



The Importance of Space for Tourism in Croatia

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Abstract

Tourism is primarily a social phenomenon in which different cultures connect. Great economic importance can be added to the phenomenon of tourism, especially for the development of the tourist economy, its dynamic development, growth, and complexity. With its development, tourism has become a necessity, a way of life, and a sign of class and interest. The subject of the paper is the place and the role of space in the tourism in Croatia. Examples are given for the city of Trogir and Dubrovnik according to the opinion of visitors to the “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation in Trogir and “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestation in Dubrovnik. The main goal is to point out the importance of space as a precondition for the development of tourism and its significance balance between tourism development and the need for long-term conservation space. The purpose of the paper is to provide a theoretical relationship between tourism and space, and then to investigate what this relationship is like on the example of the city of Trogir and Dubrovnik, using grades from the visitors’ opinion about the place and the role of the space. In order to examine the satisfaction of visitors with the event “Trogir cultural summer” in Trogir and “Dubrovnik summer games” in Dubrovnik, which would help define the importance of cultural and historical attractions and other elements of manifestations significant for overall tourist valorisation of the Trogir and Dubrovnik destination, based on a survey questionnaire primary data were collected. The results of the research, on average and cumulatively, indicate a high and average satisfaction of visitors with “Trogir cultural summer” as well as “Dubrovnik summer games” with aesthetic, ecological and cultural values. Reasons for the lower rating of the ecological value of the old core of Trogir is the proximity of the airport Resnik, which has negative implications for the environment in Trogir and for Dubrovnik is the fact that city itself is crowded with the tourists and cruisers. Croatia is a country in which tourism plays one of the most important roles and it has become very important source of income for its inhabitants, especially on the coast. The space and the environment are the inherent notions of tourism and, conversely, the concept of tourism is inconceivable without the

components of space and environment. Tourism helps to bring people closer together and to raise awareness of the value of the natural and cultural heritage, while promoting respect for different cultures. Physical planning has a specific role to play here, particularly regarding tourism planning in a long-term perspective.

Subject Areas

Tourism Economy

Keywords

Tourism, Planning, Space, Strategy, Sustainable

1. Introduction

Travel has always existed, but human desires and needs have never exceeded the limits of human desires and needs as they have now and by satisfying these needs, not only positive effects can be recognized but also negative ones. Each person has his own cultural identity, and the world recognizes him by those characteristics. The number of tourist arrivals is statistically recorded in all countries of the world, as well as the incomes that each country receives from the arrival of tourists (Grimshaw, 2000) [1]. Tourism's strong development encompassed a quarter of humanity in its movements. Its development was marked by various studies by sociologists, economists, geographers, ecologists, and marketing and urban planning experts.

The strategy of the spatial development of tourism is of great importance for both current and future generations and the growing need for tourist capacity resulted in the exploitation of space as a resource (Couclelis, 1999) [2]. Tourism itself, which is also known as the largest industry in the world, can greatly contribute to the socioeconomic development of certain areas, but without careful planning and spatial plans, it can be difficult to achieve its development plans.

The main research problem in this paper is to determine how the visitors of the "Trogir cultural summer" in Trogir and "Dubrovnik summer games" in Dubrovnik evaluated the place and its role space during the events. There is a special emphasis on aesthetic, ecological and cultural values of the space and the harmony of the manifestation with the ambiance of the old core of Trogir and Dubrovnik. In accordance with the described research problem, the following hypothesis was formed: H1: Visitor satisfaction is conditioned by overall quality space that is conditioned by aesthetic, ecological and cultural values of the area of the city core of Trogir and Dubrovnik.

It was the basis for setting up the aforementioned hypothesis observation of visitors and with some of the visitors an unstructured interview was conducted in the form of a conversation about experiences from the manifestations. The conducted conversations, that are interviews with visitors, were used to the re-

searchers' familiarization with the research issue in detail and in order to form research problem and do the quantitative research based on the set hypotheses.

