the mountains (due to the picturesque nature of the scenery), with different degrees of difficulty in order to cover all the levels of physical endurance levels of the visitors.

### 3. TOURISTIC CIRCULATION

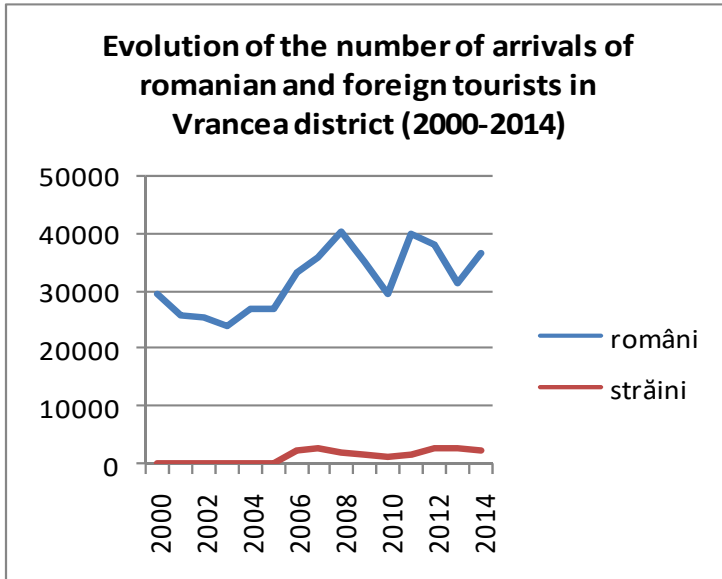
At the level of protected natural areas, there isn't available a clear statistic, mainly because touristic circulation is difficult to monitor due to different types of reasons:

- the access in the national park is available from nine different points which can't be supervised, both from the National Roads (DN2D Focșani – Târgu Secuiescu to the park from south to north through the east half, DN2L ensures the link between Lepșa and Soveja), as well as from the paths in the forest or those in the villages. This situation is also available for the specially protected areas, such as the Inferior Siret Meadow as well as Magura Odobesti, and also for areas which are fully protected.

- many natural reservations don't require a visiting fee, therefore no tickets are given in order to keep track of tourists.

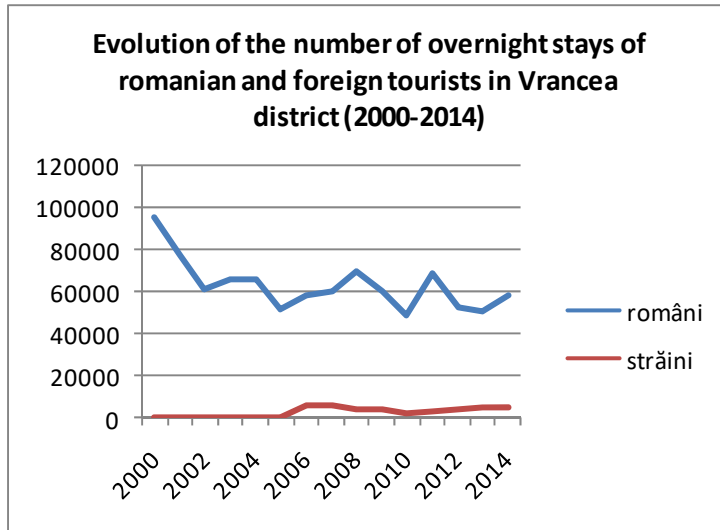
- some tourists choose to stay in some private accommodation facilities, which are more affordable, or they choose to camp in unauthorised spaces, which are not officially included in the touristic circuits.

For acquiring a clearer picture of touristic circulation inside the protected natural areas it is necessary to make an overview analysis of this phenomenon in the entire district, for reasons which suggest the theory that each administrative unit from this area which accommodates tourists can represent a transmitting pole of touristic waves towards nearby protected areas.



