

## CULTURAL TOURISM AND FOLK ARCHITECTURE IN THE SERVICE OF REVITALIZATION OF RURAL SPACE

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### **Abstract**

*Progressive and sustainable rural development is an essential factor for the survival of the Serbian village. Modern tourism seeks authentic and unique experiences when visiting a particular tourist destination. Indigenous architecture, landscape, the ambience of the village and food culture can constitute the new actuators of cultural tourism, as rural development is based on nurturing and sustainable exploitation of natural and cultural resources. The aim is to point out the possibility of general development based on tangible and intangible heritage as an actuator of tourism development. It is necessary to establish a new style that is recognizable and characteristic of our culture. A style inspired by folk architecture is presented via the historical method. Having a stronghold in tradition has created an architecture of inestimable value, which is the basis of culture and identity.*

Key Words: *rural development, cultural tourism, folk architecture, ambience, landscape*

JEL classification: *Z32, L26, Q13*

### **Introduction**

Groups of tourists driven by motives and needs to thoroughly get to know people, their traditions and cultures, monuments and other places of cultural interest during their trip are synonymous with the emergence of cultural tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization, 37% of all international travel involves some kind of cultural activity, while according to other data, as much as 70% of international travel belongs to this category. Cultural tourism, unlike other types of special interest tourism, is

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extremely complex. First of all, cultural tourism involves a wide variety of activities ranging from visits to cultural and historical monuments, through the extensive museums and galleries, attending concerts, to learning about local cultures and customs. Another reason for such treatment of cultural tourism is certainly the fact that a high-quality cultural and tourist offer requires successful cooperation between the cultural and tourism sectors, which are very different in their orientation (one on the profit and the other on the common good).

The shortest path to destruction is the extinction of villages and the destruction of agrarians. Out of the 4,709 villages in Serbia, as many as 1,034 have less than 100 inhabitants each (Gulan, 2018). Rural development is one of the preconditions for our existence and survival in this region, and the economic aspects of rural policy are a prerequisite for stable, continuous and sustainable development of rural areas. Rural development is based on the nurturing and sustainable exploitation of natural and cultural resources. It is a fact that regional entities are the most interested in initiating all activities that would improve the economic standard in these environments. They make use of available resources, which need to be identified - recognized and used to the benefit of development. One of them is a rural ambience that can be the impeller for tourism development, while being directly recognizable in one area. This paper focuses on: economic and methodological aspects of regional development, rural environment and architecture, rural tourism and the integration of material and intangible elements for needs. It is also a fact that in the global market, saturated with traditional forms of tourism, there is a growing importance of tourism based on the unique characteristics of indigenous natural and cultural diversity. Rural tourism gives a significant impetus to the revival of many rural spatial, demographic and cultural entities and directly influences the development of the region. The basic postulate, in addition to the economic parameters in this paper, is adapting content to architecture and space rather than architecture and space to content, and that it is possible to initiate local and economic development based on these elements in such a context.

### **Aspects of rural area revitalization**

Today, the economy is in long-term regression and it is a key factor in the transition lag towards Serbia's higher level of development. Assessment of strategic position indicates a long list of vulnerability indicators (Đuričin & Vuksanović, 2015). Serbia and the surrounding countries are among the

developing countries, being considered developed just until recently. This was caused by the shutdown of production and product development which resulted in the loss of the market.

Serbia with its backward economic development is hardly able to compete with the world market, but must find those sectors and programs that can offer new characteristic products or innovated ones (Lošonc & Ivanišević, 2013).

Regional rural policy is still a completely new area in Serbia. It should strive to raise and enhance local potential, promote decentralization, but also strengthen rural integration. The economic segment of rural policy is a decisive precondition for the continued and sustainable development of regional rural areas. Regional development is a long-term process that is territorially determined, multisectoral and led by local development actors. This process is possible and sustainable through the coordinated use of the free human, technical, financial and natural resources of one spatial unit. In order to improve the living conditions of rural areas, there is a need for their interconnection and cooperation with national, regional and local structures. The task of rural policy is to create and achieve objectives for rural areas that cover a wide range of different socio - economic activities. Rural development is based on the conservation and sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage. In a world full of mass production and traditional forms of tourism, there is a growing market for products and services, based on the uniqueness of local natural and cultural diversity.

