



Research note

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ANALYSIS OF TOURIST MOTIFS IN THE FUNCTION OF DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL TOURISM IN THE SETTLEMENTS SURROUNDED BY PROTECTED NATURAL RESOURCES

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Abstract: The paper deals with the presence of anthropogenic tourist motifs in the area of the Special Nature Reserve “Carska bara” in the north of Serbia with the following rural settlements taken into consideration: Belo Blato, Ečka, Knićanin, Lukino Selo, Perlez and Stajićevo. The presence of cultural heritage from a group of archaeological sites, works of monumental and artistic features, spatial cultural and historical units, famous places and memorials, folklore heritage, religion and beliefs, language and manifestation values has been recorded in the studied area. The area is well connected with the city centers of this part of Serbia and for the current level of tourism development, it has a satisfactory number of accommodation capacities. After analyzing literature and local cultural offer, it is concluded that for the purpose of attracting more tourists, cultural, that is anthropogenic tourist motifs must be united in the offer with the natural phenomenon Carska bara and its near environment. Together, they can lead to the development of an increasingly popular type of cultural tourism — creative tourism, enchanting tourists the life of the local population, their culture and customs.

Keywords: cultural tourism, anthropogenic tourist motifs, Carska bara

Introduction

Cultural tourism involves visiting cultural attractions away from the place of stay in order to collect information and experiences with the aim to meet cultural needs (Weaver, Kwek, & Wang, 2017, according to Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). Richards (Richards, 2010) defines it as experiencing local culture and tradition, along with visiting museums and monumental heritage, noting that it is often perceived as a “good” form of tourism because it is not massive, so the negative impact on nature is small, and those who practice it are educated, often wealthy and spend a lot. Anthropogenic tourist motifs are the basis for the development of cultural tourism. They differ from natural tourist motifs by length of stay and

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profit from tourists which is in the case of cultural tourism significantly less. Trinh & Ryan (Trinh & Ryan, 2015, according to Prentice, 2001 and Park, 2010) point out that many theorists see the possibility of acquiring new knowledge as the fundamental difference between this and other forms of tourism, with a greater will for learning at this type of tourists (according to Prentice, 1993; Prentice, Witt & Hamer, 1998). It is rarely an independent tourist value, more often serves as a means of improving the tourist offer (Bjeljac et al., 2014). Krasojević and Djordjević (2015) emphasize the need of local communities to use their cultural heritage for tourism promotion and source of additional income. The approach to the protection of cultural heritage used to be purely normative and was reduced to identifying objects and forming a list of heritage. Only historical and artistic values were considered, while today they are added cultural value, identity and ability to communicate with memory (Vecco, 2010). The subject of the research is the area of the Special Nature Reserve “Carska bara” and the surrounding settlements connected functionally (Figure 1).

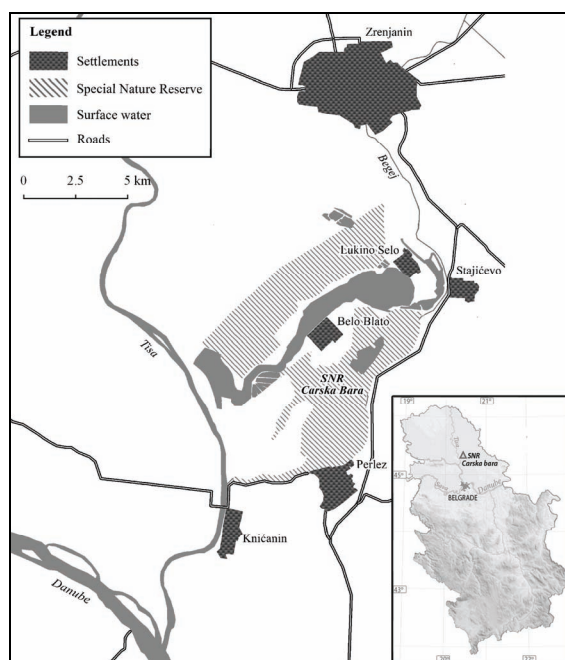


Figure 1. The area of the Reserve and its location (Authors: D. Doljak & M. Milivojević, 2017)

In 1996, this natural resource was declared Ramsar area, it is an internationally important area for birds, a significant botanical area of Europe, as well as the Emerald area of Serbia. It is under the management of the Fishing farm “Ečka” from Lukino Selo.