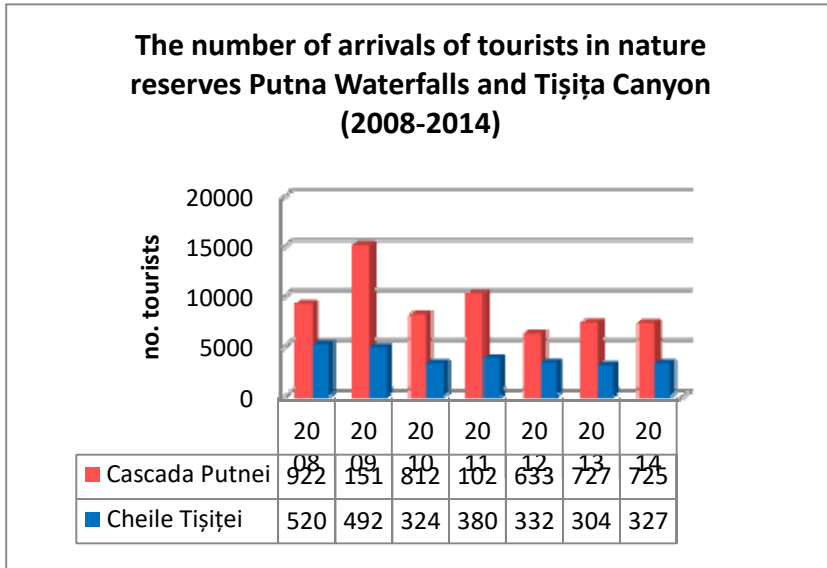
**Graph 2.** The evolution of arrivals and overnight stays in accommodation establishments from Vrancea.

*The source of data: INS Romania.*



*The source of data: INS Romania.*

The time frame taken into consideration for the analysis, 2000-2014, includes key periods of time in Romanian tourism, when stable periods alternate with varying ones, based on the chances taking place is economic, financial and political plans. If by the beginning of year 2000 the tourism was starting to develop expansion tendencies based on the tendency of an economic growth, after the year 2008 the growth becomes less intense on account of recessions in the majority of activity areas, owing to the financial crisis. The year 2012 brings about a refreshing new phase, with short periods of decline.



**Graph 3.** The evolution of tourist arrivals in the natural reservation Putna Waterfall and Tisita Canyon since 2008 to 2014.

*The source of data: Administration PNPV.*

In the graphic it can be noticed that the capital of the district has the most arrivals of tourists, and can therefore be considered the main centre from where tourists are spread towards the nearby protected natural areas, together with the administrative units from the immediate neighbourhood, Mărășești, Garoafa, Golești. Therefore, the tourists checked in in the previously mentioned localities can visit the Lower Siret Meadow with Dumbrăvița Forest, The Black Forest, Schitu-Dălhăuți Forest, but also the natural reservations situated in Vrancea's Subcarpathians, such as The Live Fire (Focul Viu) from Andreiașu de Jos, Reghiu-Scrunțaru Forest, Cenaru Forest, as well as the communal importance site Măgura Odobești. To Focșani City must be added the cities Panciu and Odobesti, even if they register lower numbers of tourists. The northern part of Lower Siret Meadow can be visited by tourists who are checked in accommodation units from the city of Adjud.

In terms of mountainous areas, domineering in terms of the favourite tourist destination chosen by people is Tulnici parish with the villages Lepsa and Gresu, followed at a considerable distance by Soveja, due to the presence of Putna Natural Park Vrancea and the included natural reservations, but also due to the vicinity of other important attractions: Cheile Tisitei (Tisita Canyon), Putna Waterfall, Stramtura Coza, Lepsa-Zboina Forest, The Black Lake, The Red Ravine, Algheanu, Goru Peak, The Pine Pit, Bozu Creek, Verdele-Cheile Narujei Forest, Misina Waterfall.

The lack of information regarding touristic circulation on protected natural areas raises great problems when trying to build a database about the touristic flow and the touristic phenomenon in general. The evaluation of the number of tourists is approximate and realised based on direct observations made by the personnel looking after the protected areas. For example, representatives from the administration of The Putna National Park Vrancea estimate a number of 35.000-40.000 tourists a year who visit the park, having as a reference the entrances at the most visited attractions of the park: Putna Waterfall and Tisita Natural Reservation.

Referring to Vrancea parish, and mainly to Putna Natural Park Vrancea, the main reasons which have determined the tourists to choose this tourist destination in approximately equal proportions, were making hikings in the park, relaxing by admiring the surrounding scenery, visiting historic and cultural objectives as well as making affordable the fees for the places of accommodation and dining, but also getting acquainted with a new area. Short strolls and hikes follow the marked touristic trails in the PNPV, but the most frequented one is that from Tisita Natural reservation, which also represents the most visited spot in the park.

Un unexpected preference for relaxing by admiring the landscape shows that tourists from Vrancea prefer static activities, which do not require too much physical effort, but most of the times these two activities are joined. For example, if a tourist is spending two days in Lepsa, he'll dedicate one day to hiking and the other

one he'll spend relaxing (within the accommodation facility, at the side of a pool, by taking a walk or making a short visit).

