

# Geographical Aspect of Tourism and Space Interaction

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## Abstract

During the last decades tourism has presented itself as more and more important social phenomenon. It has provided mass movements of people from one part of the planet to the other and a vast space dispersion of people. The basic initiative and the subject of interest for those migrations is the geographical space itself (its attraction and variety). The space in tourism is not just an instrumental value. It appears as an aim that has meaning and value by itself. The essential reason for the interest in tourism, geography finds in its spatial dimension. It is interested in characteristics of physical space, i.e. in geographical factors of tourism development. It is also interested in a space as a location factor or a space in which the most of tourist activities is performed. In this work, the authors are trying to present the interaction among tourism and space in geographical manner.

**Key words:** tourism, space, geography, interaction

## Introduction

During the last decades tourism has presented itself as more and more significant social phenomenon. Majority of theorists agree that that phenomenon is based on movement and consumption of people out of their place of residence, and all for satisfying recreation and cultural needs. Therefore, those relations connect tourism with economic and other activities. In such way they make a specific socio-economic phenomenon, characteristic interaction between material and spiritual life, i.e. a special component, but an important factor of modern civilization development as well.

A great percentage of human activities happens in geographical space. The space is a frame for some of those activities, and for others a condition of development. For tourism, the space is both, frame and condition of development. More than any other activity, tourism is determined by spatial relationships. Jovičić(1989) says that it can be spoken “only about tourism in a certain area and about tourists from certain area”.

Physical space for geographers e.g. “nature” for more philosophically oriented authors, was the subject of researches and theoretical thoughts, even since ancient period. The relation human being – nature was the base of those researches. Talking about tourism, as a relatively new phenomenon, his influence on transformation of physical space (geographical environment) is the subject of more and more investigations in geography, ecology and other similar disciplines. There is a rich scientific and expert literature in the world. Most of researchers agree that the transformation of geographical space, influenced by tourism, has either positive or negative meaning (with numerous examples of both effects). We consider that, in axiomatic meaning, the problem of evaluation reduces to a maintaining level of development.

Tourism can grow and develop and utilize the environment until the grade it starts to take advantages of it, e.g. the grade its “row material base” begin to disappear. However, the effects tourism has on space are nothing but the consequence of tourists’ relation towards the space. That is why some of theorists of tourism are right say-

ing that causes, i.e. the roots of effects of tourism on the space, should be searched in basic tourist - space relations. These relations are transferred by means of planning and arrangement to different corresponding forms of spatial transformation. (Čomić, 1998: 20). As far as it concerned, the subject of our analysis, firstly will be different tourists’ relations towards space, and then the influence of tourism, as a global phenomenon, on transformation of physical space.

## Typology of Tourists’ Relation Towards Space

Starting from From’s idea of having and existing, as a theoretic frame of investigation, the subject of analysis will be different forms of proprietary tourists’ relation towards space, considering that existence relationship is not relevant as a spatial transformation factor. Thus, it is necessary to approach to the identification of corresponding proprietary types of tourists’ relations towards space, which happen in practice. Actually, it is a specific form of appropriation, which presents an act to appropriate something and use for satisfying own needs. Concretely, there is a question how, and in which way, tourists do a sensual, psychological and symbolic appropriation of space.

**Sensual appropriation.** - The view, i.e. the eyesight observation and perception of the space is a minimal and the most frequent form of appropriation of the exterior world. Each tourist, with healthy eyesight, can “possess the world” looking at geographical forms. Majority of tourists sets out literally to “see the world”. They are in hurry, stay short time in a certain place. As a principal or the only possible form of appropriation appears the visual way, i.e. well-known “observing of the place” (*sightseeing*), which tourism theorists criticize. The other senses as means of tourist perception of the world are considerably less presented. But, it doesn’t mean they are insignificant and can be neglected, because without them there is no complete perception of space.

**Marking and limiting of territory.** – The tourist who comes into a new space, immediately aspires to “appropriate”

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somehow even a small piece of it for himself. He does it "marking" it, in a specific manner, so the rest of people know that space is occupied, belongs only to him and they must not come in it. Actually, the individual tries to mark and limit symbolically his own space from others' spaces. There is a number of personal objects identified as I. For instance, there are bag, clothes, towel, beach chair, newspapers, parasols, sun cream and other personal objects left on the beach. People sometimes even improvise enclosures of little stones, sand or other material with propose to mark and limit clearly the personal place.

