

# INTERCONNECTION OF CULTURAL TOURISM AND OTHER FORMS OF TOURISM AND DIVERSIFICATION OF SERVICES – AS A CONSTITUTIVE PART OF THE STRATEGIC PLANS OF TOURISM COMPANIES

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## Abstract

*The tourist practice is seeing new processes of structural change in the composition of customers, by a gradual transition of a considerable number of tourists from the categories of clients with a mostly “passive” behaviour into the category of the “conditioned active” and “active” tourists, respectively. Knowing the fact that tourism has always had an active character and a tendency to diversification, based on the existence of a set of tourist motivations and requirements, since tourists are always on the move, one can say that cultural tourism often intersects with other forms of tourism.*

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Highlighting, and capitalizing on, the domestic tourism attractions of an area, resort, town or village, and so on, is strongly conditioned by the content of the tourism benefits, the diversity and the quality of the services provided by the organizers of tourism trips and the tourist service providers.

Among the reasons that determine today’s tourist to accept a certain form of tourism, a certain travel arrangement option, a certain travel destination, etc., is, at the very forefront, the factor of attractiveness, generically called “leisure”, i.e. the pleasure, relaxation, or entertainment accompanying the tourist’s active leisure, so much required in enjoying one’s free time during holidays or vacations.

At first sight, the concept of active rest (or active holidays) seems a contradiction, a nonsensical notion, because for many tourists holidays are seen as a form of recreation that aims at total liberation from everyday concerns, through the pleasure of doing nothing, by recreation (e.g. long sleeping hours, lazing on the beach, reading, etc.).

The explanation of this phenomenon lies in the reminiscences of the excessive use, in the not too distant past, of physical and intellectual energy by the active population in the production processes, versus the available free or leisure time, which was almost entirely consumed for the needs of passive rest meant to regenerate the labour energy consumed daily.

The total leisure time available (on a daily, weekly or yearly basis) for the population is constantly increasing. On the other hand, as the time spent for passive leisure remains almost constant, there is a growing public demand for active recreation, as an agreeable form of spending (or consuming) one's free time available.

The increasing public concern for the various forms of active recreation is stimulated, among other things, by the increasingly harmful polluting effects of urban type clusters (or centres), e.g. pollution of the air, water, or noise, visual, etc. pollution, caused by the daily bustle of human activities and the traffic of vehicles, which are present in increasing numbers in these complex human clusters. These pollutants constantly act on the ever higher level of physical and mental tenseness of the individuals in contemporary society, a phenomenon which translates in nervous fatigue (i.e. stress), caused by the hectic pace of modern life, sensibly damaging the people's nerve health.

To counterbalance the effects of this type of "stress", specialists recommend that, during the free time, activities that are directly opposite to one's daily professional activities should be pursued. As holiday periods provide increasingly broader opportunities for practising such extra-professional activities, active leisure gradually turns into "active holidays", i.e. a form of relaxation, nerve unburdening, into a modern method of treatment that has no recourse to the administration of drugs, fully able to improve the harmful effects of the above-mentioned nerve overload.

As tourist consumption becomes increasingly a specific form of mass consumption, such concerns for including, in the tourist arrangements provided, a number of formulas of optional active holidays variants, take a growing share in the benefits of travel.

There are no crisp boundaries between active recreation proper and passive recreation. Even in the case of some traditional arrangements, such as "included total??" (II), where the tourist is provided an agreed range of services in the sojourn location, there is often the spontaneous manifestation of optional service requests for that type of leisure activities, entertainment, leisure recreation (also called "leisure time", or simply "leisure") that meets positive feedback in terms of attractiveness, diversity, originality and the quality level of the benefits.

Thus, the tourist practice is seeing new processes of structural change in the composition of customers, by a gradual transition of a considerable number of tourists from the categories of clients with a mostly "passive" behaviour into the category of the "conditioned active" and "active" tourists, respectively. The larger issue of categorizing active or passive behaviour types becomes more easily understandable if one takes into account the classification below, which – notwithstanding its concise character – reflects the potential of service demands in a resort (or zone) where the tourist has decided to spend his/her holiday time.

In conducting tourism activities, various combinations are commonly used of the different types of tourism aiming at increasing the tourist attractiveness of the location, and showcasing, along with famous tourist attractions, other, less known sights.

Thanks to the recent innovations and investment in tourism, these forms have greatly diversified from one decade to another. In addition, the increased performance of transport has greatly accelerated this phenomenon.

Knowing the fact that tourism has always had an active character and a tendency to diversification, based on the existence of a set of tourist motivations and requirements, since tourists are always on the move, one can say that cultural tourism often intersects with other forms of tourism. Generally speaking, the **cultural** idea can be applied to any form of tourism whose aims lie beyond mere recreation and rest, and takes into account the exploration of the local and regional horizon. As a matter of fact, the purpose of every tourist trip is, apart from physical and mental relaxation, the enrichment of one's cultural horizon and the spiritual enrichment of human personality. In this respect, a number of cases of interference between cultural tourism and other forms of tourism known can be presented:

- the relationship with medical and spa tourism, based on the natural factors. As a matter of principle, medical or treatment tourism is the priority, meaning that the tourists stay longer, focusing on the improvement in, and/or prevention of some disease, or on decreasing the phenomenon of stress. This form of tourism is generally based on a stable clientele, who does not always take into account a well-defined seasonality. In addition to covering a set of therapeutic procedures, tourists are interested, in their spare time, in knowing the tourist resort better, as a human settlement, and taking tours of the surroundings. The duration of the relaxation or leisure is shorter, but it allows tourists to visit and get to know some key cultural objectives (e.g. participation in outdoor shows, festivals, events and competitions, visits to museums, memorial houses, artisans' workshops, parks and gardens, botanical and zoological gardens, protected areas, etc.).