Research results

Archaeological findings

Archaeological sites of the settlements in the surrounding area of the Reserve are numerous, but none is protected as an immovable cultural goods. Artefacts found on them are not large objects that would be preserved *in situ*, but individual objects of modest dimensions that are *ex situ* protected, and as such, represent part of the tourist value of the National Museum of Zrenjanin. Eleven sites with prehistoric, bronze and antique artefacts were discovered in the settlement of Belo Blato. In the settlement of Ečka, four sites with artefacts from the Bronze and Antiquity, as well as the Middle Ages, were found. There is one locality from the Bronze Age in the settlement of Knićanin, and in Lukino Selo there are five that date back to prehistory and the Middle Ages. There are as many as twelve multilayer sites in Perlez, five of which have been examined so far, and there are seven sites in Stajićevo, with artefacts that date from prehistory to the Middle Ages (www.zrenjaninheritage.com/delatnost-zavoda/arheologija).

Works with monumental and artistic qualities

The works are most frequent in the Ečka settlement. These are the monuments of Saint Hubert and the woman with a pigeon (individual motifs of the castle “Kaštel”), immovable cultural goods enjoying previous protection (Bridge at “Kaštel”, Old Romanian school, Mill and Complex of the Old Town buildings), the Church of St. Nicholas from 1711 (the oldest church in Banat, a cultural heritage of great importance) and the Roman Catholic Church of St. John the Baptist from 1864. In the village of Belo Blato, the Windmill and the Reed House have got previous protection, in Knićanin, the House with an old shop, and in Perlez, the Mill and old church of St. Archangel Michael and Gabriel. The Assumption of the Most Holy Theotokos Serbian Orthodox churches in Perlez and Stajićevo are protected as cultural goods of great importance. The first dates from the beginning of the XIX century and is adorned with the iconostasis painted by Uroš Predić in 1895, and the second is a whole century older, and is known as the work of the most important Vojvodina modernist of the first half of the 20th century, an architect Djordje Tabaković (<http://www.zrenjaninheritage.com/kulturna-dobra>).

Spatial cultural and historical units

The “Belo Blato Centre” in the settlement of Belo Blato is also protected by the law as a spatial cultural and historical unit, which consists of the Slovak Evangelical Church, the Roman Catholic Church of St. Elizabeth, the building of

the Primary School “Brotherhood and Unity”, the monument to the fallen WW II fighters and the Citizens' House. The “Centre of Perlez” in Perlez is protected in the same category, as well as “Saint Sava” House and parish (<http://www.zrenjaninheritage.com/kulturna-dobra>). Kaštel in Ečka with its surroundings is protected as a cultural monument and represents the pearl of the tourist offer of this region and often the basic motive of arrival of tourists. It is an integral part of the very popular tour the Castles of Vojvodina. In Belo Blato there is an ethno household “Eco-ethno complex Carska bara — Belo Blato” and a farmhouse “Lujza”, an agricultural farm known in the field of rural tourism and gastronomy. In the village of Stajićevo, in the immediate vicinity of the Reserve, there is the ethno village “Tiganjica”.

Famous places and memorials

Individual monuments of importance, memorials and memorial cemeteries sometimes overstep the national significance. One such place is located in the village of Knićanin (Rudolfsgand), one of the more important German settlements in Banat until the end of the Second World War. It was founded by Danube Swabians in 1866, who came mainly from Ečka and Lukićevo (Kicošev, Bubalo-Živković, & Ivkov, 2006). It worked as a camp for work disabled Volksdeutchers from southern and central Banat from October 1945 to March 1948. Today in the village there is a memorial to the victims of the camp, raised by a joint initiative of the Serbs and the Germans, so that the survivors and their descendants come in an organized way to show honor to their fallen relatives. In the park area of Belo Blato, there is a memorial to the partisans who liberated their village in the last days of September 1944, and this is also goods of prior protection. There is such similar monument in Perlez, as well as the memorial of the national hero Pap Pavle, whose birth house is protected as a cultural monument. There are also old tombstones at the “Šiško Cemetery” in Perlez, protected as goods under previous protection (Jojić Glavonjić, 2017).

Folklore heritage

This type of cultural heritage is best presented through rural tourism, and also through various events and sales of souvenirs. There are four active amateur cultural-artistic societies in the area of the researched settlements: in Ečka — Romanian Cultural-Artistic Society (abbreviated KUD) “Stefan Stefu” and Serbian KUD “Lala”, in Knićanin KUD “Sloboda” and in Perlez KUD “Arsenije Teodorovic”. They organize regular annual children’s folklore festivals, ethno-festivals, without neglecting international cooperation (mostly with Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and Bulgaria). In particular, two international festivals are

traditionally held in the study area, such as the International Folk Festival “Ajd na rogalj momče” in Perlez, and the International Folklore Festival “Roda” in Ečka. Rural festivals are important because they gather local people as concurrent organizers and visitors, thus empowering them. Events in settlements around the Reserve are mostly local. There are exceptions. The following ones are of the international character: The Art Colony in Ečka, the art colony of Belo Blato “Let’s enjoy the natural beauties of Carska bara by artistic expression”, the folklore festival “Ajd na rogalj momče” in Perlez and the festival of children’s folklore Roda in Ečka. Regional character also has the Beloblato manifestations such as the World championship in hand cutting of reed, which gathers participants from all over Vojvodina and it is significant in its mission to preserve old-fashioned, manual way of cutting reeds from oblivion, and the Ovčar days, which besides local people, bring together representatives of local self-governments from Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, presenting the opportunity to exchange experiences. Also, In the study area there is a series of manifestations of local character: Day of the villages, Day of the storks, Sausage and homemade brandy festival, Sweet day, Ethno day (Belo Blato), Amateurs to their city (Perlez), Tomato Days (Lukino selo), Parade of horses and the Transfiguration Days (Stajićevo) (Jojić Glavonjić, 2017).