The problems of poverty and serious demographic change happening in Serbia, most often caused by large numbers of people, especially young people, migrating from rural to urban areas, are indisputable facts that require concrete activities to be undertaken through various programs and projects within rural development. Accelerated urbanization enables employment of large numbers of workers, at the same time generating new jobs, which is what prompted a new wave of transition from villages to towns, while the first wave was fueled by the development of industry after World War II (Stojanović & Lošonc, 2017). The unemployment problem in Serbia could be partly addressed within the contemporary concept of integrated rural development, which offers great opportunities to the local rural population and to the society as a whole.

In the long-term improvement of the living standards of the rural population, particular consideration must be given to the use and protection

of all existing natural resources. When talking about rural development, we must always bear in mind the sustainability of that development. Sustainable development promotes decentralization, organizes the local population, motivates and encourages their participation at all levels. Working to preserve and strengthen rural areas is first and foremost working towards a sustainable society.

The regional population needs to be constantly educated and given the power to make and manage change. Substantial changes in a local or regional community will be visible only if all its members take responsibility and actively participate in change. In order for these changes to take place, some knowledge, skills and active involvement of all individuals in the community, horizontal and vertical integration of all development actors, as well as a clear role for the public sector and non-governmental organizations are needed. Local communities empowered to take their own development initiatives will take responsibility for their implementation and they will become responsible for adopting local rural development strategies and finding secure sources of funding. In order for these changes to be implemented, rural organizations and cooperation with the private sector need to be strengthened, and infrastructure and services available to the rural population improved.

### **Cultural tourism in the service of revitalization of village**

Many theorists believe that there is no specific definition of cultural tourism because researchers take into account only their own experience and the resources at their disposal. Some call it cultural tourism, some call it heritage tourism, some call it cultural heritage. However, everyone shares the same idea: visitors or tourists interested in getting to know what makes a certain city, region or country different and interesting, whether it is art, culture, history, gastronomy, architecture or all of these factors together. Cultural tourism also implies a type of tourism where museums, exhibitions, concerts are the purpose of tourist visits, or the kind of tourism related to material, i.e. built heritage, from religious monuments to world architecture. Culture refers to a set of values, beliefs, behaviors, symbols (e.g. traditions, customs, clothing, and art) and forms of adopted behavior of the local community. It can also be defined as a way of life shared by a society that is passed on from generation to generation and it is considered to be typical of a particular social group. It includes the unique natural, historical and cultural achievements and the heritage of a particular area and the people who live in it, which are remembered or preserved in order

to be experienced by the present and future generations. Tourism mixes people and cultures, forms and forces specific to each local community as well as tourists, and a better understanding of these cultures will lead us to perceive tourism as a factor of change both within and outside the community. Discussions about local culture are often about which of the two wins or in which way they affect each other. However, it is best to study both local and tourist culture in relation to residual culture, which in this case, may explain why tourists from different cultures behave in different ways.

### **Rural tourism as an actuator of development**

Rural areas cover about 80% of the total territory of the European Union with about 25% of the total population (Veer & Tuunter, 2005). The situation is similar in Serbia, but there is an impression that the potentials based on the specifics of this regional area are underutilized. Studies conducted in this area show a clear increase in all parameters of rural tourism. Other positive examples of rural tourism are also evident: better employment of women, retention of young people in the countryside, utilization of previously unused capacities, new jobs, better attitude of the local population towards living environment, which undoubtedly affects the remaining population in these areas and makes a significant contribution to regional development. Rural tourism is the broadest term encompassing all tourist services: hunting, fishing, tourism in nature parks, ecotourism, health, cultural, rural, ethno tourism. Rural tourism is not necessarily an additional activity on the family estate that generates additional income, but it can also be a professional activity. The term rural area is generally not strictly defined, but it refers to the areas in which it prevails: natural environment, rural environment, small settlements and villages, separated agricultural households with agriculture and forestry as their main activities.

