

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTING AND PRESERVING TRADITIONS IN THE AREA OF CÂMPIA IERULUI

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Abstract

The preservation of cultural heritage in rural area is essential to affirm our identity as a nation because it creates a comprehensive framework for the preservation of cultural heritage including cultural sites, old buildings, monuments, and landmarks that have cultural significance and historical value.

Culture and its heritage reflect and shape values, beliefs, and aspirations, thereby defining a nation's identity. It is important to preserve our cultural heritage, because it keeps our integrity as a people

Key words: rural area, traditions, preservation, cultural heritage, Câmpia Ierului

INTRODUCTION

Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) are sites that have been officially adopted by the European Commission and are therefore subject to the protection provisions (10). Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are SCIs that have been designated by the Member States through a legal act and for which the necessary conservation measures are applied to ensure the conservation of the species and habitat types of EU importance present. (1)

Câmpia Ierului (Figure1) is a site of community importance designated for the purpose of protecting biodiversity and maintaining a favorable condition of conservation of wildlife and nature.



Fig. 1. Geographical location Câmpia Ierului (17)

The surface of the site has 21.283 hectares, and it is located in the north-western part of the country. The administrative regions are Bihor County 64% and Satu Mare County 36%. (11)

Located in the northern sector of Câmpiei de Vest, the valley of the river Ier crosses a distance of about 85 km, with a width of between 5 and 15 km. The Valley of the Ier has the appearance of a lower corridor between the high plain of Marghita (180 – 220 m) east, and Câmpia Careiului (140 – 160 m) west.

Câmpia Ierului was formed in the place of an ancient tectonic trench which until the early Holocene was the drainage line of the entire system of the upper section of Tisa river.

Following the hydro-improvement works carried out between 1968 and 1980, the appearance of the region changed radically. Extensive agricultural lands have appeared in place of the former swamps and ponds. As a result of anthropogenic activities, the composition of the flora and fauna has also changed a lot, not only due to desiccation but also deforestation, chemical decontamination, and so forth. (Figure 2.)

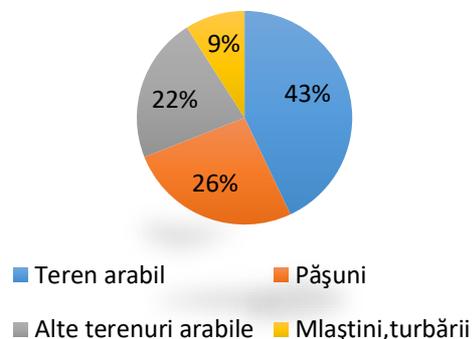


Fig. 2. Structure Site

Valea Ierului includes part of the remains of the vast wetlands in this area of the country. It is characterized by a variety of semi-natural habitats, hayfields, pastures, bushes, extensive arable land, deciduous forests, reservoirs, ponds and swamps. (12)

Currently, the old habitats characteristic of Valea Ierului with specific flora and fauna can be found only limited at some places, such as: Lacul Vărgat resort from Săcuieni, Dindești swamp (Andrid polder), Hotoan salt marshes, Sălacea-Galoșpetru swamps - Tarcea, Pheasant Lake and the Anines from Diosig, the swamp frog resort (*Rana arvalis*) from Andrid, etc.

A characteristic of the flora is the fragmentation of the area of many species, the spread of most is now limited. Thus, plants that once were common, now appear in small resorts and in a small number of specimens.

The ancient swampy character is reflected by the presence of reeds, poppies, and tall sedges. The pastures populates the low, moist and temporarily flooded lands. (20)

The most representative species are the field grass, foxtail and fescue. The most representative wood species are willow groves, meadow oaks, meadows in the marginal hilly area, bushes, respectively plantations.

The fauna in the silvo-steppe is represented by rodents: field mice, partridges, woodpeckers, rabbits; birds: partridge and quail, pheasants, woodpeckers, cuckoos, blackbirds, falcons; and other mammals: deer, wild boar, rabbits, foxes.

In the water of the rivers we find: common nase, barbel, crucian carp, carp, wels catfish and clean (*Squalius cephalus*). In the water of the lakes: carp, bream, pike, slippers, perch. (21)

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The promotion of traditions and customs in addition to the conservation of habitats and species of the natural environment is also important in the special areas of conservation of the country, such as Câmpia Ierului (4).

Cultural heritage includes tangible culture, such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art (5). It also includes intangible culture traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts intangible culture such as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge, and natural heritage including culturally significant landscapes, and biodiversity. (2)

Preserving the cultural heritage in rural areas is essential for maintaining our identity as a nation.(13)

In the Câmpia Ierului area, traditions and customs usually mark significant moments of agricultural activities, which may coincide with different religious holidays.

