THE TREASURE OF MACEDONIA THE ETHNO - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL – HISTORICAL TOURISTIC MOTIVES IN THE SHAR – POLOG REGION

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Abstract: Macedonia is a country rich in natural and cultural heritage, which makes it extremely interesting as a tourist destination. There is almost no place that is not marked by cultural characteristics and natural beauty. All this makes Macedonia a unique touristic place. In the abundance of cultural diversity, Sara-Polog region offers an amazing mix of ethno-social, cultural and historical motifs that are not sufficiently studied, but can very easily contribute to greater tourism development in Macedonia.

The main aim of this Paper is to identify and describe the cultural, historical and ethno-social values of Sara-Polog Region, as a precondition for tourism development not only in the region, but in Macedonia as well.

The research was done using the precise scientific methodology, especially: analysis and synthesis, and the genetic-evolutionary, the historical and the comparative method.

The research done led to the conclusion that this attractive multi-ethnic area is extremely rich with different ethno dresses, songs, art, traditional music instruments and dances, customs, religious buildings and houses, are enriching the touristic offer in Macedonia.

Key words: Traditional, Archeological, Macedonia.

Introduction

Luxury at the past, tourism has become a necessity today. As an integral part of modern living, tourism is a complex and specific socio-economic and spatial phenomenon that penetrates into all spheres of our life.

As a result of the conditions in which modern man works and lives today, people's need for rest and recreation has become one of the most important needs of modern times. That necessity can be met with vacation and leisure travels at attractive areas which represent the hearth of tourism.

The primary factors for tourism development on a certain area are not only the natural beauties, but an anthropogenic motives as well. Macedonia's richness

in anthropogenic elements that provide the basis for tourism development is well known all over the world. Particularly rich, and insufficiently explored, is Sara-Polog region. In terms of tourist offer, the characteristics and attributes that set apart Sara-Polog region from others, have been studied in a very few papers.

We are more than certain that there is a distinct scientific and a social need for further studying of this tourist region in order to make realistic tourist valorization of its anthropogenic elements. By exposing the anthropological peculiarities of this region, we want to present an unusually great potential of Sara – Polog region for more intensive economic development. Therefore in addition to its theoretical significance, this Paper acquires the dimension of practical benefit.

1. Ethno - social touristic motives in the Shar – Polog region

The ethno – social motives are magnificent group of anthropogenic motives, which are necessary for the development of the tourism. The Shar – Polog region can be characterized as an ethno social heterogenic, because in this area live different nationalities, which have made so different ethno motives in their existing. As far as the representation of the ethno collectivities is bigger, the number of the ethno – social elements is emphatic, and the difference is evident and that kind of treasure should be valorized and involve into the touristic offer.

In the Shar – Polog region live Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, Gipsy, Serbians and other. Thanks to this kind of structure and its number of influence, the rich ethno social complex is made, and the most magnificent place in the touristic offer is for the: traditional ethno dresses,

traditional dance and songs, traditional music and instruments, traditional customs, traditional art, houses and their interior and exterior.

The traditional ethno dresses in this region are specific with a huge folklore colorize. On one side, they are beautiful, colorful and specific, and on the other side is their difference. Their difference is a result of the different ethno collectivities that live in this area and the special area spaces in the region. The most significant areas of this type are Dolni and Gorni Polog, and Tetovo and Gostivar, as cities which traditional dresses have special characteristics.

The Macedonian ethno dresses are colorful and they are very interesting and magnificent for the development of the touristic valorization. Women ethno dresses are more beautiful than men.

Unfortunately, the ethno dresses are not in use anymore and you can see them rarely, which makes it necessary to start taking some measures for their existing and adequate presenting. Special places for the development of the tourism have the museums, which are good for presentation of the traditional ethno dresses. For now, the only ethno graphical sector in this region is the museum of Tetovo which has archeological and sector of NOB. You can find here the Macedonian women and men traditional ethno dresses, the Turkish men and women traditional dresses, the women traditional dresses from Celopek, Tenovo, Radiovce, Miletino and Blace, and the Albanian traditional ethno dresses. As a touristic attraction, the best thing would be to present the traditional dresses together with the rest of the things that are made by the traditional genius in the houses of the villages and the city's traditional architecture which will assure authentically ambient of a time that has pass but it's always interesting for the people and their knowledge.

A way of presentation of the traditional ethno dresses and the other segments of the folklore that is especially interesting is an attractive cultural – art

society. This is very original way of interpretation of the folklore, or with other words of the traditional dances and songs, traditional instruments and dresses. The organization of the festivals and the manifestation is the best way of presentation the touristic valorization of the ethno – social objects and appearances.