Village tourism is a narrower term than rural tourism, and a broader term than agritourism on farms (rural family household) and is related to the ambience of the village and its immediate environment, as well as all its activities (agriculture, manifestations, gastronomy, ethnology, folklore and other economic activities). Village tourism provides and generates additional income for the population.

Agritourism or tourism within a rural household (farm) exclusively refers to a form of tourist service which is an additional activity on the estate with

agriculture as its main activity within which products produced on the farm are offered. Agritourism means staying in the countryside with active participation in all agricultural work or for educational purposes (e.g. growing vine, preparing food for winter, storing dried meat).

Ecotourism is a stay in unspoiled and preserved nature. It is a type of tourism that has a higher annual growth than any other type of tourism (30% per year).

The attractiveness of rural areas for tourism and relaxation can best be explained by the image the rural being closely linked to the traditional and romantic idea of the "good old days", innocent and simple way of life, untouched nature and perfect adaptation of man to his natural environment. Thus, the longing and the need for a return to the roots and the simple way of life without a highly organized, stressful and urban environment is leading to an increasing interest in rural areas (Kastenholz, et al., 1999).

Rural tourism provides development opportunities for small entrepreneurs whose business would otherwise be unprofitable in rural communities with few inhabitants. In addition, rural tourism is particularly beneficial to the existing rural businesses, such as rural households, by helping them to generate secondary income (Wilson, et al., 2001).

Interest in rural tourism is on the increase due to the existence of still attractive rural areas and environments with a certain lifestyle, culture and customs. Rural tourism is a real trump for the revitalization of the many dormant smaller and larger rural spatial units. The development of tourism in these areas may hinder the departure of young people, since the development of tourism today means the creation of elementary conditions for a general, much higher common comfort of rural settlements. In such circumstances, young people may find not only economic but also socio-cultural motives to continue living on their family land in an environment where the general quality of life really approaches the level that is considered necessary in the world today (Vratuša & Anastasijević, 2002).

Serbia is a country of rural character and it is one of the most agricultural countries in Europe. Rural development, as one of the areas of regional policy, is a key instrument for the restructuring of the agricultural sector and should have the task of directing and strategically harnessing the potential of attractive tourist villages. Local specificity and availability of

resources make it difficult to create a universal model of rural tourism product and destination development (Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

Considering the pronounced economic and other functions of tourism, as well as the diverse and high-value potentials of the spatial plan of the Republic of Serbia and its economic policy, this activity has been given importance and the opportunity to develop. In addition, the Tourism Development Strategy of Serbia has established a selective approach whereby rural tourism is treated as a priority among those types of tourism that are related to special interests.

### **Nutrition culture in Serbia as a channel for spreading cultural diversity**

The modern man's relationship with food, traditions and customs that are closely related to food are the topic of many studies. Serbian national cuisine has been presented through the historical background of its dishes and the presentation of the cuisine, menus and food, as well as the culinary identities of individual regions. The difference between the traditional nutrition and the culture of nutrition and the new attitude towards food is not a limiting factor, it can be a significant comparative advantage and a new face of Serbia's cultural identity, viewed through gastronomy.

By observing the history of the dishes and presenting the cuisine, menus and food: from traditional folk meals in rural communities, through dining in urban areas and fine dining, we observe the national cuisine in Serbia, along with the culinary identities of particular regions, conditioned by numerous local cultural specificities. The phenomenon of eating culture, viewed culturally as well as anthropologically, interpreted as part of the intangible cultural heritage, is part of the everyday life of an individual and the community.

### **Between globalization and national identity**

Research shows that the globalization process, in the presence of large multimedia companies, threatens the national identities of gastronomic culture.

Today the attitude towards food is losing its traditional form and more attention is paid to its aesthetics and whether it is in the realm of contemporary trends, healthy food, physical appearance. The responsibility

of experts, above all the Ethnographic Museum, ethnologists and anthropologists, is to show and demonstrate scientific knowledge related to traditional culture and the phenomenon of nutrition - in order to know what our regional, cultural and traditional identity is in this globalization process (Museum Advisor to the Ethnographic Museum Dušica Živković).