Religion and beliefs

In the investigated area there is a significant number of sacral objects of various confessions — Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Lutheran. As Terzić, Bjeljic and Lović (2013) state, celebrations of religious holidays and processions in and around religious buildings, with accompanying contents in the village (fairs, etc.) can be attractive to tourists. In the villages of the research area, traditionally the biggest celebrations are made for religious holidays, which are also celebrated as the day of the village. Belo Blato celebrates the Day of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (November 19), a saint, according to whom it was originally named. Mass always attracts a large number of believers from Hungary and Romania. Ečka celebrates St. Vitus’ Day (June 28), Knićanin does not have a devout person but celebrates the patron saint of the village, the Holy Trinity (June 4). Lukino Selo celebrates the birth of the Most Holy Mother of God (September 21), and Perlez celebrates the Holy Martyr Julita (August 13), which represents the largest festivity in the explored area and lasts for three or four days. All mentioned festivities are followed by fairs, with music, carousel, handicrafts and food, and are important for the locals as an opportunity for everyone to gather, but also show the visitors all the features of their cultures and villages.

Languages

Vojvodina is a true example of this kind of cultural heritage, because “... it represents a historical mix of diversity of cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic nature” (Pušić, 2008). Because of its natural features, Banat has always been attractive for settling, and there have been frequent changes in the population of different origins and different cultures. The Serbs, Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Czechs, Armenians, and to a lesser extent Italians, French and Spanish, are the basis of the modern population of this Vojvodina region, which was subsequently enriched by colonists after the Second World War and refugees from the area of former SFRY (Kicošev et al., 2006). All of them have enriched this area with the diversity of their cultures and traditions. Belo Blato is particularly prominent, and for decades, it preserves and nurtures all its customs and languages, which are an important segment of its cultural heritage and a distinctive sign of recognition (Ćurčić, 2004). The locals communicate in Hungarian, Slovak, Serbian, Bulgarian, German, Roma, Albanian, Italian (due to tourists), and more. This fact itself, from the aspect of marketing, influences positively and contributes to a better image and even greater attractiveness of this village.

Cultural landscapes and cultural institutions

The only anthropogenic landscape tourism motif in the study area of importance is the old park in the centre of Perlez, dating from the very beginning of the 20th century. Botanically it is significant for about ten ginkgo biloba trees almost a hundred years old, and an additional attraction is given by the Serbian Orthodox Church of the Assumption of the Virgin from the beginning of the XIX century, protected as a cultural good of great importance. Cultural institutions are not cultural goods in themselves, but their activities in presenting cultural and artistic values are of importance. They are rare in rural areas. Within the Reserve, there is a Natural House, with a permanent setting of prepared animals, a photo gallery and the possibility of organizing film projections, which is mostly organized for the needs of excursions, which, along with weekend excursionists, provide the largest number of visitors to this area.

Conclusion

In recent years, everything has led to the shaping of a new type of cultural tourism — creative tourism; tourism that will allow its users to learn something new, taking direct participation in the activities of the local population. This chance is given to smaller and unknown places that offer something new and authentic. They can enable this profile of tourists to feel the “real life” of local

communities, try their kitchen, get to know the customs. The studied settlements around the Reserve can offer that to potential tourists. The area is well connected and equipped. The state road of the first order (Zrenjanin–Belgrade) passes nearby, and significant tourist dispersals — Zrenjanin (16 km), Novi Sad (50 km) and Belgrade (52 km) are not far away. Accommodation capacities are sufficient (the “Sibila” and the “Kaštel”, ethno houses, guesthouses).

The area studied is characterized by significant cultural potential, which is not yet fully utilized, nor shaped into a tourist product. The Reserve area is primarily attractive to tourists (mostly excursionists) due to natural values, while anthropogenic (cultural), although numerous, are not yet recognized and exploited. An overview of the situation in the field, the analysis of literature and Internet portals dealing with local cultural offer, lead to the conclusion that the solution is in a unified tourist offer (natural and anthropogenic motifs) because cultural motifs of this area alone cannot attract a large number of tourists. At this moment they are not attractive enough, but their popularization together with the natural resources of this region, as well as intensive promotion, could result in better positioning in the future.

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