

TOURIST AREA WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON ANIMATION

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Abstract: *A tourist area, regarded in itself, whether it is “a wild” (intact) nature or the nature with “a human face” (the one changed by human work – a tourist destination), has its significant animation role. For the tourist area to be more attractive in the animation sense, i.e. to have the animation effect, it has to attract, by its position, appearance and organization, **the attention** of tourists; arouse their **interest**; provoke their **desire** for visit; and encourage them to take an **action**, and make concrete decisions. Relying on these foundations, animation effect of a tourist area is expressed through three major decisions made by potential tourists as a part of their tourist travel: first, the decision to travel to a specific tourist area (tourist spot); second, determining the length of their stay at the specific tourist destination; and third, the decision on the possible re-arrival in the same tourist destination. Having this in mind, the content of this paper is to point out the need for a high quality spatial planning in tourism; then the role of tourist area related to communication; the role of natural spaces and anthropogenic resources in animation; as well as the characteristics of the tourist area as “heterotopias hedonism”. This paper, besides its theoretical contribution, also has its practical aspect, in the sense that it points to the need for analyzing and clearly understanding the role of the tourist area, as a localized set of manifestations attractive for tourism within it, as a part of tourist animation, and especially in its cultural-humanistic dimension.*

Keywords: *animation, anthropogenic resources, communication, heterotopias hedonism, tourist area*

Introduction

A tourist area, within its frameworks, comprises a localized set of manifestations attractive to tourism. These manifestations, as attractive natural and anthropogenic contents that fill the space, in addition to some aspects of instrumental and utilitarian value, have their sense of themselves for tourists. It practically means that a certain tourist area (a tourist spot, i.e. tourist destination) attracts tourists by its overall organization and inherent characteristics. For these reasons, the tourism in such a place represents a

dominant economic and social activity that contributes transforming the given place in a spirit of authentic desires and needs of tourists. (Čomić, 2010).

For the tourist area to be even more attractive for visitors, it has to attract their attention by its entire appearance, position and organization, to arouse their interest, provoke their desire to visit it and encourage them to take action and make concrete decisions. When a tourist area, as a specific tourist destination, is consistently designed on these grounds, then it is realistic to expect that it, as a whole, could be one of significant factors within substantial and heterogeneous animation.

The animation effect of a tourist area is expressed primarily through three significant decisions made by tourists as a part of their tourist travel, namely: first, the decision to travel to a specific tourist area (tourist place, i.e. tourist destination); second, the length of time if they choose to stay in a given tourist destination; and third, the decision on the possible re-arrival in the same tourist destination.

The materialistic method, as a basic general method, has been used in this paper; then follows the method of content analysis as a way of using messages transmitted through the social communication channels; and special (logical) method, as the main thinking activity, ranging from analysis and synthesis, via induction and deduction, to abstraction and generalization.

Spatial planning in tourism

Tourism has an emphasized spatial characteristic since the real development requires larger spaces, and not only legally protected national parks and other facilities. Therefore, the tourist area must be deeply studied and outlined in the overall complexity of relationships, manifestations and processes, viewed in their interrelated connection to the past, present and future. This approach stems from the recognition that the development of tourism, through adequate spatial planning, could possibly lead to achieving significant economic and social effects, to which all countries of the modern world tend.

As a part of the overall planning of specific territorial units, spatial planning has to start from a clear determination of the number and arrangement of natural and anthropogenic tourist values, which have adequate contractile zones (zones to attract tourists) and distinguish-ability both in domestic and international tourism markets. In doing so, the starting points in the process of finding the best possible ways of using the tourist area, could be reduced to the following:

- Identifying, defining and ranking the desired goals in the development of tourism and fundamental alternative ways for their achievement, as well as devising meaningful scientific and practical methods;
- Inventory of natural and anthropogenic tourist values;

- Determination of sites, centers and priority tourist regions, as well as their zoning;
- Identification of possible attractive tourist complexes;
- Analysis of existing and future roads, as well as insight into the infrastructure facilities;
- The development of ancillary and supporting activities in the planned area;
- The preservation, protection and improvement of tourist values;
- Improvement of the tourist offer elements and contents of residence;
- Education and training of appropriate personnel;
- Analysis of the existing tourism market;
- Forecasting future tourist demand with reference to the competition;
- Choosing investors, with defined deadlines for each action;
- Study of the state of the environment and biodiversity; etc. (Stanković & Pavlović, 2006).

