Culture and Identity. Tourism as Means of Their Recognition

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Abstract: The identity as its given bivalency by the simultaneous search of its uniqueness and its integrations is viewed in the up todate modernity (postmodernism) as a pressure created by both vast projects, not only economical or political but also of identification resulted as a consequence of globalisation. The process of European construction is only one example with multiple intercorelated targets (the economical ones are more carefully studied and vastly debated because of the global crissis underfelt by everyone). Among these the identity purpose has already brought about real controversies regarding the ballance between national identities and the European projected identity. The speed of the development of the identitary projects viewing identity is different to that belonging to the economical domain due to the containing elements of the pre/existent identities of these projects: the language as means of communication, the conciousness of belonging to a certain historical teritory considered as „fatherland”, traditions, myths, collective memories, historical personalities considered models (some of them values to contemporaries), sets of behaviours and ideas as parts of own culture, ethnics and religion. The free travel of people has amplified the number of the tourists who preferred ”abroadness”, looking for better jobs, diversity as well as the fulfillment of cognitive aims: the contact with the different, with „the others”, initially viewed as being different, otherwise. The result of the tourism, of the journeys abroad is not an identity struggle: it is mainly a reciprocal understanding of the cultures, a modality of diminuation and even eradication of stereotypes and prejudicies, a more rational understanding not only of the others but also of its own culture, its own identity, through the unavoidable comparision based on new source of integration and peaceful living.

Key-Words: identity, culture, tourism, knowledge, integration, identitary project.

1 Introduction
The begining of the holidays period or of some religious holidays brings about a rising up of the selling of tourist- guides, books with short, interesting stories easy to be understood about people and places, about traditions and behaviours, about personalities, generally about the culture of a certain community which leads to an invitation towards a better knowledge of that what the guide only shortly presents and indicates the addresses and illustrates with the photos.

A tourist, volens-nolens is interested in differentiating and asamnness of a cultural point of view between the community it belongs to and the local and temporary place where one spends a little of his free time. In this case the proper aim could be adventure or relaxation in a touristic resort. This hypothesis is sustained by the identity theories more frequente nowadays because of the European integration process. The aim of these theories is not only economical but also(at least theoretical) a large identitary project: the developing European identity subordinated to a national one and also complementary to this. It is a result of applying the principle „Unity in diversity”.

A well known point of view is that which pledes for the complementarity principle and for interior ”emic” study and outer ethical study [1]. Experience proves that in the middle of a group (of a culture/subculture, of a collective psychology), frames of reception and appreciation function. They pass, generally speaking from the self without being conscious about this aspect. The confrontation with the others, with distraction, the perception and its real consciousness of the difference face to face to the others, is proved to the others. The contact with the foreigner, with the other viewed as being different, at least at the initial phase of the relation, facilitates the understanding the significance of some pheomena. The difference offer the revelation
of the own identity but also of the differences magnifying self-consciousness. If I add the fact that it has been proved that the culture should be studied in the terms of its own senses and values. These are a key supposition of Sociology [2]. The reasons of trying to establish a relationship between tourism and culture helped by identity theories, they are underlined by their multiple dimensions.

2 Identity. The importance of the differences and similarities in tourism

The concept of identity is a specific one to the border zone, between Psychology and Sociology even if not all the social-psychology/psychosociology thesis include a distinct chapter about the regarded notion. The discourse on identity once to clarify the general problem of the people’s integration in a social space (the recognition of a belonging) and at the same time the problem of these people trying to differentiate themselves, to being unique in a certain space.

The identity is strong anchored in the relationship between the self and the community, between persons and the group they belong to (professional, ethnic, religious, national). The double plan of viewing and the content of the identity (individual and collective) can be described through the processes of identisation and identification [3].

The complementary of these processes, the fact that the self is looking for through identisation to individualize (to get uniqueness, distinction towards the others) but at the same time to integrate himself through identification to the group of belonging to be recognized as a member of this group. These are the main aspects which describe the two processes. A similar point of view, the identity viewed as singularity versus integration is presented by the identification and individuation concepts[4].

In this case the identification is the result of the actions of the institutions and of the social groups which include the persons in a double-value category (evaluative and cognitive), through labeling the ethnic nature, the professional, religious, regional and national one. Using denominings, the identity is established exactly due to the language capacity of permitting the persons and the groups to call themselves and to recognized or not (they could be cases of acceptance, refusal or negotiation) in used denominings by the others.