2. Tourism and Spatial Planning

The existence and development of tourism are determined by space with all its potential and contents. Tourism in Croatia is developing quite quickly and uncontrollably, and there is an interaction between tourism and the local living environment, which often results in complications and negative outcomes, but also in the expressed desire to protect the environment and cultural heritage used for tourism (Pirjavec, 2008) [3]. It is necessary to transform the creation of local tourism plans into a single process of spatial planning of tourism-adequate areas. All attractive parts of the area can be considered tourist attractions. With the development of tourism, new offers for tourist consumers are created, and that can lead to making some primary features of the area, such as clean sea, mountains, and snow, insufficient and various other forms of tourism are developing, for example, congress, eco, adventure, nautical, religious, rural tourism, etc. Such mass development also carries with it great transport possibilities and increased tourism construction, and all of this affects the economic, social, economic, and spatial aspects (Bilen, 2008) [4].

The available tourist space represents the economic competitiveness of all developed countries, market diversity, and the promotion of national identity. Tourist countries want to present themselves on the international, as well as the domestic level, and maximally economically use the benefits of propaganda for the resident population. A preserved, available, and attractive space contributes to the creation of a positive image of the country. An attractive space is a source of business in-come for many private entrepreneurs, but also for the local population (Turner & Davenport, 2005) [5]. The touristic demand implies an unpolluted and ecologically preserved space suitable for recreation, cultural and entertainment needs, and various others. Determining the value of a tourist area raises competitiveness in the market, encourages investment in maintaining the authenticity of the environment, and raises awareness and pride for the preservation of cultural heritage and all the beauties of a particular country. But, of course, there is also a negative side related to inadequate care of managing public spaces, construction control, and management of ecological and sociocultural values (Bartoluci, 2013) [6].

In areas where the dependence on tourism is high, it is necessary to carry out sustainable economic development, which means developing to meet all the current needs, but without jeopardizing the possibility for future generations to meet their needs. Successful development refers to a long-term plan that does not drastically change the environment and does not threaten the development of other activities "the concept of sustainable development of tourism implies":

- A long-term development strategy that protects and preserves the environment, at the same time not forgetting the need for the economic prosperity of

current generations.

- A concept that advocates a balanced intergenerational level of well-being.
- A concept that should be universally acceptable, *i.e.*, which should be applicable in all countries of the world, regardless of the achieved level of economic development, or socio-cultural and/or political specificities.” (Kunst, 2012) [7].

To implement this idea of sustainable tourism, participants from all sectors are needed and, in this way, the unification of social, political, economic, and cultural plans and goals is achieved. For the protection and arrangement of parts of the space, a better understanding of the needs is necessary, as well as the calming of tensions between the local administration, private individuals, the resident population, and entrepreneurs. For its development, tourism has always been looking for a quality space that contains certain social resources, namely attractions and attractiveness that act as a motivation for the arrival of visitors. In the article “Tourism and space, tourist qualification of attractions” describes the classification of potential and real tourist attractions that are in the function of planning sustainable development of tourism and protection of space and environment, as well as trends in tourism in Croatia since the 80s of the last centuries (Kušen, 2002) [8]. For tourist resources, it is important that they arouse curiosity, have historical and aesthetic value, have the possibility of engaging in various activities, and that their use has the purpose of the ecological protection of the area.

The regional spatial plan of the South Adriatic was a joint project of the United Nations (Development Program) and the government of the SFRY, which was a project for methodological studies of the development of tourism in the world. Since then, Croatia has been building its image as a destination on the sea, beaches, bathing places, and beautiful coasts, and has not paid enough attention to tradition, cultural and historical heritage that differentiates us on the market and which can still influence the more original development of Croatia as a destination (Vidučić, 2007) [9]. By the end of the 80s of the 20th centuries, all municipalities in Croatia prepared their municipal spatial plans, and cities developed urban planning, including tourism development and protection of coastal areas (Vlahović, 2003) [10]. Today, the physical removal of mass tourism buildings has begun, and some new spatial construction is being launched, which, unlike mass tourism, does not have only some primary needs in mind, but understands the diversity of demand (Kušen, 2002) [8]. Tourism resources change their attractiveness and value over time. For example, cultural objects attracted only a small part of the more educated and sophisticated tourists, and today they are indispensable parts of the tourist offer. Tourist planning of the area is based on various features and activities. Humanity can intervene and make space even more beautiful and with proper management, he can raise the level of its quality at the local, regional, and international levels, but he can also permanently damage it by crossing the limits of improvement. In every single case of development and tourism planning of the space, there should be a natu-

ral interconnection between the built and the original, so that there would be no harmful consequences for future development.

