

DIRECTED AUTHENTICITY IN TOURISM

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Abstract. *Historical monuments, as tourist resources in order to be authentic, must be kept unaltered with all their wealth, respecting the historical periods in which they were made. Although the phenomenon of authenticity has fascinated on scientists and philosophers, the issue of authenticity being the heart of research from the field of tourism, because this concept responds faithfully to the wishes of tourists, to meet their needs of knowledge, authorizes the escape from the daily life, making possible the contrast with everyday life, being a guarantee of the difference that each area to follow its own evolution. Due to the fact that authenticity in tourism is a socially defined concept, being a negotiable concept rather than absolute, tourism transforming culture into a tourism product, was replaced the real with the directed authenticity. Often what is considered authentic can be considered inappropriate for a specialist in the field, tourism from these reasons being suspected that will induce inactivity through its impact on local communities and the environment.*

Keywords: *authenticity, tourism, criteria of appreciation*

INTRODUCTION

The diversity of activities that give content to tourist activities as well as the presence of some of them in the structure of other economic branches, gives tourism the character of a branch of interference, the authenticity being recorded in relation to tourism, emphasis on preserving and conservation the natural and anthropic resources.

In the documents elaborated by the specialized bodies, the historical progress and the authenticity were defined from several perspectives, the cultural differences being considered the starting point in defining the notion of authenticity [4,5,7,8,9,13].

Recent research carried out by tourism specialists highlights the fact that the impact of tourism does not represent an object of research, the impact of tourism on non-altered cultural tourism but on the issue of tradition and the relationship between the impact of tourism and local cultural policies, the authenticity of both tourists and local communities being always changeable as tourists' expectations change and traditions can be reinvented [2,14,16]. Authenticity refers to information about a certain area, and in case of tourism to the following aspects: (Figure 1.)

- value-added travel;
- unprecedented experiences;
- discovering authentic places;
- discovery of traditional lifestyle;
- the desire to make the lived experience a way of life;
- identifying a population group;
- discovering vernacular architecture;
- discovering of some unknown traditions;

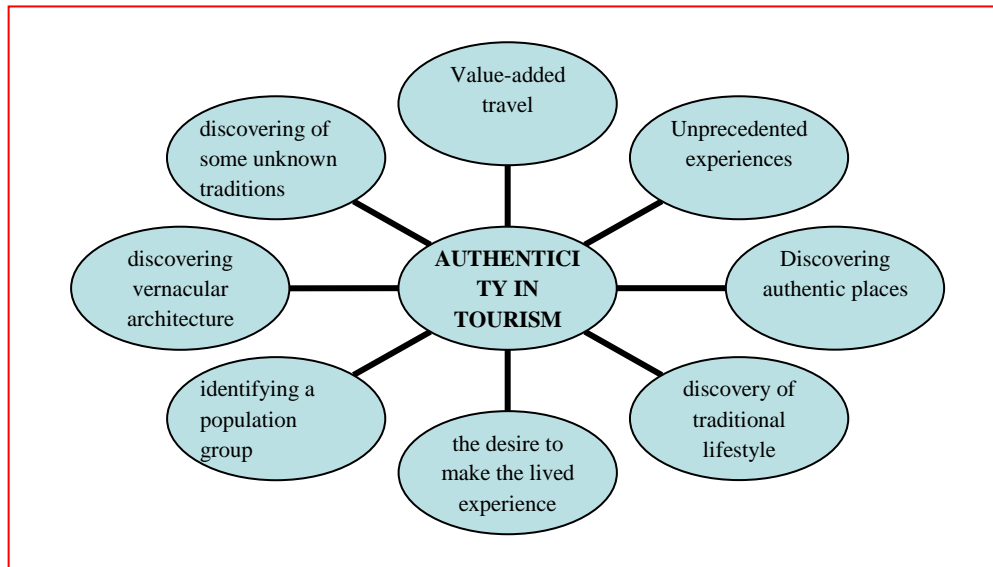


Figure 1. The authenticity in tourism

The authentic nature of a tourist destination is a special resource and for persons that developed tourism activities to benefit from it, it is sufficient in practice to highlight the culture and the history of the destination [6,10,11,12]:

- admiring the unspoilt nature of anthropogenic activities, daffodils meadows, lilac hill;
- consuming products obtained in a traditional ecological system, cheese, wine;
- trips and hiking in nature guided by locals, by wagon, by horse;
- contemplating bird and animal species in their natural areas, mountain roe, aurochs;
- attending at community celebrations, pray;
- learning traditional crafts, braided baskets;
- learning the production of some traditional products, pumpkin oil;
- making handicraft objects, wool sweaters, stockings;
- visiting some areas with endemic vegetation, corner flower, mountain peony.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Although it is difficult to make distinction between authenticity and in authenticity, in this scientific approach we will address the directed authenticity in tourism, because certain tourist products can be historically and scientifically evaluated to be purely authentic, involving a slight degree of subjectivity resulting that both authenticity and in authenticity are imaginative constructions, designed to meet the wishes and expectations of the consumers of tourism. The authenticity of a tourist product can be conditioned by its ability to prove its own authenticity, providing tourists with what they want to see, even if the product/service is invented or reinvented in order to raising interest in its purchase.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The concepts of authenticity still emphasize the fact that historical and cultural monuments must be preserved and presented to tourists with all their wealth and respecting the temporal layers, but was launched the idea of in authenticity, the problem being at the center of the research, because the consumers of products/services tourists want to satisfy their wishes. Due to the fact that authenticity is a socially defined concept and is rather a negotiable concept than an absolute concept, tourism turning culture-history into a product

replaces the real with the directed authenticity, in order to meet expectations, talking about a growing concern about the construction and social invention of some traditions and authenticity. For these reasons, invented authenticity can be seen:

- as a socially built concept;
- as a concept with criteria of appreciation of the degree of authenticity;
- as a concept perceived differently by each tourist according to his/her level of knowledge;
- as a susceptible change concept;
- as a directed, invented or reinvented concept according to what tourists want to see;

Many times what is considered to be authentic, valuable to a tourist with a certain degree of professional training can be considered in authentic for a specialist in the field, tourism from these reasons being therefore suspected to induce in authenticity through its impact on local communities and environment. Often a tourist product considered in authentic can be genuinely recognized in the case of emerging authenticity, at the basis of its authenticity being statements about its originality: content, consistency, provenance, and context. Strategies regarding the authenticity of tourist products involve a series of tactics that include:

- Focus on the originality of the informational entity, which presupposes criteria of identification, originality;
- Focusing on the intrinsic properties of the informational entity;
- Focusing on suitability degree for certain purposes.

Authenticity in the field of tourism industry can be addressed using 4 concepts:

- objectivism, which considers authenticity based on a static origin, being associated with historical cultural contexts; Tourism is considered that produce pseudo-inventions, consuming places and objects that are imitations of the original. For these reasons, is launched the concept of directed authenticity in tourism, for example on the stage there is a show while behind the scenes preparations take place between the two moments being a discrepancy, the preparations make the cultural experience in authentic and for it to be authentic, should be direct and not transformed into commodity. Some researchers from tourism field strongly criticize the transformation of mass tourism into a commodity and suggest rationalization of the pseudo-event industry.
- constructivism sees the authenticity as a social process, although tourists look for authenticity, that is often susceptible to subjective interpretations, because the ideas of tourists are based on the meanings promoted, being discrepancies between what they expects to see at destinations and what they see in reality;
- postmodernism, considered irrelevant the authenticity, the reality being represented by simulation;
- existentialism, considers authenticity in itself and not as historical cultural product/service.

We believe that in the case of directed authenticity in tourism field, as well as other researchers, we must take into account 3 categories of authenticity, but to insist on the authenticity of the host and the tourist [1,3,6,15]. The three categories of authenticity are:

- perceived by visitors/tourists;
- the one directed by tour operators;
- the real one of the host.

Hosts even they are not always succeed to be authentic, so we recommend that in order to not change the visitors' expectations to direct pseudo-inventions, even if they are looking to live authentic experiences. These aspects lead to the conclusion that tourists

want to have real experiences, and the directed authenticity should propose for authentic tourism a real authenticity:

- founded on the principles of the host community, sustainability and ethical consumption;
- which to create the feeling of a single expression;
- rooted in the past of the destination or community;
- to be natural and un makeup;
- not to offer tourists anything false, unrealistic;
- be easy to perceive and with immediate benefits;
- to be centered on tourist, because he wants to get in touch with something real and authentic, specific to the destination.

Specialists agree with the fact that each domain has its own authenticity:

- In business, authenticity is the feature of a document kept in its original form without any falsification or adaptation;
- In art, authenticity is something truly true and real in the case of works of art; it refers to the proven and accomplished ones by an author and corresponds to the stylistic period from that period;
- In the philosophy of art, authenticity describes the perception of art as loyal to the artist's self;
- In music, authenticity refers to the source, the creator's intentions and the evaluation of the results according to the intentions;
- In psychology, authenticity reveals an attempt to live the life according to the personal needs;
- In sociology, authenticity is identified with death;
- The historical reconstruction is the measure in which an object is close to what was used when it was described.

Regarding tourism, authenticity illustrates the perspective of the two poles of the tourist act, the supplier of tourist products and the consumer of products, distinguishing three categories of authenticity. (Figure 2):

- Perceived by tourists
- Directed by tour operators
- Real of the host populations.

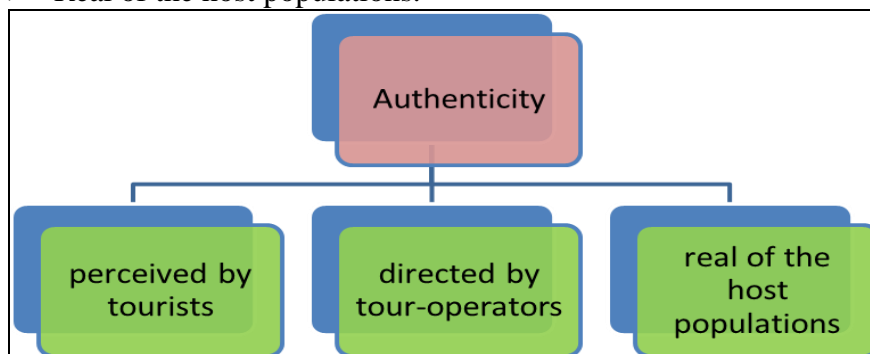


Figure 2. Types of authenticity from tourist point of view

CONCLUSIONS

Tourism has transformed culture into a tourism product, has replaced the real with the directed authenticity, so specialists from tourism field consider that it is necessary not to deal with the issue of the impact of unalterable culture, but rather on the issue of traditions and customs and of the link between the impact of tourism on some areas as tourist destinations and local cultural policies. The authenticity is a socially defined concept, being negotiable only in absolute terms, tourism turning culture into a product, replacing the reality with the directed authenticity in order to meet the expectations of visitors invented and reinvented, susceptible to change, depending on what people want to see.

Because the authenticity is an open window to culture in the case of directed authenticity it is necessary to keep in mind the authenticity of the host that can create pseudo-events in order to meet the expectations of tourists and their expectations wishing to experience new experiences triggered by landscapes, events, emotional ties with the local population, rediscovering of cultural traditions and customs.

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