#### 4. ACTIVITIES WITH AN ECOTOURISTIC CHARACTER

At the moment, tourist activities developed in county Vrancea, which are focused both on preserving the environment and increasing the local's welfare, are very underdeveloped, but the existing activities, like the ones included in developing programs are meeting the requirements imposed by national and worldwide specialized organizations.

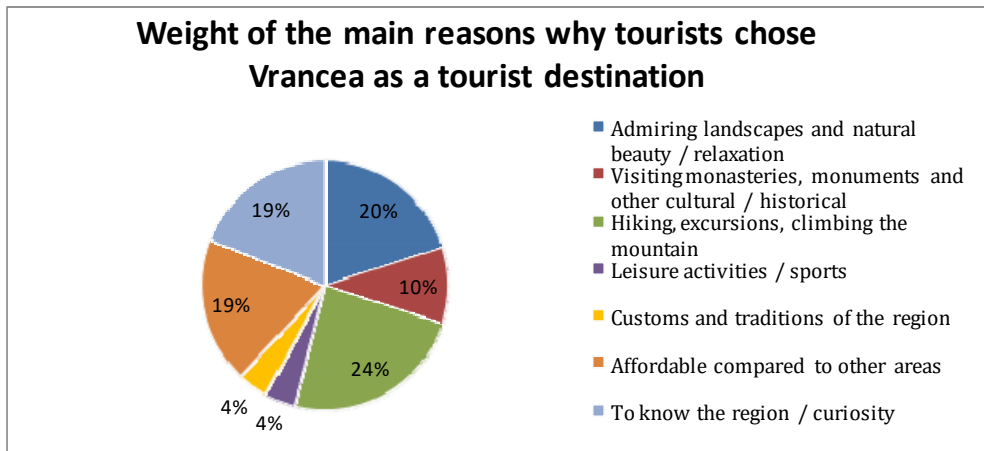
Basically, the prefix „eco” which defines the tourism in the protected natural areas from the studied space is misused, but the existing natural, social and cultural conditions offer opportunities for developing real ecotourism services. If we consider the spectacular evolution of the ecotourism phenomenon worldwide, it is very likely that in our country, especially the one which is developed in protected areas, to gain a large number of followers in the near future.

Regarding the protected areas system from Vrancea, the activities developed by tourists, in towns with a great tourism potential and surroundings, are consisting of:

- **hiking** individually or in group on a trail, especially in the mountains, with the advantage of having varied landscapes. This activity is undergoing at the moment, without the guidance of qualified guides. It targets the youth, which is showing a great interest in activities, recreation, release from the urban stress, reason why it is called „backpacking”. There are also trails with a lower difficulty, which are preferred by elders and the families with children. These activities are followed by other activities, such as photography, filming and picnics.

- **observing the landscape and the wild life** from points arranged for this purpose („belveder” points) is a closely related activity to the first activity mentioned, meaning that in order to observe the landscape it is required to go hiking. Areas with special faunal protection such as Putna-Vrancea, Măgura Odobești and Lower Siret meadow offer the

opportunity of observing bird species (birdwatching) such as grouses, long-eared owls, owls, finches, black storks, corncrakes and many others.



**Graph 4.** The criteria which have led tourists to choose tourist destinations in Vrancea  
*The source of data: questionnaires.*

Lately, in some preserved areas such as Lower Siret meadow, thematic tours are organized with educational purpose for students, stipulating this aspect<sup>2</sup>. Observing and photographing the animals are carried out purely by chance. Even though in other states, observing large animals is considered an usual activity, in our country it is in leading phase and is based on observing large carnivorous such as the black bear, wild boar and bisons (in rezervations)<sup>3</sup>.

- **trips** to local communities aiming the participation to cultural and traditional events, filled with local icons (The International Festival of the Wine „Bachus” , The Folkloric Festival „Baba Vrâncioaia”, The masks game, Exhibition of wooden masks, Pastoral Festivals: Sheep on the mountain climbing<sup>4</sup>, Village Negrileşti), tasting and purchasing the traditional food sold by the local producers, which doesn't have traditional certificates because of the strict accreditation rules (smoked cheese<sup>5</sup> from Negrileşti or

<sup>2</sup> Let's understand nature! – The fifth trip, 2015, organized by The Association for Preserving The Biological Diversity.

<sup>3</sup> Photo safari or Fotohunting („Hunting pictures”) can be carried out at the moment in Mountains Ciucaş, the boundary between the County Buzău and Braşov implies that special pavilion for photo shooting should be placed, off-road vehicle should be provided, followed by trained guides.

