

THE TOURISTIC POTENTIAL OF CARAȘ-SEVERIN COUNTY

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Abstract

In the paper entitled *The touristic potential of Caraș-Severin County*, we proposed ourselves to highlight the need for community of the tourism development, the importance in this context of the natural and anthropic resources. Translating in practice the theoretical identification we could conclude that in the development of a touristic area a special importance is awarded to the promotion of touristic attractions and facilities, meaning the touristic patrimony which is available that leads to the increase of the tourists' number.

Our research is based on the analysis of the touristic potential of the five big areas of the Caraș-Severin County respectively the touristic areas: *Semenic, Aurora Banatului, Clisura Dunării, Scorilo and Băile Herculane*. Thus, the analysis on areas was achieved on the following elements: relief and geological structures, climate, waters and hydrographic network, vegetation, fauna, archaeological and historical vestiges, artistic and architectonic elements, which participated at the economic development of the area.

On the basis of our research, we can conclude that Caraș-Severin County has an excellent natural touristic potential, tourists having the possibility to admire special landscapes, to visit caves, natural reservations, springs, falls, to go fishing, swimming and canoeing on natural lakes and due to the climatic conditions they can benefit from treatment such as air therapy. Regarding the anthropic touristic potential in Caraș-Severin County, this is diversified, tourists can study the habits and traditions of the region and they can visit: the railway Anina-Oravița, Mihai Eminescu Theatre in Oravița, the artesian fountain and the steam locomotives park in Reșița, Decebal's Statue and Tabula Traian on the Clisura Dunării, barrier lakes, the ruins of some boroughs, historical and architectural monuments, monasteries, churches and museums.

KEY WORDS: *tourism, potential, natural, anthropic, touristic area, touristic destinations.*

Classification JEL: *L8, L83*

1. Theoretical notions regarding the touristic potential of a touristic area

Tourism, due to its distinct field of activity by its content and role, is considered a component of high importance of economic and social life for many countries. In the contemporary age, tourism involves more and more resources and involves in its mechanisms a higher number of organisations.

A large touristic area, due to the multitude of attractiveness elements that it owns can be a touristic destination arranged on several sub-areas. Regardless of the touristic area, the image promoted in the original area has a special importance in attracting tourists, respectively the target segments of visitors. Neacșu N. (et. all) defines the touristic destination “as geographical place or space where a visitor/tourist stops, either for one or several nights of accommodation, either for a short period of time or it represents the terminus point of the tourists' vacation, regardless if they travel with a touristic or business purpose” (Neacșu N., Băltărețu A., Neacșu M., Drăghilă M., (2011), p. 25)

Touristic areas in Caraș-Severin County due to the touristic patrimony existing have as components: *classical touristic destinations* – mountain and town resorts which dispose of a rich architectural, cultural and historical patrimony, very appropriate for a holiday or a visit for a larger period of time; *natural destinations* – national and natural parks, reservations, recommended to tourists in order to admire landscapes, respectively natural richness of the area; *destinations for business tourism* – important industrial and balneary sub-areas; *destinations for a night* – localities positioned between the destinations of holiday and origin areas of tourists, *destinations for short stays* – towns of smaller dimensions which own patrimony objectives which make them attractive.

Touristic destination can be regarded on the one side as a *touristic product* or more *touristic products of resort/area/country type*, and on the other hand as a *cultural touristic product* because by it we promote tradition, customs, heritage, history, monasteries, monuments, museums etc.

When choosing a touristic destination, the tourists highlight the multitude of components of attractiveness and touristic facilities which exist in the area. “The variety of these components and their different role on the touristic phenomenon have determined their structure and hierarchy, thus in the specialised theory and practice more criteria and ways of classifying the touristic attractions were elaborated. The most used classification is that based on *their content*, there are two main categories: *natural attractions* respectively *anthropic attractions*.” (Minciu Rodica, (2005), p.163).