The larger combination of planned tourist functions in a particular area, the higher its tourist value, and therefore its animation role, significant to meaningful stay of tourists.

Tourist area with particular focus on communication

Every space or landscape represents a field of communication (Kevin Lynch, 1982). Messages are mainly carried by people or objects. The numerous messages that the environment sends have an influence on people's behavior, their development, personalities, feelings and intensity of their aesthetic and emotional satisfaction. However, space affects not only the feelings and the behavior of an individual, but also interpersonal communication, which means communication between the tourists themselves, and between the tourist and the host. In this way, communication exists as the factor of transforming the space, in terms of its vibrancy and dynamics (Lynch, 1982).

Attractive tourist areas imply recognition of spending time in a more meaningful manner and offer tourists great opportunities for learning, and application of new conceptual attributes, which enhances the current trend towards individualization in tourism and encourages the development of tourism in the wider sense, above all, its flexibility as a key element in all forms of selective tourism, and especially in the cultural one (Law, 2002).

Majority of tourist experiences are connected to the function of space, either if it is about open, public spaces, or localized objects (monuments, buildings, palaces). Tourists are interested in open, public spaces, which appear as "game spaces", thus becoming the scene areas, as a kind of tourist-research laboratory for tourists (Hočevar, 2003). In this "laboratory", a modern tourist decodes, i.e. decrypts the atmosphere and its impact, the ambience and the

current mood of tourists, which leads to the shift from homogenized to a pluralistic profile of tourists who gravitate toward multiple experiences by "moving their focus towards subjective preferences for the meanings as their own guidelines of the experiences themselves" (Uriely, N. 2005).

Thus, the tourist area, as the field of human communication, manifests itself in the creation of such an atmosphere and environment that increases the probability of creating the pleasant and positive travel experience, where significant place is taken by subjective preferences of the tourist experience, since tourists are able to create, in accordance with the creation of an inspiring environment of space and suitable atmospheres, some specific micro-experiences, as well as the legitimate elements of communication in the space and with the space (Larsen, 2007).

Natural areas and animation

Animation of tourists in natural areas, related to the nature and their staying in it, refers to the process of putting some specific programs into operation, the programs that should be organized and implemented primarily within the framework of interesting recreational activities. At the same time, the effort should be made to connect the effects of recreational activities of tourists with the positive effects of animations that can also be achieved by implementing the animation programs of other forms of tourism (sports, eco-tourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, etc.). (Kos & Sabol, 2012). There is no doubt that the animation activities, organized and carried out in this way, will result in the increased satisfaction of tourists (Glinia, et al, 2001), and synergy of positive effects of tourist animation, achieved by connecting these forms of tourism on the natural area, is of particular importance, inter alia, to raise environmental awareness of tourists.

Animation activities in the areas of nature, envisaged by appropriate entertainment programs, related to ecology, i.e. to the raise of environmental awareness, can be very diverse, such as: planting trees (preferably in the areas naturally altered or degraded areas); removal of introduced (entered) exotic plant species that disrupt the stability of the local ecosystem; maintenance and renovation of footpaths; assisting in scientific research (for example, identification of plant species); participation in various projects related to local communities and the like. (Jovičić & Dragin, 2009). These activities have become a powerful motivator even for those tourists who, within their tourist trip plan, have had no (primarily) eco-tourist motive and to whom the environmental activities were not the subject of interest. The realization of such animation programs strongly raises the interest and active participation of tourists, thereby enriching their travel experience, encouraging their desire for acquiring a unique experience in a natural area, but also get them adapt to the

reduced level of comfort that they are more or less accustomed to and which does not exist in a natural area (Đorđević, 2015).