The traditional dances and songs are very important part of the folklore of one nation that is made in a long period of time, which are full of life and fantasy. In this region, because of the existing of different ethno collectivities, there are a lot of interesting and different dances and songs. In Macedonia, the most specific traditional dances are called lesnoto and teskoto, which are done in groups and can be found in every part of the country. Especially interesting is teskoto but it needs a lot of concentration to do it. All of the dances are followed by interesting and well made choreography, which should keep the traditional way, without any new style or putting into it some modern elements.

There are some songs and dances that only show the life in those times. From the number of songs, the most famous is Prepuknala Sar Planina, which can be called an anthem of Sar Planina.

All the songs and dances that were mentioned are followed by a **traditional music** which is performed with a number of **traditional instruments**. The oldest instruments from the region are called: zurli, goch and gajde, tambura and dalbuka, dajre, shupelka(duduk) and kaval.

The melody that comes from the instrument kaval is very interesting and it's called Egzij. It is the most eminent expression of the economy in the past for Sar Planina – the sheep farming.

The traditional customs are part of the way of living in the ethno – social parts in the Shar – Polog region and they are very interesting. They keep the attention of the tourists here because of their good organization, different manifestation and the folklore character. They also satisfy the cultural and touristic needs of the person which is an important touristic component.

In the Shar – Polog region, the celebrations that are made for a new born baby, or the weddings and some other manifestations, are very attractive and interesting motive that show the authentically folklore elements. They are different in different regions and ethnical collectivities.

But, just like the other ethno – social things, these manifestations are on the edge of disappearing, and that's why there is a big need to be shown and presented, and a good example for that is the Galik wedding. This manifestation, actually this Shar – Polog wedding is about 15-20 days long. Between all these weddings, there are some short intervals which are filled with different things from the touristic motives. Except the cultural, this would have an economical meaning also, and the most important will be the forgotten folklore.

The **traditional art** is also very magnificent touristic motive. The textile art, the braiding, the needlework, the wood carving and other, are also a part of the creativity of some people which are part of the ethno groups with some special characteristics.

The houses with their interior and exterior can make a good impression for the tourists. Most of the houses in the region are made by rocks, and their housetop is on four waters. In the part where the mountains are, the most of the houses are covered with rock, and in the valley they are different. The ground floor was used as a room for raise cows or keeping the tools for work and some other stuff.

The newest houses, which were built between the first and second world war, are made with tough material, with decorated facade, high windows and doors. These houses had huge rooms with colorful walls and stylish furniture, nice balconies and they were very different from the traditional type of houses.

Today, the suburb and town's neighborhoods, especially their old parts, are losing their authentically look. The only thing that is kept, thanks to the owners and their will, is the outside look, which is not

enough for the touristic needs, but also should be kept the interior and exterior. This is helped by the ethno values, the climate and the fresh air. The tourism, on the other hand would help for their revitalization.

2. Cultural – historical touristic motives in the Shar – Polog region

The cultural – historical motives are such a permanent proof of the existing of one nation and its cultures in different period of times. They all have different meaning and value for the development of the tourism. Although, the most important object is the one that is the oldest, which means that as old as it gets its value grows.

As a consequence of the geographical position, the natural conditions and the creativity of the people that used to live and create on this area, we can find a lot of material proofs that talk about the archeological places. The oldest proofs are found from the time of the neolith, because there aren't any proofs from the pal eolith. The oldest village for living from that time was found in Gradiste, near to Gradec, which is also in the Shar – Polog region.

From the **VI century**, there is a **monumental thumb** that was found in Tetovo's square, near to Balezova Cesma, under one of the houses. At the end of the XIX century, the owner of this house, accidentally, without intention, found the thumb, took the things from it, and sold them in Carigrad. His nephew, years later, **in 1932**, wanted to see if there is any hidden treasure in the thumb, so he opened it again, but he didn't find anything valuable. He just found the statue that is called **Tetovska menada** and it's one of the rarest archeological sculptures from the years around **520 – 530**, and it has a huge value that talks about the art in this area. This statue is actually a girl dancing with her hands up.

The menads are mythological creatures that were always with the Greek God Dionis, especially when he had some

parties for some fruit collecting or something like that. This is the time when also was found a sword which was called **docnomikenski mec**(sword). The sword, and the Tetovska menada, today can be seen in the Archeological museum of Skopje.

The things that were left from the Roman civilizations are also very magnificent for this region. The most magnificent place for living in that time was Lesok. These places for living continue to exist even in the middle century. Probably, the Slovenes came to live here in **VII century**, or to be more specific, they lived in Polog, near to Gradec. There are also some material proofs from that time and that people.