For spatial planning to develop in the right direction, it is necessary to consider all the components of a specific destination, which are, briefly, for example:

- physical and ecological capacity of space.
- infrastructure, *i.e.*, traffic connections, electricity, water, drainage, etc.
- socio-cultural elements such as traditions, routines, relationships, and education of the local population.
- reception capacity (Bilen & Bučak, 2004 [11]).

2.1. Economic Development of the Area

Space is a significant primary element of the tourist offer that dictates the price and quality of services of the secondary element, *i.e.*, trade and hospitality, and the primary offer is valorized through the secondary, which means that the secondary offer turns the primary into an economic good.

With the development of tourism, the economic effects of tourism are mostly observed. To determine them, it should be assumed that the country dealing with tourism has the physical capacity of space, developed activities such as catering, tourist boards, tourist agencies, local and regional boards, traffic, shops, tourist market, and strategic development plans (Jovičić & Ivanović, 2006) [12]. The population of a certain region allocates a part of its income for tourism purposes and thus national income is realized, *i.e.*, in simpler terms, tourism consumption is realized. Tourist consumption and the realization of profits are closely related, which means that tourists while using space, accommodation, various services, transportation, and events are spending their private income for their tourist needs, which affects the development of activities that provide services for these needs (Elangovan, 2006) [13]. Tourism affects our social income, either through domestic or foreign tourism, which contributes to the increase of social product. This means that the available funds that foreigners spend and create outside our territory through tourism flow into our economy. Some countries transfer part of their social product and national income to other countries based on tourist consumption.

In addition, tourism is extremely important for stimulating the development of underdeveloped areas. Through the distribution of income, funds from developed areas are transferred to undeveloped areas, and then the area uses the new investments to develop. Space is precisely the prerequisite and the best characteristic of undeveloped areas due to the beautiful and untouched nature. Natural resources are part of the overall development of a certain region or country, and the wealth of resources itself is a great advantage in economic development. The entire tourist offer is derived from the characteristics of the tourist value of the resources and the space, thus creating a harmonious relationship between the demand market and the secondary tourist offer. Also, through tourism, countries solve the problem of unemployed and able-bodied people (Kunst,

2012) [7].

2.2. Negative Consequences of Tourist Development on the Area

In modern tourism, there are many negative consequences, especially in situations of uncontrolled urbanization. In the area of the city of Trogir, there is a lost possibility of expansion, and that area is reduced to only a few kilometers due to the airport, military and industrial zones, garbage dumps, and the Adriatic tourist road. City of Trogir is a touristic destination located in the middle part of Dalmatia region. The impact of tourism on the urban area is also visible in the transformation of the use of existing buildings. This refers to the apartment building of existing private residential buildings and the conversion of buildings in the old city center. Both phenomena gained momentum after Domovinski war, when a new wave of mass tourism begins in the city area. Namely, the apartment building in the Trogir settlement, more precisely in its mainland part, is visible in the functional sense change of use of already existing housing units. The best example of this is the courtyards of private houses that have been affected by the apartmentization process.

Before that process, they mostly served for growing vegetables and fruits and domestic animals. Today's vision and purpose of the yard is quite different. Such courtyards replaced courtyards with swimming pools, landscaped lawns and others with content that enables the tourist to have fun and creates a sense of comfort. On the other hand, apartment building on the island part of the Trogir settlement, but also in the settlements of Arbanija and Mastrinka, is visible in the construction of a large number of new housing units for tourist purposes. A change in rural architecture due to construction related to tourism was also recorded. With the development of hospitality, sacred and profane architecture is put into the background by stalls and coffee terraces (Geić, 2002) [14].

For a foreign example, we can take Gran Canaria as an unsuccessful valorization of space. Due to the impossibility of spatial expansion, visitors while spending their time in Gran Canaria are squeezed together. This is due to an insufficiently efficient and inappropriate spatial planning system. City of Dubrovnik has a preserved nature, environment, rich cultural heritage both autochthonous and global recognizable identity. In order to preserve the attractiveness of the destination, but also the interest of local communities, it is necessary to develop tourism focused on the preservation of space and retention origin of the destination. Modern tourism in Dubrovnik has characteristics of mass, which negatively affects not only the life of the local population, but also the demand, which ultimately may lose interest in the destination. In creating the development of sustainable tourism in Dubrovnik, spatial planning plays a very important role. For the same reasons, there is a possibility of dissatisfaction among the local population, for example, citizens of the city of Dubrovnik who, through various initiatives and petitions, won a referendum that demonstrates their non-acceptance of the urban planning proposal for the development of a sports and recreation cen-

ter with a golf course and the Bosanka-north and Bosanka-south tourist areas. The city of Dubrovnik ceded its space to a foreign investor, which led to the justified concern of the residents of Dubrovnik for potential negative ecological consequences, the impossibility of further spatial expansion, and the construction of a hotel that would permanently damage the natural beauty of Srđ (Matus, 2015) [15]. The local population experiences a strong identification with the area where they live, which attracts tourists who also bring part of their cultural identity.