<sup>4</sup> Sheep on the mountain climbing is has been an old traditional activity for centuries, which takes place every year in May, around the 21 st, when it is celebrated „The emperors Constantin and Elena”. The locals from Negrileşti gather in front of the church with their flock of sheep for receiving blessings which will keep them safe from the dangers and bad weather through the sheep's mountain travel until October, when we celebrate „Saint Dumitru” . Thus, the transhumance from the „The Country Vrancea” receives a sacred and divine signification, which is a proof of the bond between God and man, in every activity that man accomplishes.

<sup>5</sup> The cheese from the region Soveja -Negarileşti is prepared after a natural recipe, without preservatives, from low fat cottage cheese and has a distinguish shape given by the carves from the both sides. Having a circular or rectangular shape, the cheese is pressed into maple wood moulds, called „păpuşare”, after which is smoked with cold smoke from dust and fir-tree branches. The

Soveja, smoked trout From Lepșa in fir tree), purchasing traditional items (masks crafted from rawhide or wood<sup>6</sup>)



Photo 1: Smoked Cheese<sup>7</sup>



Photo 2,3: Masks from Nereju<sup>8</sup>



Photo 4 : Sheep on the mountain climbing, Negrilești (May 2014)

- Observing spectacular events such as the gas emanations from the town Andreiașu de Jos, Focul Viu.

- Mountaineering: the Crest of Ciuta, Lepșa's Towers<sup>9</sup> (The Big Tower)

- Sport fishing: Putna, Milcov, Siret.

- Hunting<sup>10</sup> is allowed only outside of the restricted and protected areas, in the existing hunting areas from the Mountains of Vrancea ( Lepșa, Condratu, Macradău ), becoming possible only after obtaining the hunting permit for wildboars, foxes, rabbits, badgers, wild cats, deer and special exemption for bears and wolfs.

The natural environment from County Vrancea, as the central element of the nature tourism, offers many other opportunities for developing the ecotourism without the use of additional preparations:

Cycling: forest trail in PNPV

- Nordic walking: Mountain Coza, Mountain Zboina, Mountain Goru, Vrancea Subcarpathians.

- Learning traditional crafts such as: wood carving and iron forging in Vrâncioaia, crafting pyrography vessels at Nereju, manufacturing traditional fabrics in Bârsești, pottery and bootmaking in Vidra, woodworking in Tulnici, woolworking in Răcoasa, sewing, embroidering and weaving mats and towels in Năruja, crafting flutes and bagpipes, also masks for winter holidays in Nistorești and many others.

- Wine tours: in Odobești, Panciu, Ctești and Jariștea.

- Food tours: in Lepșa, Tulnici and Soveja.

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patterns from the cheese date from the paleochristian era and contain the ram's horn, which symbolises fertility, the braided rope symbolises continuity, wolf fangs from margins symbolise the fir tree's eternity, the sun from centre – divinity. The moulds are also used for decorations, being hung from the house's beam.

<sup>6</sup> Masks with funeral signification were used in the past at funerals, symbolising the deceased's ancestors who came at the funeral. These days, the masks are worn by youth during winter holidays for amusement.

<sup>7</sup> Source: [www.ziare.com](http://www.ziare.com)

<sup>8</sup> Sursa: [www.tara-vrancei.ro](http://www.tara-vrancei.ro)

<sup>9</sup> Although this activity is not recommended in any location from the Mountains Vrancea, due to loose rocks, it is carried out by many climbers near the town Tulnici, first trails for climbing being opened by Galatians in the early 90's.

<sup>10</sup> Photo safari or Fotohunting („Hunting pictures”) can be carried out at the moment in Mountains Ciucaș, the boundary between the County Buzău and Brașov implies that special pavilion for photo shooting should be placed, off-road vehicle should be provided, followed by trained guides.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The network of protected natural areas from County Vrancea offers all the opportunities for developing the ecotourism, which is at the moment a role key for our community. The possibility of becoming more popular and attractive to public should determine the local authorities to capitalize something that nature has already offered, by finding and applying the best developing strategies for tourism in these areas. A first condition will be solving the problems that limit the activities of this type, especially promoting the protected natural areas nationwide and afterwards, internationalwide. The revitalization of „The Country of Vrancea” in terms of tourism will bring benefits not only for tourists, but also for the local community such as: infrastructure development, rebuilding the collective cultural identity, increasing the incomes of the locals, and many others.

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