

Literary Tourism as a Modern Approach for Development of Tourism in Tajikistan

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Abstract

The word “tourist” has been used to mean travellers, for about two centuries, and tourism as a market has passed many ups and downs and has had great changes. Nowadays millions of people go on tours and billions of dollars are circulated in global tourism. Demands of tourism marketing are expanding rapidly and they are not limited to certain types of tourism such as travel to beaches neither for some predetermined purposes anymore. The formation of different tourism types like agritourism, ecotourism, adventure travel, geotourism, and literary tourism that indicate the wide range and extent of global demand in tourism market. Such an extended market provides the opportunity for different tourism destinations to attract tourists from its global market regarding compatibilities and priorities. In this article literary tourism as a modern approach for Tajikistan is explained and also pointed to benefits of literary tourism for development of Tajikistan.

Keywords: Tourism; Tourism marketing; Literary tourism; Tajikistan; Central Asia

Introduction

Due to the pandemic tourism of the day, all social, economic, cultural, and political aspects of people’s lives are influenced worldwide [1]. Literary tourism is one of demanded global tourism types in this market in its different especial patterns. “Tourism development in the tourism literature is generally described as a mixed blessing. It can create new service jobs, provide people with greater income, and help develop the local infrastructure” [2]. It is in fact an outcome of motivations related to the interest and recognition of literary figures and artists who are famous and have created well-known works. In line with this, many countries have defined tours to visit these places named the famous figures not only supporting them, but also supporting well-known artists associated with their birth, life, literary career, and grave places, and persuade interested tourists to travel to their countries. The Kafka touristic tour can be an example including travel to Prague. Touristic paths are defined for literary tourism in this city supporting this idea, and tourists visit the squares and cafes where this famous global author had passed and reposed.

The History of Literary Tourism

Nowadays literary tourism is flourishing especially places that have cultural background and long precedence. Based on studies of trip advisor, the world’s largest travel site and as an official website for global tourism destinations, the first global literary tourism destination is London, in the next rank of favorite cities for Literature lover tourists are New York, Paris, San Francisco, and also Rome in Italy. In these cities at least one famous writer, artist or poet has lived. Their nations are satisfied not only because they have presented great famous literary figures, but also they have got economic benefit of reputation and their artworks as literary tourism.

Literary tourism is not a modern activity and the graves of literary figures have always been important places in European grand tours of 18th and 19th centuries. Tourists in first grand tours followed the paths that have explained by classic writers. Later, paths of visitors have inspired by Romantic poets such as Byron and Shelley.

Literary Tourism Structure and its Importance

In the postmodern era when Meta-narratives are in their weakest period, the identity crisis has entangled most global communities, and people are abandoned in their confusion, just those nations could guarantee their survival and can maintain their progress which govern their own history and past, and can transfer these two to its citizens and others in the form of a heritage through an intellectual, original, narrative like, and audience-based interpretation. This attempt results in recognition, interaction, convergence, and a uniform and powerful identity formation despite maintaining the differences. In fact, achieving these purposes requires a nation’s consecutive attempt which will herald material and spiritual progress of that country.

Tourism has also been beneficial for local cultures. It is frequently associated with a revival of artistic traditions that were previously in decline, as well as the emergence of new forms of cultural expression [2].

One of these important heritages or maybe the most important one is the literature of each nation. Literature is the creation manifestation or the self-belief emblem of nations when they decided to be themselves and not to be afraid of expressing themselves. Naturally, some nations have acted better and some others have been worse in this regard. One of these methods, having a variety of approaches to the society, is attaching the tourism industry to a nation’s literary heritage. The auspicious association of these subjects is named literary tourism as phenomena in tourism literature. It might be better to call it literary heritage tourism having an advancing progress in the world especially in developing countries. Literary tourism is an activity born from an interest in a writer, a literary work or climate, and/or the literary heritage

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of a destination including the birth places and graves of literary figures, literary museums and other places related to writers and literary works, and also surveying paths with literary themes [3].

Literary tourism can be analyzed in destination and path dimensions. Literary tourists, as consumers of literary tourism product, prefer various local experiences over big global projects, and greatly regard subcultures and their literature in destinations. Not only they are not unintentional creatures subject to marketing in touristic destinations, but also they want to gain more recognition and knowledge on each of the well-known figures and artists in the designed literary tourism paths, and remember an appropriate trip experience. Locations that had been homes for well-known literary figures and artists with their precedence are mostly considered as literary tourism destinations. Through highlighting the life climate of these famous literary figures and marketing and advertisement about them, these locations act in attracting tourists from the demanding market of global literary tourism. Interested tourists around the world are highly eager to visit the birth place and work creation of their popular writer and suppose to have the same nature as that great writer to some extent. Shakespeare is an appropriate instance in this regard. Many are eager to travel to his birth and life places and visit them closely. In a report by tripadvisor, Stratford City as Shakespeare's hometown have also been named as the chief aim of global literary eagers, there visitors can observe Royal Shakespeare Company or the grave of modern literature father.

Regarding these issues, the destination in literary tourism is considered from tourism product dimension. That is, the literary tourism destinations must produce the literary tourism product recognizing their own capacities. A tourism product is a combination of attractions, accessibilities, fundamental facilities and conveniences, hospitality services, and institutional and organizational elements. Therefore, the tourism product is not formed only by the attraction itself, but it needs those five mentioned pillars. Literary tourism product must also be formed in literary tourism destinations. The second dimension in literary tourism structure is the touristic path and pivot. The best type of literary tourism is the organized tours in its own framework. What is basically important in these tours is considering a definition of a touristic path. According to experts, defining a path for literary tourism requires performing scientific research, defining basic concepts, and reviving historical identity. Despite that, many travel agencies and tourism activists try to operationalize and imitate something just by hearing a name without passing the scientific process. This procedure will harm literary tourism development. Defining touristic paths for literary tourism requires special skill which must be done scientifically. The realization of this important issue requires education, reformation, and playing some animations for reviving historical identity for this type of tourism.

According to statistics, each American literary tourist spends about 994\$ in each trips, although it only refers to American readers who travel round the world.

This type of tourism has recently become more general due to the expansion of its attraction variety and number. Literary tourism attractions are usually manifested in the three following forms:

A. Real places

These places have real relationship with a writer's life, and are usually their birth, life, work creation, death, and burial places. Samples of these include Jane Austen's house in Chawton, Hampshire, England; Robert Burns birth place in Alloway, Scotland; Nima Yushij's birth place

in Yush, Iran; and Shahriar's house in Tabriz, Iran.

B. Fictional places

These places are the expression or manifestation of a novel, drama, or poetry. Samples of these include Dublin streets in *Ulysses* by James Joyce; the fantasy house of Sherlock Holmes by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; castles and forts and other places named in traditional Iranian literature.

C. Built places

These are places created intentionally to attract visitors. Samples of these include Dickens World opened recently in Chatham; and *The World of Beatrix Potter* in Windermere.

Rudaki, the Origin of Literary Tourism in Tajikistan

Rudaki was born in 858 in Rudak village (Panjrud), in Panjakent, modern day Tajikistan and received great honor and respect in Samanid court. According to early biographies, he was then blinded by some of his antagonists and returned to his hometown sorrowfully, and died there [4].

The founder of the classical Persian-Tajik literature Abu Abdullah Rudaki, lived in IX-X centuries. In his works (lyrical, philosophical, didactic), he preached humanism, freedom, patriotism. Rudaki (857 - 941 years.) had a huge popularity among the people. The fact that from all poet wrote, come down to us only about two thousand lines of poetry. But they give an idea of his poetic talent and depth of philosophical reflection.

Rudaki is regarded as the father of Persian literature. Persian poetry was composed before, but the quality of his poetry was a starting point in Persian literature progress. According to Richard Fry, Rudaki had a roll in changing the writing style from Pahlavi to Farsi. Commemoration ceremonies have always been held in the honor of this Persian speaking poet. In one of these ceremonies in 2008 hosted by the UN, the UN secretary General, Ban Ki Moon stated that Rudaki poems can be a basis for world union because he was the goodness and justice poet in the presence of many globally noted scientific and cultural figures, UNESCO representatives, and ambassadors of different countries. Also in December 2008, a commemoration celebration was organized in Tehran by Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Manufacture Industries Organization, in cooperation with Rudaki's Cultural Foundation, and UNESCO at the presence of domestic and foreign participants. The Tajikistan Republic Government has held a similar ceremony for Rudaki's 1100th birthday in 1955. Braginski Simonov, Sadru-din Eini, SaeedNafisi, Mohammad-aliForooghi, Mohammad Shakoorov, and Richard Fry can be mentioned from the greatest Rudaki researchers. As discovered by Sadru-din Eini, Rudaki's grave was recognized after a missing period in the mid-twentieth century from observations recorded in written biographies and histories of Samarkand, and his bones with signs of blindness have established Eini's findings [5].

Afterwards, a tomb as Attar's tomb was built above his grave now located in Panjrudak village or Panjakent in 170km north of Dushanbe City, in Tajikistan Republic land. The tomb of his grave has an eight-angular plan with a circular dome at its top [6].

When we talk about tourism in Tajikistan, The first idea or potential comes to mind is the ecology tourism or the ecotourism due to its beautiful nature and the sky touching mountains which attract each visitor's sight. Considering Tajikistan has long ago been the literary circuit of great poets and literary figures like Abu Abdullah Rudaki

and others, and is honored because of birth and death of the Persian literature father in it, it can dispatch many literature lovers, culture lovers, archeologists, and those who demand for visit this traditional Iranian region regarding beautiful poems on regional descriptions and the king stories of this traditional and literary region presented to us names such as Panjrud, Panjakent, Khujand, Zarafshan, Samarkand and Bokhara. The tomb of this great man is located in 170km north of Dushanbe City after passing the sky-touching mountains of Hesar and Zarafshan, no matter from Khujand or Dushanbe side. By creating a touristic path and managing related countries, a comprehensive and affluent linear literary path can be drawn to satiate the thirsty hearts of Persian speaking literature lovers, open-minded ones, and culture lovers by visiting these original historical-literary-cultural places of Persian poetry, specially the tomb and life place of this great poet as the boiling origin of poetry and literature, more than before.

Considering mentioned explanations, The UN has organized a ceremony in the honor of this great poet in 2008. This was a starting point by the UN to hold meetings and the familiarity of Persian speaking people with this valuable poet. This procedure is continued, ceremonies are held in his honor, literary criticism and poetry recitation is performed besides his tomb. This way we have took steps to attract and extend literary tourism to this region, and literary lover travellers living around the world are dispatched to this region through creating various organized touristic paths. September 22 is named the Rudaki day in his honor in Tajikistan, of course, which will again be another starting point in creating and planning literary tours by tour guides and Persian speaking agencies all over the world for those demanding the visit of the tomb and other related literary and historical places. Through television and internet ads by Tajikistan government for this commemoration and other literary-cultural festivals, holding opera theaters on life subjects and poems of this poet in the traditional Opera Baltu hall in Dushanbe has picked a big step towards literary tourism progress.

Iranian and other Persian speaking people in traditional Nourooz days intend to travel to historical, religious, cultural, and modern places of the world to spend their vacation and relax. According to most official Iranian news agencies, the number of these foreign tourists range from 1,200,000 to 3,000,000 people. The destination of 90% of Iranian tourists is countries with no cultural, historical, literary, and linguistic kinships and no cultural and literary Nourooz programs and festivals are performed [6] to be in line with Iranian Nourooz culture. Considering these explanations and this point that this co-culture country is also the home for great poets such as Rudaki, can attract at least a low percentage of this profitable tourism market to itself by planning a various comprehensive touristic, cultural, and literary program and presenting it to co-cultural Persian speaking agencies which can cause the flow of great touristic incomes to this country. Totally traditional dances, ceremonial, music and the local literature can be the most important attraction for tourist of villages [7] These require purposeful management and intention from government and private and public institutes in related countries, which then requires the creation of modern substructures such as hotels, restaurants, and recreational complexes in touristic regions of this country. By creating touristic packages from Dushanbe to Panjakent, this highly historically and culturally gifted region can best satisfy domestic and foreign tourists, and create a happy and fruitful educational memory for them.

The benefits of Literary Tourism Development in Tajikistan

1. Creating enjoyable leisure time and full of profitable educations which will be the concern for leisure time in near future
2. Try to make domestic and foreign visitors familiar with literary honors of this country and their accomplishments
3. Strengthening and expediting the education current, or motivating curiosity in visitors through presented interpretations by knowing guides of these regions
4. Making the educational contents strong and rich for children and teenagers through defining and determining organized educational tours to attractions and literary sources of this country
5. A powerful visual and attractive representation reflecting rich cultural, traditional, and literature of cultural domain in this country for domestic and foreign tourists
6. Clearing modernity destructive effects such as cultural self-alienation and the lack of self-belief in people
7. Strengthening correlation, national union, and maintaining group nostalgia
8. Familiarity of foreign tourists with other powerful touristic potentials in Tajikistan such as ecotourism, Alpinism, and feting during their visiting path and informing them to attract other tourists this way
9. Guarding artistic and aesthetic values of this country
10. Enabling national and domestic populations psychologically, training honor and pride in them towards cultural and literary properties and attempting to keep and add to these valuable properties
11. Enabling rural people socially because tourism can change mentality of people nevertheless they are from countries where send tourist or accept them [8].

And finally, economic enabling

Governments and the hosting population perform policies to maximize the benefits of tourists now a days developing countries are increasing their share of international tourism as its share from 20percentin 1975 have increased to 42 percent in 2000 [9]. They follow economic and uneconomic purposes. Their economic purpose is usually obtaining the maximum income and job opportunities in related regions. They of course have uneconomic purposes such as making the tourists familiar with their national and local culture and advertising and recognizing them [10]. The region is then powerful considering different literary touristic tours and creating new jobs in the region. By creating modern cultural-recreational places both the number of related jobs and the stay time of a tourist are increased. I also caused major earning at Tajikistan tourism level and new investments regarding the increasing approach to domestic and foreign tourism to this country and will show this country as a successful dynamic country in new touristic arenas in tourism global market.

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