In fact, it seems that the tourists who come for spa treatment are the most interested in, and prone to, the wish to change the medical type of milieu for a recreational one, more exactly to know novel, still unseen places and tourist attractions.

- the relationship with mountain tourism takes account of the existence of two essential components of this type of tourism: mountain hiking in summer and practising winter and sun sports. This kind of tourism includes significant inflows of tourists, and occupies a large share compared to other forms of tourism.

The leisure time tourists have at their disposal is relatively limited because it is held by hiking along the mountain trails and practising winter sports. In this context, during the summer season, passionate mountain tourists have the opportunity to visit some mountain resorts, small local museums, memorial houses, nature reserves, nature monuments, or the anthropogenic monuments represented by monasteries, hermitages, crucifixes, commemorative crosses, etc. In many cases, mountain tourism (or mountaineering) is practiced only at the week-end, and then the tourists' possibility of visiting cultural sights is quite reduced. More often than not, the tourists in this segment are interested in participating in events and traditional celebrations or festivals (e.g. the Snow Holidays, the Maidens' Fair on Mount Găina, etc.).

- the relationship with seaside tourism is especially evident in recent years, because it is no longer recommended to take sunbaths and sun treatment over long periods of time. Out of the hours spent on the beach, tourists are interested to know other tourist attractions. In general, this form of tourism has a high share in the overall tourism activity, and the tourist flows are quite important.

During their spare time, many tourists are attracted to visiting the museums of natural sciences, specializing in marine fauna and flora, to visiting museums of history and

archaeology, or art museums, to go to the theatre, outdoor music shows, various exhibitions (painting, sculpture, tapestry, clothing, philately, numismatics, etc.). Others prefer some specific sports competitions (yachting, yawl sailing, kayaking, golf, tennis, etc.).

Diversification of cultural activities in seaside areas is beneficial because it is designed to extend the tourist season by one to two weeks, and also to increase foreign exchange earnings, which, in seaside tourism, focus in the main on the basic services.

- the relationship with ecotourism and scientific tourism, mainly relying on visiting various national natural parks, or nature reserves. In general, in the periphery of these protected areas there are numerous settlements, which are mainly rural. Along with getting a knowledge of particularly interesting species of flora and fauna, visiting places with beautiful natural scenery, tourists can also know traditional lifestyles. Many tourists are interested in buying gifts, souvenirs typical of the region they visited, or participating in a number of local, traditional celebrations and festivals, and maybe learning the secrets of artisan crafts.

- the relationship with business and congress tourism features, in the foreground, various leisure opportunities outside the professional issues. In general, the segment of tourists participating in such activities use a variety of tourist resources, in most cases high quality ones. These tourists are more interested, particularly when they are in other countries or regions, in participating in tours of a documentary type, or in cultural and artistic events.

Since many such business meetings, scientific seminars, workshops and conferences are conducted in large urban centres, some having the status of capitals, the participants usually visit the national museums or memorial houses of famous personalities.

- the relationship with rural tourism and agrotourism is essentially based on the characteristic features of rural settlements. Besides the return to nature, to the benefits of a healthy diet, tourists are also interested in leisure activities and active relaxation. A special place is held by the ethnographic value of the area where the villages integrate, since traditional crafts, local handicrafts, religious and agricultural or pastoral customs and festivals, are component parts representing as many tourist attractions.

Tourists are willing to participate in celebrations, ethnographic events having to do with family-related events or that involve the whole local community (e.g. wedding parties, baptisms, funerals, vineyard harvesting, fruit picking, driving the sheep flocks down from the high mountains, etc.). In many rural areas there are museums, memorial houses, special cultural sights, both religious and secular monuments, which can, whatever the season, attract the visiting tourists or the tourists on a short-stay schedule.

Assessing these relationships between the form of cultural tourism and the other forms of tourism is based on how the historical heritage is preserved and transmitted down the successive generations.

## **Conclusions**

Depending on the dominant form of tourism and these interferences that occur over time, the opportunities can be established in point of developing and modernization of tourist services, as well as the most appropriate means of promotion. Accepting attractive forms of tourism can be based on combining those forms of tourism by means

of which the whole tourism potential of a local (urban and / or rural) community is turned to best account in economic terms.

The existence of varied activities decreases the seasonality, orientation, volume, intensity and duration of tourist flows in a given geographic area. It also produces the phenomenon of supporting a higher standard of travel benefits, of continued diversification of supply and renewal of products based on the components of tourism potential.

Through this approach to cultural tourism, its structural complexity becomes clearer, no less than its interrelation with other tourism activities, determining the socio-economic development of human settlements. It also reduces the pressure due to high tourist flows on a certain type of significant or potential tourist attractions, and facilitates compensation by drawing into the tourist circuit other attractions, which are less vulnerable and valuable.

Any change in the dynamics and structure of some forms of tourism has direct influence on other forms of tourism. The reputation of a tourist destinations can become permanent specifically by developing the connection between the many forms of tourism known.

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