But, the biggest touristic value from this period belongs to the **churches and the monasteries**. According to Jovan Tifunovski, there is no village that does not have a church or a monastery, and according to his researches there are around 162 places that used to have churches, and 17 of them were monasteries. Today in Polog (Gostivar and Tetovo), there are 117 churches which are built on the same place where the old ones used to be, but with some renovations. The most magnificent **monastery complex** is the one in **Lesok**. In this complex, there are: the church **St. Atanasie and St. Bogorodica**, the old monastery rooms and the newest church together with the other objects and buildings of the monastery. The complex is in renovations so it would have higher touristic and historical value. This church exists from 1348, but around 1698, St. Atanasie was abandoned. Later, **in 1818, when Kiril Pejcinovik came from Sveta Gora**, he made this place a place for living again.

In the monastery complex Lesok, there is also the church St. Bogorodica, which is mentioned for the first time in the first half of the **XIV century**. In 1818, when Kiril Pejcinovik comes, this church becomes a monastery.

Very close to these churches, there are the monastery rooms that were built

from Kiril Pejcinovik – Tetoec (1171 – 1845). The first monastery building, where in 1839 stayed the biologic Grizabah, as he says, was very modest and there weren't any difference between it and the other country houses. It only had more rooms, and in one of them there was a cross and a chair and some sentences that were written on the wall in Greek and Slovenian language. He was a monarch but he also collected books so he opened the first monastery library, and he taught the youth. He left some book behind him, and the most magnificent are "Ogledalo" from 1816 and "Utesenie gresnim" from 1840. On the **4th of June, 1967**, in his honor, was opened **the Memorial museum** in the monastery complex of Lesok.

His thumb was renovated and it was opened a memory room which had pictures of him, his books and other things made from Kiril Pejcinovik. Also, there are three pictures of him which were made from his co-worker Aresenie from Tearce, the place where he was born.

In the museum, there is his epitaph that he wrote it ten years before his death. The epitaph has a huge meaning for the Macedonian history and literature.

Near Lesok, there are also some left buildings that remind of the churches St. Dimitrija and St. Nikola and that is actually the only thing that was left from them. The monastery rooms are open for tourists and they have great infrastructure. We can say that the monastery complex of Lesok has a huge meaning and beauty, and it can be magnificent motive for the development of the tourism in the Shar – Polog region.

There are rests from the middle century churches on other places of Polog too, especially in Vratnica. In Gostivar, there is the **Gostivar's monastery** which comes from **XIV century**.

In Tetovo, there is the monastery **St. Bogorodica**, from the **XII and XIV century**, where in 1914 is built the new church St. Bogorodica. In some written documents, the church St. Bogorodica, for the first time is mentioned in the period of 1217 to 1234, in the annals that were left

from the Ohrid's archbishop Dimitrij Homatijan, which was also very beautiful and worth to be known far away.

From the time of the Turkish domination, there are a lot of cultural – historical monuments in these expanses, and the most magnificent are concentrated in Tetovo or close to it. **Aladza or Sarena Dzamija (Multicolor mosque)** is one of the most magnificent cultural monumental in Tetovo. It is located at the right side of the river Pena and probably it's built in XV century. Some family from Tetovo, Palosi, has some information that the church was built form Hursude Anuma around 1566. This mosque, according to its architecture leaves an impression of a small mosque. This mosque was rebuilt or renovated from Abdurahman pasa, who made the art gallery, the rock cock, and the place that he wanted to be his thumb, but he wasn't buried there.

All these constructions together with the **old Tetovska carsija**, which should be renovated together with the **begovski kuki and konaci**, are the only urban union which needs only few material resources to become big touristic attraction.

The other monuments that have magnificent role as cultural – historical motives for the development of the tourism in this area are: **Arabati Baba Teke**, which is in Tetovo, and it was built around XVIII – XIX century; the **castle Kale**, which is at the top of Tetovo, or 806 meters above the city; the Saat Dzamija (Time mosque) and some others.

Conclusion

The Shar – Polog region, which is in the north-west part of Macedonia, has an exclusive difference of ethno – social and cultural - historical motives that are very important for the development of the tourism in the region. All the motives that were presented come from the past and they are very old but very important group of anthropogenic factors for the development of the tourism. Still, they are not used enough and in the future they need to be

involved into the tourism because they are very valuable. That would be a good way of developing the tourism in the Shar – Polog region. Also, the people will be more interested into visiting this part of the Republic of Macedonia.

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