During the time, *the touristic potential* was defined by several authors as:

- “an assembly of natural, cultural and social-economic components which show the possibilities of capitalization on touristic plan and offer or give a certain functionality to the territory, having an essential role in the development of the touristic activities” (The World Tourism Organisation quoted by Căndea M., Şimon T., (2006), p. 7);
- “the result of the spatial association of the touristic capital with the afferent technical-material base Cocean P., quoted by (Neacşu N., Băltăreţu A., Neacşu M., Drăghilă M., (2011), p. 13);
- “the assembly of natural, social, economic, cultural elements and the totality of arrangements (ways of communication, accommodation bases, rest, treatment, meals, entertainment and instructional places) destined to the touristic activities on a territory (town, county, region, country etc) (Ielenicz M., Comanescu L., (2006), p. 8;
- “the prerequisite of the statement of the touristic phenomenon, which includes both the location premises which allow the transformation of the touristic fund in an active factor of tourism, respectively the exploitation of the touristic fund” (Susan A., citată de Neacşu N., Băltăreţu A., Neacşu M., Drăghilă M., (2011), p. 13);
- “the totality of natural, economic, cultural values which following a human activity can become the objectives of touristic attraction” (Snak O., Baron P., Neacşu N., (2001, p. 28);

Thus, we can say that *the touristic potential of an area contributes to its development by capitalizing the existing natural and anthropic resources*.

The natural touristic potential in its turn is formed from *the totality of factors of natural order* which determines *the tourists’ attraction* towards an area by elements such as:

- a. *The relief and geological structures*. *The relief* is characterised by: tops of mountain, falls, gorges, passes, caves, sinkholes. The relief represents an attraction for tourists due to the panoramic landscape that it can offer but also due to the practice of mountain climbing, hiking or visiting the caves and precipices; *The geologic structures* offer to tourists the possibility to visit walls, peaks, pits (which are unique due to the rareness of the existing rocks), Salinas or salt mines and also geological reservations and fossiliferous points;
- b. *The climate* is represented by the volume and frequency of precipitation, recorded temperatures, the air currents. The climate conditions of an area are considered attraction for tourists having in view the achievement of different therapies such as: air therapy, heliotherapy, terrain treatment (movement outdoors in the sun).
- c. *Waters and hydrographic network* which have as components: springs, rivers, streams, underground waters, thermal and mineral waters, natural lakes: glacial, volcanic, salty, karstic, natural levee, anthropic and artificial levee.
- d. *The vegetation* has an important role of touristic attraction due to a large number of rare and special floral species which make the tourists become interested to know the flora of the natural reservations, botanical gardens (which own rare species of plants, trees, shrubs, greenhouses, herbariums) and Silvan reservations which exist in an area. The tourists can visit the forests placed outside the urban areas, for diverse recreational activities, hunting, picking up savage fruit etc. and the forest parks inside the urban areas which can be arranged by plantations if there is no initial vegetation.

- e. *Fauna* due to the variety and richness of different species protected by the faunistic reservations such as chamois, pelicans, Carpathian bear etc. Fauna presents a special aesthetic, scientific and hunting importance. It can be represented also by natural reservations and zoological gardens.

„Within the sphere of the touristic potential, the natural potential fulfils an existential purpose in the extinction of the touristic sector and records a diversity and complexity of high richness due to the elements which make the natural framework.” (Glăvan V., (2000), pp. 22-23).

The anthropic touristic potential contains the totality of touristic objectives created by man with the purpose of attracting tourists. The structure of the anthropic touristic potential includes:

- a. *Archaeological and historical vestiges* made up of: relics and traces of settlements and certain cultures from Neolithic and Palaeolithic; the vestiges of Dacian, Greek and Dacian-Roman settlements; the ruins of medieval fortresses, walled churches, peasant boroughs; battlefields, heroes tombs;
- b. *Artistic and architectonic elements*: monasteries, stone churches, wood churches in Byzantine style, synagogues; civil edifices; statues, monuments, busts; museums, memorial houses, exhibitions;
- c. *Ethno-folkloric elements* which highlight the customs and traditions of popular festivals by: popular architecture and museums; wood constructions; collections and workshops of spoons, distaff, forks and other objects of popular nature; fairs, popular festivals.
- d. *Elements which have participated to the economic development of the area*: stone bridges, old blast furnace, windmills or stone mills etc.