In this regard, botanical gardens could also be mentioned as natural spaces that provide an excellent source of information, but also the satisfaction for tourists. Medical treatment of people, education and research are considered as primary functions of botanical gardens that are still maintained to this day. These areas have been experiencing a new renaissance period in the last two decades around the world in the context of tourist visits. The Botanical Garden of Padua, for example, with 1,300 plant species from around the world, is certainly the most famous. This garden in controlled greenhouse conditions that simulate the conditions of natural habitats, its appearance, ambiance and characteristics, acts strongly as an animation and is directly connected to it. When visiting this garden, tourists may have a unique experience of traveling through the flora of the planet from different parts of the world. Traveling through the vegetation of North and South America, Africa and Madagascar, Asia, Europe and Oceania, tourists also become familiar with the richness, uniqueness and beauty of the flora world. Solar energy used in the greenhouse is designed with minimized negative impact on the environment. There are numerous flora beds located outside the greenhouses, dedicated to various themes and where the local climate plants are grown as well (vegetables and flower gardens, industrial plants, spices and herbs, etc.). These beds often follow the season of the year and they often shift and represent a part of the education program. In that context, there is also the British Kew Gardens in south-west London located on 121 hectares with theme gardens and botanical glasshouses with numerous and vivid plant collections. Started in 1759, this garden represents the largest collection of live flora with more than 30,000 different kinds of plants but there is also the herbarium which is one of the largest in the world with over seven million preserved plant specimens. The library contains more than 750,000 volumes, and the illustrations collection contains more than 175,000 prints and drawings of plants. Gardens are situated in the open area, as well as in 37 houses regarded as the British culture monuments. It is an international botanical research and education institution that employs more than 700 staff, with annual income of £56 million. Simultaneously, it is a tourist attraction visited by almost two million people a year (Stefanović, 2015).

Apart from this, there are of course numerous other activities and characteristics of natural areas present within other forms of tourism as well (sports, adventure, cultural, health, rural tourism, etc.).

Areas of anthropogenic resources and animation

All countries have their cultural and historical monuments as anthropogenic tourist resources, some of them with richer and some with poorer

heritage. However, the main question is how to represent that legacy (anthropogenic resources), and how to "use" it. Tourism suffers most when the present fails to respect the past, which could have negative implications (for example, in the case of an Italian baroque church transformed into a car-wash). Anyway, it is in the best interest of tourism when the past is focused on activating and developing cultural capital (Hartley, 2005), where the effects of tourism are much higher if the past is embodied in ever greater cultural capital (Đorđević, 2013).

For exploiting the anthropogenic resources in animation, it is necessary, above all, to have access to information on the importance and chronological development of the site, and all that in different languages, as well as other adequate information important for drawing the attention of tourists. An average tourist is neither a historian nor an archeologist so his/her interest in monuments, archeological sites and historical places can be quite different from that of a professional (Lawson & Baud - Bovy, 1977:194). However, there are numerous cases when historical and scientific data related to a monument are less significant for the tourist than the general impression made by the monumental scenery, an interesting approach, uniqueness of the place, etc., so the list of monuments attractive to tourists could be quite different from the one with historical, artistic or archeologically valuable monuments (Čomić, 2008).

The animation opportunities of tourist areas have to be adapted to all of that. It is necessary for the animation effects to connect, conform and comply with the animation effects of the human factor, i.e. animators and animation groups, as well as professional experts who create and implement, together with the tourists, certain animation programs to reach the creation of ambient and atmospheric benefits in a tourist area, and that area becomes a tourist promoter animation. The synergy of both factors is the best way to create conditions favorable to the tourist area to appear as one of the important factors for creating a pleasant and memorable experience, which, from the standpoint of tourism, in addition to the economic effects, is the focus of its socio-humanistic development.

According to some authors, there are so called "intangible elements" in tourism as a network of various elements related to a landscape, climate, cultural heritage, communication, etc., thus, with all the things considered as being indicative for animation initiated by the tourist area by itself, as opposed to tangible elements, like transport, meals and other elements which are part of tourist industry (Binkorst, 2005), that make the tourist animation significant for research in the context of subjective preferences of experiences. Therefore, when summing the areas of animation application, Dragica Tomka emphasizes that the animation is a specific, multi-dimensional and highly sensitive activity (Tomka, 2007).