The pressure that Dubrovnik faces leads to thinking about how to end the pollution and overcrowding of tourists in the destination. The proposal that should be accepted is maximally protect cultural heritage by introducing various measures that would be acceptable for local population and tourists, such as measures to regulate and limit the number of tourists in a certain area space. The goal is to manage the growing tourism in Dubrovnik with a responsible and sustainable approach. Therefore, sustainable development of tourism, sustainable use of resources and sustainable development of people are needed. For such a thing, it is necessary to introduce certain measures such as capacity building for private-public partnerships, encouraging mutual communication, coordination and cooperation among stakeholders. It is necessary to develop innovative solutions through optimization, distribution and diversification.

3. The influence of Trogir and Dubrovnik Core on the Overall Experience of the Visitors of “Trogir Cultural Summer” and “Dubrovnik Summer Games” Manifestations

The questionnaire consists of 4 closed type questions in which the respondents are required to do the ranking according to the Likert scale (I am very satisfied—4, satisfied—3, I am not completely satisfied—2, I am not satisfied—1). To each answer that requires ranking a corresponding grade is assigned from which interval scale is obtained in order to do evaluation of the attitudes of visitors during their visits to “Trogir cultural summer” and “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestations.

The research was conducted during the manifestation “Trogir cultural summer” in Trogir in 2023 and during the manifestation “Dubrovnik summer games” in Dubrovnik where in total 642 e-mail addresses of interested visitors were collected to complete the survey. Primary data were collected for the period from 01.06.2023 to 15.07.2023, and the answer were received from a total of 248 visitors of “Trogir cultural summer” and 201 visitors of “Dubrovnik summer games”. The survey questions asked the guests to rank the aesthetic, ecological and cultural ambient core of the destination Trogir and Dubrovnik with ratings of 1 (I am not satisfied) to 4 (I am very satisfied). The data collection process was carried out by the authors of the research. The data is not earlier officially used, and the data used in this paper represent a segment collected primary data relevant to defining the place and role space according to the views of visitors to the

“Trogir cultural summer” in Trogir and “Dubrovnik summer games” in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

3.1. Research Sample

The criteria for selecting the sample were that the respondents visited “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation in Trogir and “Dubrovnik summer games” in 2023. 642 contacts (email address) were collected, of which 449 answered the survey. The goal was to form a stratified sample that will consist of an equal number of domestic and foreign visitors, and care was also taken that they were in visitors of different ages are approximately equally represented in the sample. Specifically, 249 domiciled and 220 foreign participants participated in the research of the respondents.

3.2. Research Results

Table 1 shows the assessment of the ecological value of the Trogir core by visitors of “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation.

Table 1. Ecological value of the Trogir core by visitors of “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation.

Ecological Value	Frequency (f)	Total grade f(x)
Very Satisfied (4)	102	408
Satisfied (3)	69	207
Not completely satisfied (2)	44	88
Not satisfied (1)	33	33
TOTAL	248	736
AVERAGE SCORE $f(x)/f$		2.97

On the basis of the evaluation of the ecological value, it can be confirmed that the average rating is 2.97 out of 4.

Table 2 shows the assessment of the cultural value of the Trogir core by visitors of “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation.

Table 2. Cultural value of the Trogir core by visitors of “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation.

Cultural Value	Frequency (f)	Total grade f(x)
Very Satisfied (4)	210	840
Satisfied (3)	33	99
Not completely satisfied (2)	5	10
Not satisfied (1)	0	0
TOTAL	248	949
AVERAGE SCORE $f(x)/f$		3.83

Based on the average visitor rating of 3.83 out of a total of 4, it can be confirmed that visitors are satisfied with the cultural value of the core of the city of Trogir.

Table 3 shows the assessment of the aesthetic value of the Trogir core by visitors of “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation.

Table 3. Aesthetic value of the Trogir core by visitors of “Trogir cultural summer” manifestation.