#### **Movement and activities in space.**

– Modern tourists are usually compared with nomads, because they move a lot. They are not able to experience the sensual appropriation of space sitting in one place for hours and observing quietly the landscape. The static dimension of space perception where either observer or landscape are immovable, is not popular among mass tourists. Much closer to them is another, fundamentally different – kinetic manner of perception and individual interaction with space. Movement is not only a mean in function of place changing, but it has also the meaning by itself as movement. It presents, independently of the aim, the source of pleasure. As some theorists emphasize, tourists see landscape like an uninterrupted continuity of moving pictures, that rapidly disappear.

#### **Reconstruction of personal space.**

– Tourists who set out, in proportion to distancing of their home, feel every time much bigger unsafety and fear, because they lose the well known support that gives them feeling of safety. Owing to that they have a need to reconstruct somehow their permanent residence, even in unknown countries, i.e. their personal space. They do it in hotels, i.e. hotel rooms, movable caravans, tents,.. etc., which are permanently or temporally installed in space and represent a refuge for tourists. Besides, tourists usually arrange their personal objects around them (in hotel rooms they dispose and throw a great number of personal objects around), in order to make that impersonal space much closer to them and fell "like at own home".

**Verbal appropriation.** – Tourists, by means of verbal knowledge of space and observation, have a feeling they possess it, in the way "I know you, so I possess you". An approach like this one, by From(1980), expresses so-called "knowledge possessing". That means collecting as larger number of facts as possible, which can be memorized and taken home in their head. One of the main reasons why tourists ask for information about tourists attractions is because the photos they take, with the quickness they are absorbed with, do not keep their

attention for a long time. Thus, they look for "a story" connected with a picture of attraction they observe, and which explains it and gives its verbal continuation.

#### **Permanent material appropriation.**

– This aspect explains two types of analogous appropriations which have negative effects on tourist space. The first is a tourists' wish to mark in a "permanent" way their experience on a certain place, especially if it is a famous locality (mountain peaks, caves, pyramids, ancient temples... etc.). Mostly they do it by leaving some marks, flags or something like that, writing or engraving their own names and date of visit, occasionally, on the walls or building pillars, stone blocks, cave walls...etc.). The other way of appropriation is by taking the fragments of space, and so they become souvenirs in tourists' homes. Tourists take multifarious objects from the place they visit: shells, stones, crystals, sand, blessed water in small bottles, but they also break off cave ornaments, ornaments of temples, parts of broken statues...etc. They "capture" them in their home and have them in a permanent possession.

All above mentioned modes of possessing, that distinguish the individual attitude of tourists towards space, directly or indirectly, are transferred to the relation of tourism towards space, e.g. to the transformation level and spatial arrangement manner. Proceeding from all of that, it is necessary to analyze the most important agenses, modes and effects of tourist transformation of space.

### **Agenses, Modes and Effects of Tourist Transformation of Space**

Arrangement and equipment of space for tourist needs presents the strongest form of social appropriation. In order to realize a balanced development of tourism, which coordinates the level of social appropriation through arrangement with inherent characteristics of anterior form of space, people try to realize so-called "supporting capacity" conception, i.e. "maintaining development". So, it is very important, including both aspects, theoretical and practical, to establish the principal agenses, modes and effects of tourist transformation of space.(Čomić, 1998: 21-22):

#### **Agenses of Transformation**

**Movement.** – Mass movements of tourist flow require improvement, widening and building of a new traffic infrastructure between emission and reception countries, and inside of reception regions as well. Roads with all following static facilities (approach routes, signalization, pumps, parking places, motel, etc.), and the traffic, as an dynamic component, represent an important agenses of transforma-

tion and a component of physiognomy of transit spaces landscape. Already the highway building itself, which, beside asphalt gauges includes building of numerous following facilities, influences on a radical change of physical space. Beside of it, highways "spend" all wider zones of surrounding space for facilities that need them to be very near.

**Accommodation.** – Facilities for tourists' temporary abode, i.e. hotels and other accommodation facilities, by their appearance, number and dominant position in reception regions, represent the most important and most specific elements. They exert influence on formation of tourist physiognomy of space. They also occupy the most dominant and distinctive locations, which are, as a rule, central parts of settlements, coast lines or other attractive places. Taking this into consideration, the accommodation facilities significantly influence on formation of a visual identity of settlements and a shape of wider localities.

**Presence and tourists' activities.** – Already static and dynamic presence of tourists and their vehicles in reception region by itself represents a factor of temporary landscape transformation and a source of pollution. However, tourists during their stay, want to occupy themselves with numerous recreation, cultural and amusement activities. Some of these activities directly, and some indirectly influence on physical transformation of space. For instance, swimming requires putting beaches in order, while nautical environment means port and marine building. Beside of that it occupies a vast surface of water space and pollutes it, throwing the rubbish and fuel out.

