



TOURISM – A HOBBY, A PROFESSION, A BUSINESS

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Abstract *Travelling, the wish to escape from the everyday life and environment, has always been a human interest in knowing, in answering inner needs for moving, for adventure, socialization, for commercial, cultural and educational exchange etc., since immemorial times. The author intends to present historical aspects with regard to the first steps to tourism, to the importance of the tourist phenomenon, its coming into being, by stressing the idea that this domain has initially generated a lot of passion, by practicing it, by its specific issues, by studying it as the field of a profession, and, not ultimately, by approaching it as a private business. An extraordinary rich domain, fascinating and dynamic, a call to creativity in which the need for relaxation, leisure, return to nature have been always mingled with a large economic diversity. The author is a member of the Romanian Association of Tourism Journalists, boasting many years of work in the field of tourism, both as a teacher in the high education structure and a PhD. candidate in a tourism branch.*

Key words:

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specialty

Introduction

Starting with its well-known origin, the word “tourism” comes from English, where “tour” referred to travels to Europe, mainly to France, in the 18-th century. The French word “tour” stays at the origin of the same English word, having become a very common word in most of the European countries; it initially meant leisure, and entertaining trip.

Contents

Many studies in the field (“Turism Internațional” – Niculescu, 2013) have staged tourism development- and implicitly the evolvement of its specific travels and events-, in five periods as it follows:

1. The Prehistoric stage, in which man had to move, to „travel”, looking for all his life necessities, such as food, a milder climate, a safer environment.

Once the first dawns of civilization, man started to undertake the first goods exchange, thus initiating a first primitive form of trade, a big step forward towards the evolution of a huge phenomenon, if perceived from present.

The coming into the world of the great empires in Africa, Asia and Middle East has generated the opening of the first surface and sea routes, of the first means of transport to ease the travels of the leaders, of envoys, carriers, animals, tax collectors etc.

The Egyptian dynasties determined the first business as well as leisure trips, which fact led to the opening of hospitality centres on the main routes to the most important cities.

The routes were mostly developed by the Persians, who initiated their marking, parallel to the appearance of the four wheel means of transport.

A major contribution to the development of travels belongs to the Greeks, who created the currency based exchanges, thus intensifying exchanges and communication, mainly in the Mediterranean Sea area, of most of the journeys. The travel reasons started to diversify, when the Greeks participated in sports events, olympic games organized every four years, religious festivals, visits to big cities, among which Athens mostly. The Romans also showed a great pleasure to travel, they used to frequently visit Greece, Egypt, and Asian towns where they liked to go shopping. It is of interest mentioning Pansanias’s work entitled „A Guide for Greece”, written in ten volumes in 170 A.D., in which he described monuments and works of art, myths and legends, a proof of the first attempts to make people’s art, culture, and events of that country known, as places of traveling interest.

The Asians also had a special contribution to the development of the tourism phenomenon, mainly through building summer resorts and temporary departures towards the Far East, in China and Japan.

2. The Middle Age started with a travel involution, travelling being seen as dangerous steps given various causes, such as wars, barbarian invasions etc, roads themselves being less available. The situation last up to the 14-th century. Many Christian pilgrimages were initiated during that time, becoming mass events strongly supported by church, as a result of

Christianism which had spread at a large scale; the pilgrims, a numerous population from different social classes, used to visit both Rome and Jerusalem, and stopped at the so called „charity hospices”.

At the end of the 13-th century, initiated by Marco Polo, the great travels at longer routes started, from Europe till Asia, actually a Far East world discovery, implying all the attractions of a different civilisation, a totally unknown one to the Europeans, with all its mysteries and achievements in the field of constructions – mainly routes-, of which the first one dates back to the Chou dynasty, in 1122-1121 B.C. There were also other travel writings issued, as a result of print. In 1357, Sir John Mandeville wrote „Travels”, a book translated in several languages, in which he described the visits to the South- East of Asia.

The 15-th century marked a significant change in the organization and development of travels, as each traveller had to pay for the means of transport, food, accommodation, trips etc. This kind of „package tour”, as one is familiar with today, was initiated during the travels to Venice. Many merchants offered their products on the routes, for travellers to buy food, drinks, fruits, souvenirs etc, a profitable commerce in which the law of supply and demand was in perfect agreement with the tourism development.

