

ETHNOGRAPHIC TOURISM AS ONE OF THE MOST PRIORITY DIRECTION OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ABKHAZIA

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Abstract: *in this article ethnographic tourism in the Republic of Abkhazia as one of factors of development of tourist branch and the country in general is considered. Assessment of his current state is carried out, the examples of implementation of different ethnographic projects based on the existing traditions and customs of society are reviewed. Analyzing historical and cultural prerequisites of the territory, the potential of development of this tourist branch is estimated, and also the prospects of development relying on importance of development of this sphere in the country are defined.*

Keywords: *Abkhazia, culture, ethnography, ethnos, tourism.*

ЭТНОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ ТУРИЗМ КАК ОДНО ИЗ НАИБОЛЕЕ ПРИОРЕТНЫХ НАПРАВЛЕНИЙ РАЗВИТИЯ РЕСПУБЛИКИ АБХАЗИЯ

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Аннотация: *в данной статье рассматривается этнографический туризм в Республике Абхазия как один из факторов развития туристической отрасли и страны в целом. Проводится оценка его современного состояния, рассматриваются примеры реализации разных этнографических проектов, основанные на существующих традициях и обычаях общества. Анализируя исторические и культурные предпосылки территории, оценивается потенциал развития данной туристической отрасли, а также определяются перспективы развития, опирающиеся на важность развития этой сферы в стране.*

Ключевые слова: *Абхазия, культура, этнография, этнос, туризм.*

In the conditions of long interaction of ethnos with the environment of a certain territory, obviously, the characteristic features of society which are expressed in many parties of its material and spiritual culture are formed, and most distinctly affect on housekeeping. Importance of consideration of ethnographic aspect of the Republic is obvious: development of such branch as tourism in many respects depends on the people inhabiting the territory, Abkhazians – very original ethnos, and their culture draws attention of many tourists and researchers [1].

At the moment ethnographic tourism is at an origin stage, but it is considered the most perspective further future, capable to interest a huge number of tourists. Many projects on development of this sphere only in development, but the country has high potential for their creation. Analyzing historical and cultural prerequisites, it is possible to draw a conclusion that in this country there are people with the richest history, traditions and customs, very original, on anybody not similar [3; 7]. It is possible to give the planned ethnocomplex [6] which as it was conceived by the author, the founder of the Abkhaz-Russian fund of support and development of science and culture, Bella Agrba, will combine a number of constructions as an example of one of future projects: the ethnographic museum, a conference room, pavilions with applied art. Besides it is planned to create a scene where there will take place the dramatized representations, performances of dancing and choral collectives of Abkhazia. Attempts to create the ethnopark were earlier, there was a project of an ethnographic complex under the open sky near Sukhum, but the project didn't manage to be carried out up to the end.

To understand at what stage nevertheless there is an ethnographic tourism in Abkhazia now, it is necessary to analyse events which are held already and not just a plan in the future.

For a start it is necessary to focus attention on some travel agencies, which have in assortment of tourist's products ethnographic tours [5] in which tourists are offered to visit several Abkhazian settlements where, besides historical and cultural and natural sights, there are such ethnographic aspects as practice of the Abkhazian feast. These feasts are carried out in villages, for example in the most ancient village of Lykhny and the village of Duripsh which is near it. Guests are acquainted with the Abkhazian culture of a feast and offered the most popular dishes of traditional cuisine. Feasts are often followed by a show which includes national songs and dances, and also the competitions for guests sustained in traditional Abkhazian spirit. But it is impossible to agree up to the end that a similar tour has the right to be called "ethnographic" as the main objective of this tourist's product is connected with demonstration of the main historical and architectural and natural objects. They

are certainly connected with ethnography, but don't reflect it in such degree in which it can be presented in Abkhazia, having very high potential in development of this branch of tourism.

It is possible to allocate with a separate element of ethnographic tourism the jumps [2] which are carried out in the Republic annually. This industry holds the major position in sports tourism, but it is also related to ethnography, being national sport. In Abkhazia the equestrian sport championships are regularly held 2 times a year. In the country there are three large hippodromes, and also many villages have the small hippodromes. After war of 1992-1993 a large number of hippodromes strongly suffered, but the largest, in the village Bzyb, was recovered in 2002 and it is the venue of the major championships which are dated usually for the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 (on May 9) and war of 1992-1993 (on September 30). Competitions traditionally consist of runnings of horses from 2000 to 8000 meters, a fancy riding and horse soccer. For tourists this action is at least interesting, than to participants and locals, but organized tours as such to jumps aren't conducted as, for example, in Spain on a bullfight. Respectively, this direction can be very perspective for the country, and as option, Abkhazia can carry out jumps more often than two times a year, considering demand of tourists to visit a similar excursion [4; 6].

Thus, it can be made a conclusion that the country should rely on ethnographic tourism, thereby acquainting tourists with the original culture, but, without turning it into a subject of the monetary relations.

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