In the case of the own denominings and those of the others are different (but also in this agreement as significance in meaning by the group). There are to be accepted reactions of restoration, clarification of the used denominings with reference to the self. The second notion individuation refers to the way in which several identifications actively and selectively are gathered and recognized.

All together the using of the two notions leads to the understanding of the identity as a trial to build up both a distorting or discontinuity to the other as well as building of a homogeneity or continuity with one-self.

The identity both in individual and in collective sense conceived as a „heritage“/building of a difference, as an elaboration of a contrast, an emphasis of a distorting [5].

Looking upon collective identity the dictionaries define it as being „the capacity of a community to recognize itself as a group; an attribute of the fusion principle...; resource of life in a society and for collective action“ [6].

The definition and the analyzing of the identity is strongly influenced by the way of self organizing, as “the perceptions relatively stable assembling about who we are the in the relationship with ourselves, with the others and with the social system” [7]. The influence is more clear in the moment the sources from which the perceptions result are identified and contribute to the self-structure: the beliefs about the way in which the respective individual is evaluated by the others (”looking-glass-self“), which may not always reflect the truth of those evaluation of the others), status and social roles (essential for creating and orientating the social identity). The ideas referring to whom the individual should be, the real references of the individual’s appreciation about who he in fact is ideal-self and self-esteem, the later being expressed in the positive amplitude of the vision or, on the contrary, the negative one which a person has about himself as a result of the agreement or disagreement between the ideas and feelings which the respective persons has about himself in accordance to the ideal-self.

The emphasizing of the social and individual components of the identity, the recognition of the relations between the subjective conscience of the identity (self-identity) and the objective social-characteristics (objective-identity) were aims of further resources which started from the analyzing of the way in which appearances of certain given groups (national, socio-professional, religious) influences the self perception and the social shared values (but vice versa too). The resources done in
the 80’s of the previous century have shown the importance of categorizations I/we versus he /they, the other/the others[8].

The conclusions have demonstrated that gathered representations to the specific evoking characteristics specific to the first units (I and we) refer to common contents, depending both on biography and the cultural model. Moreover each group is submitted to a process of (de)codification of its characteristics to make it suitable of representation through one or several persons (real or symbolical ones) with a prototypic value.

I also consider that there is another important aspect. As the wished social-identity is the positive one and the intergroups comparisons as well as the further action strategies are orientated to obtaining this desire.

People would use at least to types of prototypes. Thus „identifial” prototypes can be selected and used, their aim being the characterisation of self-identity with its specific notes but also „differentiated-prototypes” can be chosen and used; these belonging to the out-group.

The main purpose is to introduce the distortion the differentiating towards the member of the other group categorized (often stereotyped) through evoked prototype characters. This conclusion aiming to the characters selection criterion or to the prototypes (either contrasting presented in opposition or on the contrary alike from the point of view of their identity characteristics) is important in the social action of peaceful living of different groups/communities.

The balance between self-identity and the social-identity has been different analysis because of the difficulty of solving opposition(individual and collective).

Jean Claude Deschamp [9], professor of Social Psychology at the Laussane University, considers the balance between the two types of identities even if it can be differently expressed in connection with variables such as culture, real context- it can be described through making appeal to the simultaneous experience of similitude and the difference of „thus-nucleus” of self representation in the present modernity. The articulation between similes and differences explain in fact the balance between the two types of identities. It is generally considered that the similes send to asimilation, integration and the differences lead to unqiess consciousness and even to argues. Using the model of similies covariation and the differences, the mentioned author excludes the fact that the interindividual differences and intergroups are placed at the extremities of a preexistence; this make them be at least partial opposed. The consequence of this assumption is the claiming of the hypothesis conforming with the more emphasised the identification with the group the stronger the interindividual differenciaton within the group.

In this way the two identity pole (self and social) could be no longer be in a position of mutual elimination because in fact simultaneous search of both similies and differences take place: being alike doesn’t exclude being different; in a simultaneous way, on the contrary.