#### **Modes of Use**

**Space that has meaning by itself, that presents the aim of visit because of its esthetic value and other inherent characteristics.** In fact, mostly, it is tourism based on enjoying in landscape (*landscape based tourism*). Tourist that comes to mountain wants to enjoy in beauty of the nature, and not to use it as a mean of doing sport and recreation activities.

**Space as a mean for something else, i.e. specified for doing certain tourist activities (activity based tourism).** In this case space doesn't have meaning by itself. It is not an aim of visit because of its inherent characteristics, but because it offers favorable opportunities for doing certain sports and recreation and other activities. Space appears as an instrumental value, as a bare "carrier" of activities. A typical example is the mountain skiing, where tourists don't come on account of the mountain itself as much as because it offers the ideal natural conditions for skiing – a coating of snow and steep slopes (additionally transformed

into ski paths). In practice, the above mentioned extreme relations towards the space and models of its use are uncommon, so mostly appears a certain level of mutual overlapping and combining.

### Effects of Transformation

Tourist arrangement that transforms a natural environment into geographical, depends on that nature itself and techniques of spatial organization disposed by certain society. The example of the most intensive transformation of physical space caused by tourism are the coasts of warm seas. They represent such natural spaces that are objects of rational continuous and concentrated arrangement, by the side of the reception society. There is the major concentration of tourists and equipment, and the physiognomy of space is completely consequence of tourism. All these mentioned agencies work on the coastal transformation. During some period of time they, through a cumulative effect, come to a gradual conversion of natural space to a geographical. Summing up the works of a great number of researchers, Barton (R. Barton, 1997:79-83) identifies following successive phases of development of coastal tourist regions:

**First phase.** A small number of tourists, no special facilities built, very small influence on physical environment

**Second phase.** Small proportional changes, small summer houses and camp built. Minor damages of a coastal vegetation.

**Third phase.** First luxurious hotels built, it comes to local settlements' destruction and agricultural ground expropriation for needs of tourist development. It also comes to a certain level of pollution and resource degradation, considering that local infrastructure, as waterworks and canalization, still are not improved in order to satisfy growing needs.

**Forth phase.** It comes to a rapid changes in land use. Different zones meant for accommodation, amusement and recreation of tourists, grow. Blocks for new workers are being built on the background.

Pollution problems are being temporarily reduced thanks to a local infrastructural improvement. Houses of domestic population (placed on attractive central locations), has been bought and adapted for tourist needs or totally destroyed in order to leave space for new, much bigger facilities.

**Fifth phase.** Number of tourists is bigger, place and beach are crowded, polluted and noisy. There has been built a great number of different types of accommodation facilities, spreading more and more into the profundity, to the background. There is a larger number of tourist attractions.

**Sixth phase.** Appear serious pollution problems. There are no new investments in infrastructural sector because of the tourist crowd which overcomes its capacity. Structural changes happen in accommodation, in the way that hotels are being converted into settlements with apartments specified for tourists who don't have much money, or other, more profitable facilities. General absence of new investments on account of facilities' maintenance and improvement leads to the circulation decrements and profit reduction.

### Conclusions

Taking all above mentioned into consideration, we can come to a conclusion that the relation of tourists towards space moves in a very vast extension. Starting from the individual psychological and symbolic forms, through the personal forms of material appropriation, to a social appropriation by means of arrangement and equipment of a vast spatial extensions for mass tourist needs. All these processes look accumulative. Therewith, the biggest influence on physical spatial transformation have exactly the arrangement and equipment for tourist needs, i.e its principal agencies: movement, stay and tourists' activities.

Geography is one of the oldest sciences about natural and social human environment. Modern geography, with its natural and social components, is more and better, scientifically and practically, a relation to other sciences, meant to dedicate to

tourism. (S. Stanković, 2000:5). It is based on the fact that the base of tourism makes people movements in space, which is a frame and object of geographical researches.

As a science of integrated power of knowledge and methods of other disciplines, tourist geography is, in the field or cabinet environment, in cartography or statistics, theory or practice, science or education, meant to study space and tourism in it. From general to particular, from the world to concrete country or region, tourist geographers can and have to study, more, and better, tourist movements. They start from forming the tourist needs, over direction and zones of tourist movements, to a reception tourist spaces, as places of culmination of tourist occurrences. Especially because the trends of tourist development in the world are stable, every time more and more countries and regions join with tourist initiative and reception, types of tourism, effects, appearances and processes caused by tourism are multiplying and getting more complicated.

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