

PROMOTING ROMANIAN TRADITION AND CUSTOMS IN OCNA ȘUGATAG THROUGH TOURIST ACTIVITY

HATEGAN IONELA DANIELA¹, BALCU NARCISA LARISA¹,
CIOLAC RAMONA¹, MARIN CORNELIA DIANA¹

¹*University of Life Sciences „King Mihai I” from Timisoara,
Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism, Romania*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: dianamarin@usvt.ro

Abstract: The town of Ocna Șugatag was documented in 1355, its history being closely linked to the exploitation of salt. Archaeological discoveries, as well as other historical documents, attest that the population of the area exploited salt since ancient times. Tourists who want to discover the traditions and customs of the area can visit Ocna Șugatag which still preserve and maintain it through various cultural events. They are carried out through various celebrations (the field festival "Tânjaua de la Hoteni"), festivals (the Goulash Festival), games (the Șopru Game) and fairs (the Charity Christmas Fair)..

Key words: *tradition, tourism, promoting, Ocna Sugatag*

INTRODUCTION

Some authors reserve the term "tourism" only for the modern socio-economic phenomenon of temporary mass movement of people, mainly, although not exclusively, for recreational reasons. [2,9,10] Modern tourism, like democracy, is practically accessible to all members of economically developed societies. [5,11] However, if we look back in the history of the pre-industrial era we find that only a very small percentage of people participated in travel. The vast majority of the population was immovable for the rest of their lives. Traveling in this period meant painful effort, hardships and hardships. [1,4,7]

Today, tourism represents an important component of economic and social life. [3,8] The fact that tourism is a phenomenon with multiple connections and implications in economic, social, cultural and political terms, argues the actuality of concerns for knowing the content of tourism, its incidences and for deciphering the functioning mechanisms. [6,12]

Ocna Șugatag commune is located in the central part of Maramureș county, in the west of the Maramureș Depression, at the foot of the Igriș and Gutâi mountains, at a distance of 19 km from the municipality of Sighet, respectively 50 km from the municipality of Baia Mare. The territory of the commune includes in its composition four villages: Ocna Șugatag, Breb, located in the south of the commune, the village of Hoteni, located in the center and the village of Șugatag, located in the northwest of the commune. The total area of the administrative territory is 9087.46 ha.

Ocna Șugatag commune is bordered to the southwest by Desești commune, to the west by Baia Mare municipality, to the north by Giulești commune, to the east by Călinești commune, to the southeast by Budești commune and to the south by Sisești commune and tangentially by the town of Cavnic. [13]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to carry out this scientific work, I carried out both bibliographic studies and field studies, visiting Ocna Șugatag. Thus I observed and participated in the Romanian traditions and customs specific to the area. They delighted and delighted us, so we believe that by promoting them through the tourist activity they will be preserved and appreciated for future generations as well as for the preservation of national identity.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The area under study is a special one, where people live who respect and still preserve the old Romanian traditions and customs, that's why we will briefly describe some of them.

Longing for Mara. Tânjăua is an old popular custom found even nowadays in some villages in Maramureș. The custom celebrates the first householder out to plow.

The most famous is the Tânjăua on the Mara, which is still organized in several villages in Maramureș, with a rigorous ceremony. The most famous for its Tânjăua is the village of Hoteni, from Ocna Șugatag commune. Here, the ceremony is organized in honor of the most diligent householder - usually the one who goes out to plow first is chosen, but other criteria, his qualities, are also taken into account. According to the tradition, almost half a century old, the village elders are the ones who determine, year after year, which of the locals deserves this distinction.

For this custom, the villagers still dress up in festive attire, wearing tânjale (pieces that make up the chariot) and yokes decorated with flowers. The celebrated householder is taken, on a telegut, to the river, where he is splashed with water on his face, then he invites his fellow citizens home, where a feast follows, with selected dishes and music specific to the area.

Since ancient times, the ceremonial with agrarian meanings was part of complex fertility rituals, intended to ensure the obtaining of sufficient harvests, the basic condition of survival.[14]



Figure 1. Tânjăua for Mara

Source: <https://acasalaromani.ro/tanjăua-obicei-popular-agrar>

Washing the girls (April 23): Girls, compared to flowers, are sprinkled with water so that they grow beautiful and do not wither.

The festival of goulash, pies and Romanian culinary art (July 19). In the commune of Valea Marei, traditional Hungarian and Romanian food complete to conquer the taste of the gourmet public.



Figure 2. Gulaș Festival

Source: <https://acasalaromani.ro/tanjăua-obicei-popular-agrar>

”Jocul la sura” (August 23, 30): After Saint Mary the Great, three Sundays in a row will be the occasion for games in the villages of Ocna Șugatag commune.

”Joc la sura” (Hoteni, September 6) In the yard of Ioan and Anuta Pop, a real game is heating up.

Ball of the Grapes (October 10). The grapes are better picked if there is a good mood, and if you let the music and dance go, the wine comes out better. The residents of the Ocna Șugatag commune are of the same opinion, who organize a ball to celebrate their harvest.

January 1 - New Year's and Saint Basil's Day customs: The New Year comes with plenty of beliefs and customs. The children walk with the "Star" and the "Goat", unmarried girls put into practice all kinds of habits of finding the bear, boys stick to "door-stealing" and everywhere there are signs that, interpreted, show what the coming year will be like.



Figure 3. „Capra” custom

Source: <https://acasalaromani.ro/tanjaaua-obicei-popular-agrar>

January 6 - Epiphany customs: To protect households from evil and impurity, the priest sprinkles houses with agheas, his arrival being heralded by groups of shouting children.

March 25 - Annunciation: To protect the place from evil and troubles, the householders clean their gardens and light fires in the evening. It is said that the one who tastes fish now will feel like a fish in water all year round. Popular belief also says that if on Annunciation, the weather is beautiful, it will be the same on Easter Day".

Flower Customs: The faithful decorate their houses and gates with flowering willow branches, called matisoare, and will keep them there all year round to ward off troubles.

Pentecost customs: In Maramureș, the celebration of Pentecost is also linked to the vegetable abundance of summer and the fruitfulness of the fields, which is why the villagers decorate their houses with green branches.

June 24 - Sânziene customs: In Maramureș, the girls pick sânziene from which they make wreaths that will decorate the windows, doors and eaves of the houses. Because it is said that the Sânzienele, fairies that live in the fields, get angry if they are not celebrated, on their birthday all kinds of events are dedicated to them.

July 20-27 – Fan holidays. For a week, starting with the day of Saint Elijah, the peasants of Maramureș abandon agricultural work. It is believed that Saint Elijah walks in the sky in a chariot of fire and punishes those who do not honor his day with thunder and a fiery whip. The fear of thunder and lightning keeps people away from field work, leaving them time to rest. [15]

Next, we will present ideas for tourist activities to promote traditions and customs in Ocna Șugatag. Traditional craft workshops. These workshops will be hosted by local

artisans who will share traditional techniques, but also stories related to the crafts practiced. Within them, tourists can learn techniques of weaving, wood carving or pottery specific to the region.

Discovering local gastronomy. In the courtyards of the traditional houses, traditional dishes will be cooked on an open fire in front of the tourists. They can even participate in cooking them or just tasting them. Finally, the wine specific to the region cannot be missing.

Cultural Festivals and Music and Dance Performances. Organizing an annual festival that includes performances of traditional music and folk dances, as well as fairs with local handicrafts and food. Youth formations from Ocna Şugatag, as well as from the surrounding towns, will be involved.

Evenings with Stories and Legends. Campfire where the village elders will tell local stories and legends.

Video Documentary on Traditions. Making short documentaries about local crafts and customs to be shared online for promotion.

Online Platform for Promotion. Creating a website or blog where tourists can read about Ocna Şugatag festivals, balls, games, activities and stories.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the proposed initiatives and the active involvement in promoting traditions and customs, Ocna Şugatag can become a pole of cultural tourism in Maramureş. This type of tourism not only supports the local economy but also contributes to preserving the region's heritage.

REFERENCES

- [1]. **BONIFACE B.G., COOPER C.**, 2005, Worldwide Destinations. The Geography of Travel and Tourism, Amsterdam-Boston-Heidelberg-London-New York-Oxford-Paris-San Diego-San Francisco-Singapore-Sydney-Tokyo: Elsevier
- [2]. **BUTLER R.**, 2024, Tourism destination development: the tourism area lifecycle model, *Tourism Geographies*, pp.1-9
- [3]. **CULLEN CH.T.**, 2000, Authentication of Digital Objects: Lessons from a Historian's Research. In *Authenticity in Digital Environment*, Washington D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, pp. 1-7
- [4]. **DEFERT P.**, 1996, *La localisation touristique*, Edition Gurten, Berne
- [5]. **HILARY DU CROSS, BOB MCKERCHER**, 2015, *Cultural Tourism*, Published Routledge
- [6]. **FORMICA S., KOTHARI T.H.**, 2008, Strategic Destination Planning: Analyzing the Future of Tourism, *Journal of Travel Research* 46, pp.355-367
- [7]. **MARIN DIANA**, 2015, Study on the economic impact of tourism and of agrotourism on local communities, *Research Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, vol 47, Issue 4, pp.160-163
- [8]. **PETROMAN CORNELIA**, 2015, Typology of tourism destination, *Scientific Papers Animal Sciences and Biotechnology*, 48 (1), pp. 338-342
- [9]. **PETROMAN I., MARIN DIANA, PETROMAN CORNELIA**, 2015, *Bazele turismului*, Editura Eurostampa, Timisoara
- [10]. **PETROMAN I., PETROMAN P.**, 2006, *Turismul cultural*, Editura Eurostampa, Timisoara

- [11]. **ROTHERBERG, J.**, 2000, Preserving Authentic Digital Information. In Authenticity in Digital Environment, Washington D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, pp. 51-58
- [12]. **SHARPLEY R.**, 2006, Travel and tourism, London- Thousands Oaks- New Delhi: Sage Publication, pp. 129
- [13]. ***Memoriu-justificativ-si-descriere-stema-varianta-1.pdf
- [14]. ***<https://acasalaromani.ro/tanjaua-obicei-popular-agrar/>
- [15]. ***<https://www.emaramures.ro/calendarul-evenimentelor-obiceiuri-din-maramures-festivaluri-folclorice-serbari-campenesti-si-alte-manifestari-culturale-care-au-loc-in-maramures/>