All these theoretical consideration bring about the idea in according to which individuals, in the moment of permanent contact with: „the others”, with another culture and look for elements which singularize that culture which make it different, unique but also the elements which make it similar to other cultures. The process is notable not only in the demanding zone (from the tourist’s point of view) but also in the offer zone the tourists being offered relevant places to visit regarding a certain culture or identity. Even proposal is „a place of memory” of the respective community, element of an identity offered not to be sold but to be known. For instance climbing Mount Rigi in Switzerland, the tourists is being informed (in German, French and English) that he is using first mountain railway built in Europe (in 1871).

This is an aspect which tells something about the people of the place and their willingness to valorize the environment they live in. A similar narrative is told to the tourist who finds out, in Wien this time, in the Prater Park that the Riesenrad, built in 1897, is the only functional wheel in the world. The wheels in Paris, London, Chicago of the same age with the Austrian one being out of use for a very long time. Such examples (numerous in the world) „speak” to the tourists about native identity, inviting to meditate on tourists’ own culture, being compared to that with which they are in contact. Not only the diferenciating, the singularity, the unicity constitute attraction: similiary and integration are both looked for bringing pleasure. I am thinking here at the feeling of a tourist who travelling through Europe discovers numerous clothing, eating, behaviour and sentimental similies which accompany saying such as: „We also have these” or „they have the same as us...” The conclusion I consider can be drown: „We are different but still alike.”
3 National identity. Supply and demand in tourism

On the first time as well as Eric Hobsbawm [10] considered, the concept of nation an its correctly understanding, including the derived terms, is the key of understanding the contemporary history, all the more as with the modern sense of the term derived from the XVIII century how the author said. The spokesman of the „great history” writting and its popularisation, Eric J. Hobsbawm remarked as a complex investigator with a huge curiosity, his cosmopolitan passion and his multiculturaly origins made him an international recognized personality, not only in the left mediums [11].

His conception about nation has common points with Ernest Gellner’s theories and Benedict Anderson’s ones, which had been fascinating. I’ll came back! From biographical point of view there are some similitudes [12].

Nation, considered to be synonim with nationalism [13], becomes a social entitiz even when there is a connection with „the nation state”, it can’t be changed or irrevocably made up, because the criterions which define a nation weren’t constantly and some of them wished to be unique (language or ethnical affiliation) and the others wished to be combined (language, common territory, common history, cultural traditions). Ernest Gellner [14] considered on the first time nationalism is a political principle which establishes that political unity and national one must be congruent, this must be understood as a feeling (rage or satisfaction feeling), depending by the violation degree or by the applying of this agreement principal) but as a political movement, as a theory of the political legitimacy by virtue of which the political leaders can be separated by the people leaded through making borders (it should be ideally the borders coincide with politico-geographic ones).

In the British researcher’s opinion, the problem of the nationalism doesn’t exist within the societies without state, the latest being (in a good Weberian’s tradition) the expression of the division of labour and especially of the specialization and of the maintaining order concentration one through having the monopoly of the legitimacy violence.

Going to the direction of the terminological elucidation, nation („evasive” concept, it could be a synonim for nationality and even with nationalism, although not so much clearly as Hobsbawm said) is defined through culturalistic orientation and voluntarist one:

1. Two people have the same nationality if they have the same culture, when culture means a signs system, ideas, connections, behaviors and communication system.
2. Two people have the same nationality if they reciprocally recognize themselves that belonging to the same nation” [15].

As for the national identity, any nation’s defiliation is usefully to understanding this sintagm.