Aesthetic Value	Frequency (f)	Total grade f(x)
Very Satisfied (4)	201	804
Satisfied (3)	34	102
Not completely satisfied (2)	13	26
Not satisfied (1)	0	0
TOTAL	248	932
AVERAGE SCORE $f(x)/f$		3.76

Average grade for the aesthetic value of the Trogir core is 3.76 out of a possible 4.

Table 4 shows the assessment of the ecological value of the Dubrovnik core by visitors of “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestation.

Table 4. Ecological value of the Dubrovnik core by visitors of “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestation.

Ecological Value	Frequency (f)	Total grade f(x)
Very Satisfied (4)	103	412
Satisfied (3)	41	123
Not completely satisfied (2)	36	108
Not satisfied (1)	21	21
TOTAL	201	664
AVERAGE SCORE $f(x)/f$		3.30

On the basis of the evaluation of the ecological value, it can be confirmed that it is average guests’ satisfaction with the ecological value of the core of Dubrovnik. Average rating is 3.30 out of 4.

Table 5 shows the assessment of the ecological value of the Dubrovnik core by visitors of “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestation.

Table 5. Ecological value of the Dubrovnik core by visitors of “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestation.

Cultural Value	Frequency (f)	Total grade f(x)
Very Satisfied (4)	144	576
Satisfied (3)	53	159

Continued

Not completely satisfied (2)	4	8
Not satisfied (1)	0	0
TOTAL	201	743
AVERAGE SCORE $f(x)/f$		3.70

Based on the average visitor rating of 3.70 out of a total of 4, it can be confirmed that visitors are satisfied with the cultural value of the core of the city of Dubrovnik.

Table 6 shows the assessment of the aesthetic value of the Dubrovnik core by visitors of “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestation.

Table 6. Ecological value of the Dubrovnik core by visitors of “Dubrovnik summer games” manifestation.

Aesthetic Value	Frequency (f)	Total grade f(x)
Very Satisfied (4)	144	576
Satisfied (3)	53	159
Not completely satisfied (2)	4	8
Not satisfied (1)	0	0
TOTAL	201	743
AVERAGE SCORE $f(x)/f$		3.70

Average grade for the aesthetic value of the Dubrovnik core is 3.68 out of a possible 4, which is very similar to the aesthetic value of the Trogir core.

4. Conclusions

Tourism is a phenomenon that has brought world fame to Croatia, a small developing country, especially thanks to gastronomic delicacies, the kindness of employees in the tourism sector, and good transport connections. Tourism is strongly developing, and its needs should be followed, but at the same time, it should also preserve its original authentic products, stories, and events. Despite all its natural beauty, tourism in Croatia needs something more, which would be additional education of workers, the inclusion of residents in the decisions of tourist boards and their independent creation of events related to a certain destination, proper leadership, and a desire for progress.

Tourism in Croatia needs a plan for spatial maintenance, greater care for the environment, a greater focus on preserving and presenting our traditional and authentic constructions to foreign visitors, and greater environmental awareness and pride in one’s identity is needed. Space is of great importance for tourism, it is a resource whose beauty visitors cannot resist, but also a resource that makes a certain destination different, special, and competitive.

Highly rated elements in this paper indicate that the space as the resource can play an extremely important role in the creation of manifestations and events which are part of the touristic offer in destinations such as Trogir and Dubrovnik. At the same time, it is particularly important to respect the ambient values of the space and contributions to the theme of the event. The examples of the “Trogir cultural summer” in Trogir and “Dubrovnik summer games” in Dubrovnik point to significant role of space in the organization of tourist events. Because of its natural, aesthetic and cultural values, the old core of the city of Trogir and Dubrovnik represent optimal setting for events that are sustainable.

Every person can reduce the negative impact of mass tourism through their actions and sustainability of the destination, and all tourism stakeholders must ensure that a phenomenon like tourism does not exploits in a negative context rather than being a leader in the protection and preservation of the entire nature. Regardless of the successful results of tourist traffic, both, city of Trogir and city of Dubrovnik need make people aware of the fact that the development of tourism is not based on the principles of sustainable development and from fundamentally change the course of action because if tourism is based on two months of the year it is not sustainable in the long term. If the local administration wants long-term sustainable tourism, they need to make difficult decisions that should primarily relate to spatial plans, the basis of sustainable development for every tourist destination.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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