The phenomenon of food culture is a unified complex process that involves geographical, climatic and economic conditions, as well as cultural influences. In Serbia, it is the Old Balkan cultural influence of the Byzantine and Oriental, and part of the European gastronomic heritage. The way of eating significantly changed in the middle of 20th century. That cultural pattern was lost the moment the pattern of the traditional way of living and housing began to change. In fact, industrialization, the formation of large agricultural combines and the entire modernization that began in Serbia or former Yugoslavia, substantially equalized the rural and the urban nutrition and provided perhaps an easier way of food production and processing. Still, it is one of the ways to gradually lose the traditional nutrition both in Serbia and around the world. Nutrition is the existential activity of the man without which he cannot survive. In today's modern, fast-paced world of high-speed communications, one would expect nutrition to be reduced to fast food only - because it is something existential that a person should quickly deal with and devote to other aspects of his life (Milos Matic, Curator Ethnographic Museum).

On the contrary, today we are witnessing the expansion of very complex kitchen systems of food and ethnic cuisines, whereby food culture is used as a kind of channel for the dispersion of cultural values of particular ethnic groups, which sounds absurd in the modern world.

### **Ethnic cuisine restaurants**

Nutrition through ethnic cuisines is one very powerful channel in the world of globalization through which cultural diversity is spreading. This is especially true in globalization centers such as North America and Western Europe, where various ethnic cuisine restaurants are flourishing.

Continuity is an important segment in the study of nutrition phenomenon: it encompasses the historical course that can be traced from the earliest times, through ancient Balkan communities, Slovenian, Byzantine, Oriental and European, to the mere culture of nutrition that involves the process of production, processing, conservation or preservation of food,

and its consumption in contemporary life, festive, ritual and public family space. Today's gastronomic menu is recognized by gastronomic regions; for example, the Pannonian gastronomic region in Vojvodina is recognized for being considerably influenced by European culture. According to research, the western and central gastronomic regions are mixed with the Central Balkan and Dinaric gastronomic regions, the south and east of Serbia being even more authentic, where much of the Old Balkan cultural heritage in terms of nutrition is preserved.

### **Slava as an intangible cultural heritage**

Family slava is the first most significant element of cultural intangible heritage, inscribed on a representative UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage. It is a ritual which celebrates the patron saint. However, apart from the religious aspect, the social aspect, which is realized through a significant ritual feast, is very important. Food is a kind of medium at the festive feast which unites the religious and the social aspects in the ritual, uniting them symbolically by consuming the same food together in a holy, sacred situation. Therefore, it is assumed that the social connections that are established on this occasion last longer because they have the religious symbolism of invoking higher energy.

### **Gastronomic tourism**

Gastronomic tourism is based on a gastronomic offer which is very interesting in rural areas. It is important for gastronomic tourism to have a diverse and unobtrusive, yet noticeable, food offer. Within this range, specialties and varieties such as national and regional dishes and traditional cuisines should be visible. These specifics should be presented to specific consumer segments, for example vegetarians, organic food lovers, hunters, fishermen and others. Within this type of tourism, thematic gastronomic trips (through centuries, national cuisine and cuisine of the nobility, blueberry or mussel harvesting, tasting of meat products, entertainment, competitions, etc.) can be offered, lasting one or several days, with a tour of the whole country or just a certain region.

### **Development accelerators - rural ambience and architecture**

At the beginning of the new millennium, the most attractive idea in considering a global future is to plan sustainable development as a new paradigm for rural and regional development. However, the thesis of

sustainable development acquires negative connotations because it is exploited for various manipulations (Pušić, 2004). In addition, social, environmental, cultural and regional development is essential to further planning. The global strategy should retain important local characteristics, to the extent and in a way that will contribute to coherence with other rural elements, taking into account the rural - cultural context of sustainable development, which means satisfaction of social needs at a higher level of aspirations than is the case of a banal interpretation of economic, social and environmental sustainability hypotheses for communities, assuming that the individual's natural and necessary needs have been defined earlier (Pušić, 2004).