3. The Renaissance stage

The travelling wish has always been motivated by the new experiences in widening the knowledge horizon of the people, with the 14-th to 17-th centuries being important stages in the tourism evolution. The development of the diplomatic relations in both Europe and Asia generated study tours, mainly for the English diplomats, while the great Cambridge and Salamanca universities initiated „curricula” to answer the demand. During the reign of Queen Elisabeth I, they issued travelling licences with a validity of 2 to 3 years, but they restricted the amount of money, the number of servants (no more than three accepted) and horses. They opened travel lending accounts, checks, and issued the first passports for departures from the countries of residence and arrivals at another country.

The Grand Tour can be considered the first tourist instructive and cultural mass event in 1600 over 1800; a participants' guide was issued in 1778. The study travels were mostly aiming at arts, architecture and history.

4. The Industrial Revolution stage

The extremely important changes on both economic and social plan that the industrial revolution came with and developed during a hundred years, determined new needs and choices in the people's life. One of the consequences of the new equipment that

appeared was the growth of the middle class and of spare time, with all the mutations that were generated in both rural and urban economy. Mass tourism became to be more and more present with the goods producers, people looking for holidays and leisure time, as means of relaxation.

The workers' paid annual holidays was introduced at the end of the 19-th century, so that mass tourism market started growing, mostly towards seaside and mountains destinations, as well as towards treatment resorts and rest services. It was a general wish to evade from the crowded, noisy urban areas.

Tourism industry began to be income generator, supplying services addressed to the large mass of goods producers.

5. The Modern Tourism

The progress of science and technology, the development of the air transport, of the communication multiple means, the diversification of demand, of preferences, the higher income, the ever growing spare time budget etc, all these became factors contributing to the boom of the tourism industry in the whole world, to a real field competition, in spite of all the threats caused by the raise of criminality, terrorism, interethnic wars motivated by the geopolitical or religious grounds. At present, tourism is an important sector of global economy, of international trade which evolved parallel to the development of a new marketing, specific to this field and its services.

It is obvious that the travel wish has always been a generator to tourism market demand and supply, a wish determined by passion, by need of novelty and escape from the everyday environment, by the spirit of adventure.

The trips experiences, the memories of the places held in both pictures and films, souvenirs, friendships on the routes, regrets that nothing is everlasting, the coming back promises, everything generates a peculiar feeling which connects people to tourism, to what it means, gathers and creates. And there comes the passion, a special and real one, a link for a life.

The tourism experience motivated observation, understanding and analyses of this phenomenon, in all its complexity and variety at both national and international plan. Thus, they created tourism dependency, a strictly professional terminology, neologisms in terms of tourism industry and tourism programs, foreign languages learning – a sine qua non condition for tourism professionals-, facts-finding activities in the studied areas to check tourism on the spot and many other connected activities, scientific papers and tourism libraries with books in the domain, participations in scientific sessions on tourism, various other papers with regard to tourism, membershiping in tourism associations, teaching tourism at academic level,

an ever growing wish to raise professionalism, Ph.d. candidatures in the field, etc.

To be a professional in tourism is neither an easy, nor a short way, and it is not meant to people not linked to the domain, as its social and economic responsibilities are huge. Tourism services, as a specific and major supply component, are a real encyclopaedia of theory and practice, a perfect link between the aspects, the peculiarities and the high professional level of the dealers. Tourism supply success and the field career depend, in a major respect, on this junction.

The chance to a solid career in the field may lead to tourism business, its various forms meaning as many directions, branches, specialisms such as: holidays for relaxation at the seaside, in the mountains, in spas, tourism generated by different events –fairs, conventions, conferences, festivals, carnivals, sports competitions, shows etc- , shopping, studies, adventure etc, all these and many others meaning and giving immense opportunities to raising national as well as international tourism business.

Conclusions

Stepping to the competition market and keeping a prominent profile, tourism will depend on the high professional level, on creativity, on the permanent access to the target population, on the state policy and its regulations in force, on the price policy, and last but not least, on a climate of peace and security for the people, compulsory and main conditions to tourism.

From tourism passion to profession and then to business there is a way leading to satisfaction, to achieving the wish to help peers, by giving them a part of unforgettable experience, thus trying to be active in their life quality, and to contribute to maintaining the material and spiritual values of society.

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