Nowadays, there is a growing number of cities and tourist resorts which, by their appearance, content and authentic characteristics, provide tourists with a wide range of options for a variety of visual, aesthetic and other experiences, with an aim to attract and impress. In this context, in particular, dominant the visual approach to animation is dominant, because tourism exerts increasing influence on urban aesthetics, or urban design and architectural appearance of the constructed environment. Namely, the impressive facades of monumental buildings, i.e. their monumental architecture, broad axes, views and boulevards, as well as large squares, stand out in the foreground as main points of attraction for visitors, (The Place de la Concorde, Red Square, Tiananmen Square); then, there are monuments with a strong symbolic meaning; grouped as historical, sacred and iconic buildings (Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Sydney Opera House, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the Reichstag in Berlin); museums (the Louvre, the British Museum, the Prado); and street sights and scenes (socio-cultural attractiveness of the area). Finally, there are also some historic centers and core individual cities that are very attractive to tourists (Florence, Venice, Prague), some modern cities and parts of cities (Brazil, La Defense), as well as some postmodern cities created as a tourist attraction and a spectacle in itself (Las Vegas) (Čomić, 2010).

Tourist areas as “heterotopia hedonism”

Modern tourists are inconstant and dynamic, revealing their hyperactivity in the search for new a tourist area. This hyperactivity is emerging as a strong motivating factor that encourages potential tourists to exclude loyalty or commitment to a particular tourist spot, and that, when making a decision on any new tourist travel they opt for the new tourist area. Because of these reasons, the number of repeated visits to certain tourist destinations is currently declining (Arva & Deli-Gray, 2011). New places of various exotic destinations have been increasingly offered on a tourism market, with a pluralism of "tourist tastes" (for example, wide variety of offers for tours in the Sahara, Greenland, Alaska, Guyana...) which appear to be from another world or from another time (Đorđević, 2013).

In context of seeking an ontologically radical different area, it is important to mention Foucault's concept of heterotopias, as a space that is “absolutely something else” (Aggarwal, 1997). From the ontological standpoint, these areas are completely different places (*ganz andere*) from those where tourists spend their everyday existence (homotopy). In relation to initial society, the aim of understanding and studying heterotopia would be a description, analysis and "reading" these different spaces, these other places in a kind of mythical and at the same time real antithetical competition and comparison with the space in which we live. Foucault makes distinction

between the crisis heterotopias as privileged, sacred or forbidden places intended for individuals who are in a state of crisis in relation to the environment and society in which they live, and the heterotopic deviations from the norms of everyday existence at home, as a place where individuals whose behavior deviates from normal average and standard go (psychiatric hospitals, prisons, nursing homes). In addition, we can talk about heterotopy of a temporary stay, as a tourism form of occasional finding different places, where the starting place is the one of residence - here. In this context, however, we can talk about heterotopias of low or high intensity depending on the degree of diversity in relation to the system of initial countries, i.e. the place of residence. In this sense, the new tourist spaces, where tourists are constantly searching, we can treat as "heterotopias hedonism" because everything there is subordinated to the satisfaction of tourists and their needs and desires (Čomić & Kalmić, 2008).

Aspirations and preferences of tourists related to areas are different in modern conditions. Some authors in the academic literature generalize preferences of individual tourist groups from certain countries according to certain kinds of spaces, primarily emphasizing the importance and impact of culture on the selection of a certain area (Fisher, 1981; Jodelet, 2006). In any case, the impact of culture on the selection of a certain area is undoubted, especially in modern conditions, but that does not mean that it should be taken as absolute, since in this sense everything that tourists bring with themselves is acting (understanding of nature, landscape paintings of a certain area and forming feelings about it, et al.), as a result of education through the images imprinted in the consciousness that are revealed when encountering each new space and opportunities for desirable activity in it (Đorđević & Tomka, 2011).

Conclusion

Tourist area, filled with attractive natural and anthropogenic amenities, plays a significant role in the animation of tourists. Therefore, modern tourism does not rest just on animation programs and efforts of animators to make them implemented in the spirit of the genuine wishes and needs of tourists, which makes it an important part of the tourist offer, but also departs from animation role of the tourist area. In addition, one should have in mind the tourist area as a pristine natural environment and tourist area in the shape of specific tourist destinations. Both types of tourist areas "produce" more or less powerful and exciting experiences, that are important not only for the degree of satisfaction of tourists (cultural and humanistic aspects), what is also extremely important, but for the length of stay of tourists in the chosen destination, as well as for their decision on a re-arrival to the given tourist area (the economic aspect).

With this in mind, tourism management today, and especially the animators and animation groups, in their analysis, preparation and drafting of tourist services, have to carry out an overall evaluation of the tourist area characteristics, its motivational effect and animation opportunities. Such an approach, undoubtedly, will be a clear landmark to take concrete actions in relation to directing tourists and the function of the tourist area in animating them.

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