One of the possible strategies in the area of rural environment could be the conversion of outdated facilities according to requirements of rural tourism as a result of the growing need to preserve architectural heritage and the environment, in undeveloped space or to demolish existing facilities. The conversion of obsolete facilities is one of the key initiatives in many countries around the world. This type of conversion has potential economic, environmental and social benefits (Živković, et al., 2016). The balance between building strategy and heritage conservation, through the development of a sustainable structure in the present, and a tendency for sustainable development in the future, is one of the main goals. Additional motivation for preservation is necessary: ambient architecture, country houses, local specificities, traditions and customs, old interesting skills and crafts, biodiversity, agricultural production on small surfaces, original products (Đenadić et al., 2016).

The basic rule which has to be followed when arranging a tourist family farm as a basic feature of rural architecture and ambience, is adaptation to architecture and space. Very often, homeowners adapt the space and the facilities to business content, that is, they over-intervene with the architecture and space for certain content organization. An example of this is the arrangement of an area where food is provided for the guests of the picnic area (at the picnic area). Considering that the traditional architecture is smaller, and the owner of the household usually wants to take advantage of the legal maximum of food service (currently it is 80 people if the household is registered as a rural household, or an unlimited number if the household is registered as a business), a traditional building is remodeled so as to cater a large number of people. In this case, it inevitably intervenes with the architecture (upgrading and expanding space) to obtain a satisfactory space that can accommodate 80 or more people. On the

contrary, it would be correct to adapt the number of people to the capacity of the existing space.

Arranging the household / facility is extremely important not only to preserve the ambience and visual attractiveness, but because future marketing will be based on the arrangement of the tourist rural family household and it will be the first contact of a potential guest with your household via promotional material, photographs in catalogues or on the Internet. It is important to arrange the object according to the traditional, ambience laws, which are first and foremost: functional space, simple and functional arrangement, clean and green surrounding. When decorating, be minimalist, make the least possible interventions in the architecture, without forgetting all the details that traditional houses had in the past.

The layout of the facility intended for rural tourism should be in accordance with the needs and requirements of modern service provision, harmonized with the functional contents of the facility, simple, reduced and rooted in tradition. Tradition and technology today contribute to the creation of contemporary environments that, in addition to top performance, can offer other precious and valuable moments of enjoyment in the artistic and cultural heritage, while arriving in a place for a variety of tourist motives and at the same time offer a cultural experience within the service (Stojanović & Đenadić, 2019).

Each region has certain development potentials, but these benefits are often left untapped. The reasons for this are the lack of interest of local and regional entities, ignorance or lack of professional staff. This moves away from the basic postulate of regional development, which should be based solely on the local and regional advantages of a single location (Riznić & Vojnović, 2010).

### **The historical context of the emergence of national style**

The emergence of national style in Serbian architecture was conditioned by the historical context. The creation of an independent Serbian state in the second half of the 19th century became possible only after intensive intellectual growth under the influence of Serbian art. A romantic spirit was formed, history was magnified and spiritual culture was mitigated, a conflict between faith in the present and a powerful medieval culture, which resulted in the idea of creating a special national style (Kadijević, 2007).

Romanticism with tourism basics was prevalent for half a century. The change of society into a capitalist one influenced the tendency to create a national style as the identity of the new bourgeoisie. Architecture was built for institutions, and the motifs or the inspiration in the Middle Ages set Serbia apart from the global context. Romanticism was reminiscent of Serbian medieval architecture, and the precarious social context, due to frequent turbulence, required a foothold in tradition (Nestorović, 2014).

The formation of the Serbian national style in architecture progressed gradually with occasional mixing with the previous forms of Baroque, Classicism and Romanticism. However, the end result was the existence of a new style based on broad knowledge, education and skills, following contemporary needs, but with a foothold in tradition, which created an architecture of lasting values that is admired today throughout our historic cities and villages, and not only for us, but it is the basis for the culture and recognition of our people to all who visit our country. The urban form is a great human creation, a wonder of memory, between dreams and reality, utopias and pragmatism, the core of both city planning and house construction (Radović, 2003).

### **The roots of folk architecture**

Documents and collections of Derocco collected in the mountainous regions of southern and southwestern Serbia, northern Montenegro and southeastern Bosnia, also in the valleys of the rivers Morava, Raska, Lima, Tara, Piva, Drina, testify to the elements of folk architecture, which, even at the time when the architect took notes, was disappearing. Noticing a tendency of oblivion, he sought to revive some of his historical motifs in his construction oeuvre. Even then, he was able to identify the causes of the disappearance of folklore, in the aftermath of World War I, when modern civilization had penetrated into previously inaccessible areas, bringing new materials, replacing manual with mechanical production and introducing foreign forms (Deroko, 1939). He noted that different forms develop under different conditions of life. The situation and the influences are similar even today. It was concluded that the log cabin was the oldest method of construction in Serb-inhabited areas, brought when settling in the Balkans, and bundwerk was of Western origin and was spread by the Turks who had brought it from the Levantine shores of the Mediterranean Sea (Deroko, 1939). These are the two main types, which are not originally Serbian, but have been processed in a particular way in these parts. The

documents also mention stone construction, especially in places where the material is found in nature.

In contrast to the economic and political factors that usually drive development today, alternative ways should be approached to make settlement upgrades more rational and more manageable, catering for the users' real needs (Marcinkoski, 2016).

The balance between building strategy and heritage conservation, through the development of a sustainable structure in the present, with a tendency for sustainable development in the future, is one of the main goals of the modern world (Živković et al, 2016). Identification of the key criteria that determine the quality of potential interventions is the next stage in finding alternative and sustainable solutions for the problem of disappearance authentic architecture.

### **Establishing criteria**

On the basis of the analysis so far, in order to determine the typology of objects containing elements of national style and having national architecture as a model, it is necessary to define the key criteria for defining a representative sample for research. Studies conducted in the field of studying the development of styles and elements define a wide range of individual criteria, viewed from different aspects. The main groups of criteria for the classification of certain types are time, location, purpose, function, type of construction, type of material which they are built from, disposition and compactness of composition, scale, humanity, (anthropomorphism), logic of communication, comfort, colors, purity of processing and plastic expression of all the details and wholes, as well as the quality of life in these objects. Possibilities and limitations of the analyzed forms are evaluated by determining the general characteristics, considering their specificity, noting regularities but also deviations, and their classification and typology on the basis of the defined criteria.

The town houses of Podunavlje and Pomoravlje areas belong to the same type, which is related to the common natural and social factors that existed in these areas (Živkovic, 2011). The rare preserved specimens of folk architecture in the area testify to advances in construction, residential culture and fine arts. The farmhouse characteristic of the Danube region mainly developed after the Turks had left these regions. Immigrants from Kosovo and Metohija, from Pomoravlje, Šumadija, and Bulgaria, brought

their own type of houses that changed under the influence of natural and social conditions. Rural houses, irrespective of the type they belong to, are typically located in spacious yards that, in addition to the dwelling house, contain other auxiliary and economic buildings needed by the rural household (Živković, 2011).

Objects of folk architectural heritage could still be cautiously infiltrated into modern planning and construction streams, thus contributing to the vibrancy and historical authenticity of the environment as a whole. Today, through the buildings of the preserved heritage, the line of development of the national architectural expression can be traced from the old Balkan house, inns, crafts and commercial shops, the Vojvodina house and public buildings. Then, as well as today, no one was held responsible for devastating or demolishing a cultural monument. The main cause is the lack of respect for legal regulations and the lack of clear legal frameworks, which is a problem everywhere in Serbia, as houses have disappeared without any legal consequences for anyone (Živković, 2011).

### **Representative objects**

In further work, we will analyze and typologically classify known and lesser-known objects with elements of folk architecture which are located in different territories where Serbian people lived or still live, which will confirm the initial assumptions.

A multi-floor building with its ground floor built by a massive system and using bundwerk construction above. We find examples in Šumadija, such as the Building of the First Agricultural Union in Azanja, also erected between 1920 to 1927 according to the project of architect Branislav M. The base has the shape of the Latin letter "L". It is characterized by a mixed structural system, where the basement and ground floor are constructed in a massive structural system with supporting brick walls, while the upper floor is made in bundwerk structural system with brick filling and wooden beams seen on the façades. The house stands on foundations made of stone. The floor and roof structures are of wood. Elevation is noticeable on the façade, the ground floor and the first floor are treated differently. Then the lesser-known house in Grace, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which also ends with a belwerder in the middle of the façade or the old house in Sarajevo whose detail around the window upstairs shows the bundwerk construction. An old house in the village of Saracino, near Tetovo, Macedonia, and one of the types of traditional houses in Sarajevo, with an ejected porch and a

floor, match typologically. The Rancić's house in Grocka from the early 19th century combines the Kosovo-Moravian style of construction and had only two rooms and a porch and it is very low. Later, the second part of the house was completed with a doksat (a closed balcony) and basement, so that now it has the characteristics of a Serbian town house. Milivoj Manasić's house is located in the village of Radinac, Smederevo, erected in the traditional Moravian style in the early 19th century. The base is rectangular with a recessed porch with Moravian arches. It stands on high brick foundations built in bundwerk system with walls filled with wicker.

### **Modern approaches for restoration of intangible and material values of rural settlements**

Today, we strive to create an image of the ideal living environment, while in our region the situation is opposite, associations to the landscape, which is itself a conceptual construct, are introduced as much as possible, because the transcendent landscape sublimates experiences, creates a dramatic effect. Europe is striving for a knowledge-based society in 2020. A holistic approach is the pursuit of the timeless, which cultural heritage is (Kurtović-Folić, 2014).

Solving the problems of planning, building and thinking through strategies to achieve the best possible rural quality of life in today's context of the overall impact of financial indicators is certainly preservation of the continuity and tradition of a place, which make it imperishable. It also gives it significant potential for economic development based on location advantages. Different types of heritage from different periods of settlement in rural areas, as well as different characters and specificities of their multicultural population, could intertwine into one harmonious whole, establishing links between past and present, and building new links between historical epochs and heritage through new architecture, by establishing a new style that would be recognizable and characteristic of our culture. The survival of the Serbian village today depends on defining its way of functioning and creating opportunities for different events. Contemporary tourists seek authentic and unique experiences when visiting a particular tourist destination. Local food and wine tasting is a special experience for tourists. When visiting rural areas, tourists come in direct contact with the host culture, exchange positive experiences with people, learn about cultural attractions and the overall value of the tourist destination. The development of rural tourism contributes to the positioning and recognition of a particular tourist area and creates a

competitive advantage. Serbia, as a tourist destination, certainly has a lot to offer to domestic and foreign guests in this area, but it must be in compliance with all standards for rural tourism as practiced in tourist developed European countries. The development of rural tourism creates preconditions for the increase of tourist satisfaction and consumption, as well as for increasing competitiveness of Serbia's tourism offer. Following this direction, it is necessary to renew and improve all elements - material and intangible.

### **Conclusion**

Architecture unites peoples from different spaces, testifies to their existence, relationships and connections that were somewhat different from today's. Monuments of culture, works of architectural heritage thus make material facts that are not easy to obscure. The main strategic goals of regional tourism development of Serbian rural areas should be: competitiveness in the international market, balanced regional development, self-employment and motivation for young people to stay in the countryside, permanent protection, implementation and respect for high ecological standards in order to obtain long-term sustainable valorization of the tourism potential of the rural area, development of the overall offer of the tourist destination, raising the level of quality of accommodation capacities of catering and tourist services, encouraging the production of organic food and autochthonous products and their placement through the tourist offer, education of rural tourism employees and increasing the share of rural tourism in the total tourist traffic and, above all, preserving the rural environment. Additional motivation is needed to preserve: ambience architecture, farmhouses, local specificities, traditions and customs, old interesting skills and trades, biodiversity, small-scale agricultural production, original products. To enable the preservation of village vitality and the attractiveness of rural lifestyles through tourism services which can serve as a motivator for the development of rural areas. Priorities should include a new development methodology, based on local entities, taking advantage of the benefits of a given region. As stated in the text, it can be concluded that the rural environment can be and it is one of the most important factors in the development of tourism, while respecting the existing architecture and without neglecting the needs of the economic development of the area. Moreover, the given methodology enhances and enriches the environment, accelerates development and gives new opportunities. Considering that there is little research of the importance of ambience for regional development, a number of new studies need to be

conducted and a special dimension should be given to regional development.

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