These traditions and customs are known by all the component localities and neighboring localities of the area, and most of them are still practicing, both by the youth and elders.

For example, a remarkable tradition is one from the beginning of the summer, 1 May, The Day of Work, also known as "Armindeni", and it is held to celebrate the successful harvest.

On the night of April 30 to May 1, at night young men secretly decorated the gates and the fences of the houses with lilac branches, where in the household existed young ladies to marry, and sometimes they even took the door from the entrance to the yard and hid it at the nearest neighbor.

Another popular tradition was the vine harvest ball, when the people of the village gathered in the cultural hall, and celebrated the rich harvest by dancing, and by decorating the hall with bunches of grapes hanging from the ceiling. The boys cut them for a symbolic amount of money or for a kiss on the cheek (9).

The celebration of the wheat harvest is organized every year on the occasion of the celebration of the village's anniversary. A beautiful moment of the ceremony is, when the young girls dress in traditional costumes and offer the inhabitants of their baskets sweet bread and cones, which were baked with fresh-milled flour. At the same time the boys are serving palinka and wine and they encourage people to join the festivity. This event is

followed by a worship at the local church, where the locals are praying for God's to bless the harvest and to thank the richness of the soil. The first bread baked of the fresh-milled flour will be placed on the altar to express the gratitude (8).

Probably the most awaited holiday was and still is Christmas. On Christmas Eve, after the worship at the church, children of the village gathered and went to sing religious songs through the village. They stopped at houses where they could still see light from the window and there they presented a small show about the birth of Jesus in costumes with some accessories and with singing.

From the point of view of the gastronomic tradition of Câmpia Ierului, the following festivities take place:

- Autumn, after wine harvest ball, the new wine is also celebrated with a worship at the church.
- In the Garden of Zichy Castle in Diosig, a contest for wine-growers is held every year. They organize this wine tasting contest every year, where the most famous wine cellars present their wines of the noble variety.(18)
- There is another well-known village about wine activities, Sălacea. The village is known as the "Village of the 1000 cellars". Whether they are brick or cut directly into the lustrous earth of the hill, the 970 cellars form the "cellar street". The oldest of them dates back to 1803. The cellars shall have a minimum length of 30 meters. The good wines obtained from the grapes produced by the winegrowers of Valea Ierului are stored here clear, aromatic and cold (especially summer). Local winegrowers are presenting their wines annually at the contest mentioned earlier, Wine tasting in Diosig. (19)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The development of Valea Ierului from the point of view of rural tourism must also take into account oenological tourism, as a niche tourism, on the route of the ancient "Wine Road" on Valea Ierului. The "Wine Road" began in Oradea, climbing north to Valea lui Mihai (68 km), from there, through the Ottomans, to Marghita (35 km) and then, along Barcău, back to Oradea (58 km). The attraction of the circuit can be multiplied and diversified by organizing folklore events and folk art exhibitions, followed by tasting local traditional products in a rustic setting (7).

Another type of tourism would be the ecological one considering the location in the Valea Ierului site. The elements of flora and fauna conserved within the botanical, forest reserves and wetlands characteristic of Valea

Ierului, support any local initiative to attract tourists, allowing the organization of hikes, excursions in nature and the practice of tourism focused on conservation of genofond, ecofund and rare or unique landscape. For an optimal capitalization of the biogeographic potential held by this territory, it is necessary to establish certain circuits / thematic routes. Attractions may be present to tourists, but it is necessary to create the image, marketing activities, making leaflets and informative guides, along with raising awareness environmental protection and environmental education. (1)

The tourist valences of the region, suitable for mixed type agrotourism are supported by the preservation of a geocultural background rich in traditions, customs, crafts and specific holidays, as a result of the long coexistence on the same territory of a human group composed of three ethnic groups (Romanians, Hungarians, Swabians).), each of them, still keeping alive the elements of territorial belonging to the mental space with which they identify. Mixed agrotourism involves the tourist to attend or be actively involved in a series of activities in traditional rural households: picking grapes and apples, mowing and gathering hay, weaving baskets from twigs, preparing local dishes, making souvenirs, making brandy , grape peeling, traditional weaving and sewing, egg decorating, etc (6).

CONCLUSIONS

In the Vail Ierului area, there is a minimum number of accommodation opportunities. Practically in this part of the county, rural tourism is underdeveloped despite the resources (vineyard culture, cellars, culture and tradition that connects the area with the eastern part of Hungary).(3)

New tourist destinations must be developed in Valea Ierului where there are the necessary resources, where the culture of vineyards and agricultural activities and products are underutilized resources for Gastronomic tourism and religious tourism / pilgrimages through effective destination management policies (14)

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