Anthony D. Smith [16] considers essentially attributes of the national identity are given by the territoriality (the existence of a territory known by geographic and historic point of view as a native country, a „fatherland”) by the believing in the same myths and historic memories, by the common culture, by the equal rights and obligations juridical established for all the members of the national community and, not at least, by the participation at the economical life which includes the territorial mobility for each member of the national group. The national identity must be multidimensional, abstract and complex (the difficulty to induce it to people into an artificial way derived from it) because of these reasons it is easily combined with the other types of identities (ethnic, religious, class) it can be reduced to a single dimension, to a single collective identity, selected from those who built it. The national identity becomes, I consider, that which gathers the members of the national groups, that which determines them to evaluate themselves as being different from the other national groups, through an inherited nature which must be handed down from one generation to another within in a society recognized by the other social entities (foreign ones) with it has relationships based on the principles built through the people’s contribution, compulsory for everybody. The idea of the nation, of the national identity is “the binder” which, together with the national state (proper and externally recognized ), it makes going to people to nation, to a community not so unique, rather culturally, economically, and politically unified, of an ethnical majority within the state’s borders, but carefully to the protection, obligations and rights of each citizen, indifferently to the ethnical or religious attributes or any attributes associated to it, through the state’s agency, as an assembling of the public institutions which keeps on the coercion monopoly, but permitting the existence of a multitude of the other political institutions.
The research of the nationalism, of the nation and of the national identity entails critics, one of them aims the distinction’s error between nationalism and patriotism, both concepts being considered distinct expression of the national nucleus: the attachment to a nation [17]. The other disputed aspect of the nationalism and nation’s theories, in what measure, the circulated elements and used as arguments, as facts, are the role of the inventing and imagination process by the cultural topnotch classes about the necessity of an own nation and of an own national-state.

The Ernest Gellner’s opinion [18] is clear: nations „as a myth, the nationalism which sometime transforms into a nation, it sometime invents them, but it often eradicated the preexistent cultures from the Earth is the reality, good or bad and in generally unavoidable”. Eric Hobsbawm [19] agrees this opinion, he continues underlining that „there is an artefact element, invention and social engineering which contributes to the setting up of the nation”. Other author, who Hobsbawm considers to be important is Benedict Anderson, who compels recognition the imagined community sintagm. According to him [20], the concept of nation must be associated not with „invention”, „making” or „falsity”, as Gellner has done, but with „imagination”or „setting up”, nation is „a community politically imagined” or in a different way the communities are differently after they are imagined, within the communication image persisting, it is given (after an explanation which used Renanian’s arguments) by the fact the people have common things, imagines and visions but they have „the forgetting” of the other many things too.

The imagination of the community as a community is given by its creation as a deep comradeship, horizontally structured, this imagined fraternity existing as a possibility not to kill but to die of one’s own accord, to sacrifice himself for the nation’s defence in its assembling or its intrinsic elements.

Nation is more imagined as being sovereign, according with the mentioned author, however it’s unavoidable reduced, even the most Messianic nationalists can not imagine a day when all the people who live on Earth will join to the nation, they made no nation doesn’t imagine itself coteminously with the humanity or substituting to this.

However, if the nation includes a serious setting up dose, an invention one (according with the traditions, myths, or legitimacy aims for history falsification), why, for example, the communist projecty, identitary through establishing a new classes, through new criterions for the distinction, classificationn and definition, through the history’s rewriting even its falsification, through new ceremonies, sofisticated ways and systematically applied of the reorganisation of the social memory, doesn’t succeed in?

The things happen in the same way in the former Yugoslavia. These are only two examples which proved that a real alternative is given by the theories which analyze nation as „a setting up”, not because of „a breaking” of process, but „accumulating” one, preparing on the the cultural, economical, political and social ground [21].

It is proposed to the tourist the knoledge of the real national identity, viewing through the perception organs, through that „memory places” (museums, historical buildings, squares, parks, cultural buildings, important institutions from economical, political or cultural point of view) completed by the beauty of the traditions, hotels, restaurants, cafe houses or of the promenade places valorified economically and ecologically, with modern and not expensive services. Mountain or sea, beach or ski track, the story of each place is a people’s presentation, a presentation of their way to communicate with themselves and with the others, a way they permanently refered to the environment where they lived or live in.

4 Conclusions
The national identities, founded on collective memories and on forgettness, on traditions and myths, on a common history, in a place pretended to be „fatherland”, a place of the one cultural and economical common life, on the communication in a certain language on the collective and individual behaviours moraly and legally standardized, they are an important part of the touristic offer and the demanding in this important field, not only economic. Based on reciprocal knowledge of cultures, on that singular and general are given to each identity, the taking over of the some elements of people’s behaviour which come in contact with increasing the similarities and the integration is produced. The past, through the way in which it is presented to the tourists, the selection criterions of the events and of the characters, is used in the present benefit, the tourist quality increasing the people’s reserve to especially perceive that elements which make them to be closer to the other communities. Understood and practiced in this way, the invitation to a reciprocal knowledge
during the tourism, beyond of the economic implications, becomes one phenomena with the cultural deep semnifications.

References: