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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "BOLOGNA PROCESS" INTO THE SUBJECT OF ANIMATION IN TOURISM, AS A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE HOTEL INDUSTRY PRODUCTS PROMOTION

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Abstract: Since the academic year 2001/2002, the programme of studies at the Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry has been adjusted to the requirements of the Bologna Declaration. All the exams, including optional subject Animation in Tourism, during the studies are organised into one-semester exam, and obligatory student's intership has been introduced. Animation in tourism with it's animation programmes, introduces very important segment in touristic offer of one destination. In this way tourists are able to feel local atmosphere. Also, that is an original instrument to oblige them to have a significant role in creating the "genius loci".

In the most hotels and restaurants, on a famous destinations, authentic food is served to guests in the course of animation programmes. The programme should be enriched with the folkloric characteristics of one nation, which we want to represent to visitors. The main goal of this essay, with theory aspects and concrete examples, is to point out the importance of animation, as a considerable factor and new trend in a process of promoting the hotel product.

Key words: Bologna Declaration, practical work, Animation in Tourism, Animation Programme, student's intership.

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INTRODUCTION

The Bologna Declaration, being a joint declaration of European ministers of education, was signed in Bologna June 19, 1999. It refers to the high education system reform. The Declaration arrived from Europe to our country with a new **Law on High Education System** in school year 2006 / 2007. Back in 2001, the Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry Department started „creating environment“ for introducing and applying the Bologna Declaration (pursuant to which 30% of teaching process involved practical work), organizing for its students (primarily tourism and hotel industry students), practical work in a form of summer training in home and foreign travel markets.

The implementation of the summer training begun in 2001, even before the Bologna process had been introduced in the teaching process. That year, our students stayed on the Greek islands of Kos and Rhodos at prestigious hotels Mitsis and Kipriotis Corporation, as well as at hotels in Montenegro.

The most significant feature concerning restaurant, hotel industry and tourism staff's education in our secondary schools, colleges and faculties is acquiring different types of practical skills. That is why acquiring skills through expert training should be the primary purpose of the high education teaching of this area of restaurant and hotel industry.

Students who are leaving abroad to attend summer training have been selected based on:

- Foreign language (English and German)
- Average grade during their studying
- Grade of their preparation training
- General impression during their studies

All these elements are taken into consideration when selecting students, because persons for working in hotel industry should have specific kinds of knowledge, skills and experience. It is hard to find a person who has all these characteristics, but they should have the major part of required prerequisites for doing this type of work. *L. Rogers*, a management researcher, argues that the hotel management team are to choose persons according to the following list of required features.

Appearance	Enthusiasm	Hand shake	Numerical ability
Politeness	Flexibility	Sociability	Health
Attitude	Knowledge	Speediness	Originality
Self-control	Persuasiveness	Hand writing	Mental capability
Ambition	Interest for the job	Intrusiveness	Self-initiative

Source: Nikolic, 2003

This is why a strict student selection of those who will be representing their faculty, as well as their country during their stay abroad, is being applied.

During 2004, the Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry Department expanded and increased the practical part of teaching by opening an Education Centre – national house *Trag* (Trace).

Today, student training is the necessary part of the teaching process. Aiming to enable students to work in conditions applied in foreign travel markets, that have optimal results in different types of holiday offer, is being carried out from a two-month season training in Greece (the islands of Kos and Rhodos at five-star hotels), Montenegro (Becici), Slovenia (mountain holiday resorts on the Alps), to the one-year training in London, Great Britain. Tourism students by recommendations of London experts are attending a part of their training in residence of the Crown Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjevic in the White Palace, Belgrade.

Tourism students attending summer and winter training will obtain certificates that may make their job seeking easier (as a proof of their relevant experience). Tourism, hotel industry and hunting tourism students, after they have carried out theme nights successfully, are getting certificate in acquiring basic skills of *Animation in Tourism*, which provides them to be fatherly involved in organizing events of similar kind, both in our country and abroad.

Within *Hunting Trophies* course, students are acquiring theoretical knowledge and skills required for being able to *evaluate hunting trophies* (they will get certificates in being able to evaluate trophies on the national level). The Department is also providing scientific and expert services in the form of tour guide educational courses, as well as services pertaining to setting travel range of services at certain holiday destinations.

1. IMPORTANCE OF THEME NIGHTS FOR THE QUALITY OF HOLIDAY OFFER IN HOLIDAY DESTINATION

Animation in tourism may be defined as an integral part of travel range of services that implies expanding the range through different events, as encouraging tourists for a more event-related vacations (Ivkov, 2006). The animation in tourism lately has been increasingly more involved in many leisure travels, and animators are tourism workers who are here to meet all of tourists' wishes and requirements, to please their demands and make their vacation nicer. An animator needs to be polite and ready to meet tourists' demands since they first meet until the tourists' leaving the resort, a facility or the holiday spot, when they promise the tourists again they will fulfil all their wishes when they see next.

Encouraging tourists to take active part involves communications and personal contacts with guests, as well as trying to get to know the guests' needs and wishes as best as possible. Furthermore, this involves a task of monitoring how much are the guests pleased with the offered programme. Many a tourist is required assistance in organising their spare time, because they have a hard time socializing, or hard time doing something they are not used to in their everyday life.

Sociologists believe a modern man is often incapable of making contact with other people, in spite of feeling a need to do so (Ivkov, 2006). It is hard to imagine a vacation at a spot without culture and entertainment-related events.

Majority of tourists are visiting resorts not only to relax, but to learn something new, get acquainted with culture, tradition, folklore, national dishes, and folk dance of the country they are staying in. People visiting other countries will be able to get to know people better as well, to get closer to them, understand them better and potentially like them. The host is expected to do the same (Comic, 2003). These are the reasons why animating guests and the animator himself are important bonds between tourists and hosts.

2. STAFF AS AN IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE ANIMATION

An animator is a tourist worker who needs to meet all required criteria through his general characteristics. The animation is important to be carried out by primarily educated animator, who has had an excellent pedagogical training. The animator needs to have certain *physical and psychological abilities*), as well as being *physically fit*. That is why an animator's general characteristics can be defined through following requirements: physical and psychological abilities, talent and sense of establishing a contact with guests, as well as a certain education level.

An animator needs to have certain *character qualities*, such as: communicativeness, generosity, cheerfulness, ingenuity, consideration, sincerity, natural talent, and energy. An entertainment programme animator needs to possess following abilities:

- Ability to perform activities such as: singing, dancing, painting, and some such
- Having good knowledge of tourists' culture, as well as presenting their own culture (a type of entertainment programmes may involve national dance, such as: belly dance, Cossack dance (Vlasko kolo))
- Being aware of differences between the tourists, involving their age, profession and culture.

Splitting animation tasks is important when organizing the programme: a) by *language criterion*, b) by *animation fields*, and c) by *specialization criterion* in all animation areas. The importance of animators' team work should be underlined, because good team work enables the following:

- Introducing various offers' elements in animation programmes, which will produce wider diversity of programmes
- Treating animation as a service, equal to all other types of services
- Creating atmosphere in which every worker of a hotel, an organization or the town participate equally, and the animation is becoming taking care of guests (www.udruzenjebanja.co.yu).

Radoslava Ravkin (1989) suggests an animator needs to have developed *physiological and sense abilities* (sight and hearing) and *psychological and motorical abilities* (motion capability and reaction speed), and mental abilities will be crucial for communicating successfully. Interaction is a criterion for communicating and animation successfully, in which effects of tourists' interaction and reaction, since being information recipients through communication, should be monitored. Even a high quality events and programmes may be out of tourists' interest if the communication with guests fails. The animation can be defined as offer of programmes being carried out through communication and with communication's assistance.

3. ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES

A group of activities called "entertainment programmes" can be divided into: 1. entertainment programme in the narrow sense, 2. entertaining games and other programmes, and 3. music programmes.

1. Entertainment programmes in the narrow sense are all-night shows the basic aim of which is to amuse guests. Each of these programmes has a basic theme that runs through the entire programme and which is most often complemented by various entertaining games, i.e. background music. These programmes can be divided into:

- a) *Personal entertainment contact programmes* – in which guests themselves are main actors. They are hosted by an animator in accordance with the previously arranged programme schedule. These are top quality form of entertainment programmes' implementation. Their quality is reflected through a high level of guests' satisfaction and high reward. The guests want to entertain themselves, be active, ease off and relax, and all of this is possible through this type of programme.
- b) *Paid-for entertainment programmes* – involve contents that are being arranged and paid for per a performance. This type of programme is being arranged over various agencies and mediators. These are: live performances of musicians and music groups, national folklore groups' programmes, Latin – American, Hawaiian and other types of exotic dances, revues, and professional dancers' contests. These programmes are extremely expensive, because the amount of expenses matches performers' popularity and demand substantial technical support.

2. Entertainment games are smaller, overall parts of programmes which involve the guests' participation. These are many contest-related games, underlining fun, joking and amusing guests, These games may be parts of the major programme or may be organized as individual programme parts with the aim to complement the major programme. Concerning the every entertaining programme, an animator is required to define on time the following: necessary aids, joint connection with other programmes, adapting programmes to suit the guests' structure, emerging unwanted situations and dealing with them, prizes for contestants, etc. Furthermore, an animator is required to

rehearse and demonstrate performance, as well as to secure the programme's continuity by harmonizing all of its elements.

3. Music programmes basically may involve live or disco music, and one has to pay special attention to choose good quality performer (Jadresic, 1999).

4. THEME NIGHTS

Getting tourists acquainted with a country's culture is by no means one of the animation's principal tasks. In relation to cultural and historic monuments, there are the animation's two primary tasks:

- a) providing tourists with such an information that would arouse interest of those whose travel motivation does not include getting to know more about cultural and historic monuments and
- b) organizing culture and art-related shows within historic ambience, as well as contents that would give a new life to historic buildings and cities' old centres.

The animation's task is to utilize all traditional events and shows in cooperation with specialists in order to enable tourists to make contact with local residents. In this case, the animator is taking the role of an ethnologist who is to explain the tourists the meaning of a traditional event. Acquainting tourists with economic *and social activities* of a town and area needs to be an integral part of the animation process.

Gastronomic range is also significant for informing the tourists about the country's culture and for diversity of the holiday offer. The gastronomic range is attractive by itself if it includes animation details, such as national costumes and music. It is extremely important, if possible, to enable guests to take part in preparing some traditional dish, for this may enable them to familiarize with something typical of the region they are staying in. (Ravkin, 1989).

Nowadays, the entertainment, sport, recreation and other types of programmes through which socializing and communicating, alongside accepting cultural and other differences of potential customers, are taking an increasingly more important part of the holiday offer. There are various types of theme nights that can be *pre-arranged events*, designed to take tourists back into a country's specific historic period.

Many holiday destinations have become unique for their theme nights. For instance, if you go to Spain, you can attend the "Knight's Party", if in Greece – "Greek Night", or "Czarda Night" if in Hungary. Prejudices about certain nations tourists have are often "erased" owing to the theme nights.

5. GIPSY NIGHT IN NOVI SAD

Vojvodina's ethnographic wealth came as a result of tradition and customs of the national structure of its residents. This abundance involves a wide range of funds of movable and immovable monuments (spiritual values that represent the nations' activity – dance, songs, national costumes, myths, customs, rituals, etc.). Vojvodina, being a region of a complex national structure, has a good base for establishing ethnographic tourist values in the form of quality and variety.

In order to understand the animation concept itself, and for practical use of theoretical knowledge, the third-year students of the Tourism Manager and Hunting Tourism Manager course organised in 2006 a theme night entitled "The Gipsy Night" that took place in *Trace* national house in Petrovaradin. Wishing to bring the Roma's ethnographic abundance closer to the general population, the students in cooperation with their professor and the teaching assistant decided to present this nation's culture and customs.

The theme night's programme was designed through several turns:

- *Meeting guests* at 20.30 p.m.– At the way in, hostesses dressed in accordance with the theme party met the guests. They distributed performance programmes and escorted the guests to their seats
- *Turn 1 – Start of the show (10 minutes)* – Welcome remarks in Serbian and Roma. The Roma's origins, identity and short history were presented with background music and slides on a video beam
- *Turn 2 – Recitation (1,5 min.)*– Dark on the stage, a love poem recitation, 20-second music afterwards
- *Turn 3 – Introduction to the show (15 min.)* – The narrator makes introduction with lines: The Roma are getting married very young. A girl getting married at 12 or 13 is a common case... This turn involves a dance number, aiming to underscore the Roma's nature and their fighting spirit.
- *Turn 4 – Dinner (40 min.)* – Romantic atmosphere during the dinner, with slow music, candles, hostesses giving lilies of the valley to the guests
- *Turn 5 – Continuing the story about the Roma (10 min.)* – Story about the Roma's culture, customs, myths, interests, their status in the world nowadays, and about the way they live in Serbia. The goal of the programme is to bridge the gap between the Roma and the majority population (Savic, Mitro, 2006)
- *Turn 6 – Story about little Romas (5 min.)* – A documentary about lives of little Romas. The goal is to legalize the Roma settlements with the assistance of the city authorities, as well as to encourage them to educate.
- *Turn 7 – The wedding ceremony (30 min.)* – Description of the wedding ceremony
- *The end* – Ending the programme, serving the dessert, after which the guests are having fun alongside animators, dancing to the Roma's music

6. ETHNO AND GASTRONOMIC DELIGHT IN ANIMATING TOURISTS

Diet has always been of vital importance to people, because food was the base of their existence – the man's oldest habit. Regardless of the fact he was less engaged in studying the diet than in his other activities and issues of life, the man is making the food through his customs, tradition and ritual motives. The gastronomic range is also a part of a nation's culture.

Thereby, it should also be involved in the animation programmes, because it was based on national cuisine and folklore elements. The gastronomic range is attractive by itself if it includes animation details, such as national costumes and music. It is extremely important to enable guests to take part in preparing some traditional dish, for this may enable them to familiarize with something typical of the region they are staying in. (Ivkov, Stamenkovic, 2006).

6.1. Development of the gastronomy

In early stage of the human society's development, people used only what nature provided them for making food, raw and uncooked ingredients. After a stone axe's was invented, the man starts hunting and using wild game's fresh meat. Back then, the food conservation problem emerged. Thereby, the man started using the sun light to dry grain and fruit, and later dries meat on smoke. The invention of fire, which was used for heating at first, was the prerequisite for food preparation. Soon, the man started roasting pieces of meat, which was the start of ingredients' thermal food processing – cooking.

Ancient civilizations gave many pieces of information about the way they ate and prepared food. Food preparation in *Egypt*, one of the oldest civilizations, was pretty much developed. Remains of bread and several kinds of cakes were discovered in Egypt. *Persia* was a rich country, with abundance of food. The art of cooking came from Persia to *Greece*, where the oldest cookbook "*Opsology*", by Terpison, was written.

First gastronomic encyclopaedia *Hidipatia* was released, containing complete works of all gastronomic achievements of that time. It was Greece that started giving artistic touch to preparing dishes and gastronomy's development. *Ancient Rome* was famous for its lavish feasts and grand parties. The Rome cuisine was abundant, luxurious and exaggerated. The Romans were first who started decorating bowls with gold, silver and precious stones. The Roman emperor Vitellius divided feast into breakfast, lunch and dinner, and started decorating feast rooms. After the downfall of the Roman Empire, *Byzantium* took heritage of the Roman cuisine to the East.

Cuisine developed further and accomplished impressive results, at the same time when people in the West ate with their fingers. The famous orient cuisine that has lived until present day in Serbia, was created in Byzantium. Today, one may say gastronomy is the privilege of the developed parts of the world, America and Europe,

compared to less developed Africa, Asia and South America, where people eat barely enough to get by.

6.2. Ethno – gastronomy tourism

The animation is one of activities that contributes to achieving economic results through carrying out its human feature. The animation is used to satisfy tourists' need for changes and being in other people's company. To continue with, the animation helps developing leisure travel culture, acquiring new kinds of knowledge and skills, as well as acquiring habits of having an active holiday. The tourists increasingly often choose travel tours which include organised entertainment programmes and other activities, as well as meeting and communicating with other people (Ivkov, 2007).

Any kind of shifting cuisine is an imitation, because it is being taken into an environment in which a nation that the cuisine in question does not belong to lives, and there are no country or region's customs. Owing to certain nations' recipes, we are able to trace down their history, based on both ingredients they use, and the way they prepare a certain dish.

The gastronomic range is going to be more attractive if involving "the animation details", appropriate environment, national costumes, and music. Serving a national cuisine's specialties can be a true experience for tourists who are also interested in learning how to prepare some of the local dishes. In this way, the tourists are enabled to find out about something "typical" of a certain region or a country, and at the same time, tourist offer's image is being created (Ravkin, 1989).

6.3. Animation and gastronomy – unbreakable bond

There are various types of theme nights taking place at certain holiday spots. These may be pre-arranged events, taking tourists back in a country's certain historic period, and at the same time revealing the way people of that period lived. Many holiday spots have become famous for their theme nights, whose aim is to provide pleasant stay, and are cultural-related too. (Ivkov, Stamenkovic, 2006).

Mexican cuisine, being the combination of Spanish, Aztec and Maya cuisine, is an excellent example. In 2006, when they organised the "**Mexico in Novi Sad**" theme night, the Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry department students, apart from presenting folklore elements, involved a wide range of gastronomic products in the whole-night programme. To the Aztecs, maize was a core of their sacred and secular life. Out of maize, they made *atol* drink, then *tamales*, filled with meat or fish, as well as *tortillas*, which were often used as spoons. The most popular drink was chocolate, made from cocoa and consumed by royalty. The rest of the nation made soft drinks out of agawa called *pulke* and *mescal* drink. And tequila was the most famous alcoholic beverage. After finding out about features of the Mexican cuisine, the guests had a soup with *nachos* (chips) and *questedily* as appetizer, and barbecued chicken with dressing and beans as the main course. *Fajita* pancakes were served as dessert.

In **2007**, a group of students organized a **Cuban Night**. The typical Cuban cuisine is Creolic, and it unites influences of Indian, African and Spanish cuisine. Tropical fruit bananas and papaya were served as appetizer, along with the main course, and as base for dessert. Meat is being grilled and soaked in an orange juice, and served with a garlic sauce. Regarding meat courses, menus involved chicken and pork. More established restaurants offered fish speciality prepared by the Creolic method, with sea food. **Flan** – caramel pudding dessert, taken from the Spanish people, is a must. Rum is the national beverage that can be served straight and in cocktails, and alongside beer. On this occasion, the guests had Cuba Libra cocktail as a start, after which they were served a Cuban pie. As main course, several specialties were served in **tamali** leaves - Creolic chicken and rice on the side. In the end, chocolate bananas were served.

If we analyze separately some nations' cuisines on other continents, we will see that each one of them offered certain distinctive features based on which it may be presented within the theme nights. If the night of Egypt or Tunis is organised, guests will be served **brick** hit appetizer (pastry filled with a mixture of eggs, cheese and greens), and before the main course **horis** – a kind of peppery dish. Majority of their dishes resembles soups and pottages, and are prepared of many vegetables and chunks of bread. **Couscous** is the most famous dish, made of roughly grinded grits, which will be served as main course.

Indian sub-continent reveals a special world of taste and aromas. Ingredients of the most famous spice mix **garam masala** differ from region to region, depending on the dish being prepared. The spices are characteristic for the Thai cuisine too: chilly peppers, ginger, coriander, basil, and mint. Regardless of whether an Indian, Thailand, Indonesian, or some other night of South or South-East Asia is to be organised, it will surely be full of magic and rich aromas of many kind of spice. Fast cooking reached perfection in Japan, by preparing raw dishes: **sushi** and **sashimi**, out of fish, meat and algae. Due to its size and different ethnic groups, **China** has a variety of recipes and ways to prepare food. The West appreciates more cuisine of Canton that involves a fast way of preparing food, which enables ingredients to preserve their freshness and be crisp. That is why the ingredients are being chopped and mixed with light sauces, rice wine or a mixture of soup and thickener. At these nights, the guests will be delighted with tastes' distinctive features.

Europe's ethnic map is divided with invisible boundaries that separate groups with the same-kind origins and various diet regimes (Kiznije, 1996). Preparing a national dinner does not mean choosing specialties, but following customs of the country concerning meal ritual and hospitality. In this way, the dish and everything that comes alongside it will be a true connection with the country. If you are preparing Mexican food for your guests, you may set the table for dining casually, with a rustic tablecloth and napkins with colourful bird-embroidery. You can serve the dish with a beer, or tequila with little bit of salt and lemon. If you are to serve a Japanese dish, the core element should be made of refinement, elegance and harmony. We are not easy to dip into such a world in which every move is a ritual, where fish and meat dishes are becoming a genuine small works of art. Still, famous bamboo-made chopsticks must not be forgotten.

Regular cutlery should be provided for those less skilful at using chopsticks. Which ever cuisine we choose, we must pay attention to make the gastronomic dishes in harmony with the animator's programme, which is a difficult task they tend to perform easily and gladly.

CONCLUSION

A state and a nation as hosts may present their country and culture through the theme nights to tourists. Holiday makers often visit certain countries having prejudices they obtained through the media, or were told something bad by people who visited spots they are staying in. Perhaps these kinds of events will help tourists understand better the country that are to visit, and get rid of prejudices.

Surely, tourist industry takes a number of advantages from arranging theme nights, through sales of: gastronomic delights, souvenirs, home-made products, publications, music and video recordings, presenting new and recently established holiday spots, as well as enhancing service quality in these spots.

When choosing a place they are going to visit, holiday makers choose the ones that offer a change, new adventures and events through sport and recreation, being in a company of other people (excursions, birthday parties, various celebrations); entertainment shows (game shows, contests); adventures (adventure trips, camping); cultural and historic animation (drawing, sculpting, writer's nights, concerts), getting to know themselves (yoga, meditation course).

Due to the grand education system's reform being carried out in our country, and challenges set as a result of the constant technological progress, the education system needs to come up with certain solutions.

End quality of graduated students and their skills to work in teaching process, as well as in tourism and hotel industry, is directly matching the possibility to perform expert training successfully. That is why much attention should be paid to this issue.

Student training's basic goal is acquainting future students with actual requirements of teaching, hospitality, hotel industry, as well as tourism in general in real environment of work process, before they devote themselves to this branch. It is necessary to provide them with an opportunity and chance to be able and know how to apply their theoretical knowledge (during the teaching process) in practice. The Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry Department is aiming to *make the best of it, because there is nothing more required.*

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