2. The touristic potential of Caraș-Severin County

The Caraș-Severin County is **geographically placed** in Romania on the left bank of the Danube, at the border with Serbia, respectively on the contact area between the Meridional Carpathians with the southern part of the Occidental Carpathians, respectively the Banatian Mountains. On the country territory it is neighbouring the counties: Timiș, Hunedoara, Gorj and Mehedinți. It has a surface of 8520 km², a population of 327579 inhabitants and eight towns: the Municipality of Reșița, Oravița, Moldova Nouă, Băile Herculane, Oțelu Roșu, the Municipality of Caransebeș, Anina, Bocșa. The specific of the area results from the rich natural potential and from the touristic objectives that it owns. Popovici G., states that in Caraș-Severin County there is the most of the Mountainous Banat region which is completed by the area Orșova-Cazanele Dunării, according to table 1.

Table no. 1 The Components of Mountainous Banat

Information regarding:	Caraș-Severin County	Area Orșova-Cazanele Dunării	Mountainous Banat
Surface	8520	495	9015
Population	274277	18573	292850
Number of towns	8	1	9
Number of villages	69	3	72
Number of localities	77	4	81

Sursa: Gheorghe Popovici, *Mountainous Banat-Touristic Guide*, Editura TIM, Reșița, 2014, p. 113

As touristic destination, Mountainous Banat is divided into five areas:

- ❖ “The touristic area Semenici;
- ❖ The touristic area Banat’s Aurora;
- ❖ The touristic area Clisura Dunării;
- ❖ The touristic area Scorilo;

- ❖ *Zona turistică Băile Herculane. The touristic area Băile Herculane* ” (Popovici G., *Mountainous Banat- touristic guide*, available at <http://www.banatul-montan.ro/index.html>, on 11.03.2017)

The touristic potential diversified from the Mountainous Banat can considerably contribute to the development of Caraș-Severin County by attracting potential tourists in this area.

The natural touristic potential of Caraș-Severin County

On the territory of Caraș-Severin County there are varied forms of **relief**, such as mountains, hills, depressions, fields, the predominant form of relief being the mountains. The mountainous units belong both to the Meridional Carpathians and the Occidental Carpathians, these are the Godeanu Mountains (peak Gugu 2291 m), the Țarcu Mountains, the Cerna Mountains, the Mehedinți Mountains, the Small Mountains, the Semenic Mountains, the Almăj Mountains, the Locva Mountains, the Dognecea Mountains, the Anina Mountains. On the surface of the county there are: the hills Dognecea, Oravița and Pogăniș; the depressions Timiș-Cerna, Bistra, Almăj, Caransebeș, Ezeriș etc.; the field of Caraș and of Bârzava. In the county there are three national and one natural park, namely: the National Park Cheile Nerei-Beușnița, the National Park Semenic-Cheile Carașului, the National Park Domogled-Valea Cernei, a part of the Natural Park Porțile de Fier (the Iron Gates).

In *the touristic area Semenic*, the Semenic Mountains attract tourists in all the seasons due to its altitude of over 1.400 m. Regarding *the localization*, we can say that : “The Semenic Mountains are found in the South-West part of Romania and they belong to the mountainous group of Occidental Carpathians; the three tops of the massive form a triangle, whose peaks are: Semenic (altitude of 1400 m), Piatra Goznei (altitude of 1447 m) and Nedeia (altitude of 1439 m).”(Tourism in Romania-Semenic Mountains, <http://www.turismromania.ro/infosemro.html>). In this area there is also the *Comarnic Cave* known as the biggest and the most beautiful cave in Caraș-Severin County with a length of 4040 m.

In *the touristic area Banat’s Aurora*, on the versants of Anina’s Mountains, having a length of 6547 m, there is the *Buhui Cave* which is crossed by a river which is divided into two falls, namely the Big Fall and the Small Fall which are very difficult to be crossed by tourists due to the natural modifications during the years. In Banat’s Aurora there is *the town Anina* which “is known for the best coal it used to produce once, in this town there is the deepest mine in the Banat region and the second one in Europe having a depth of 1240 m.” (Popovici G., (2014), p. 211).

In the touristic area *Clisura Dunării*, there are:

- *The natural reservation Cazanele Mari and Cazanele Mici*: „we can find it on the surface of Dubova, having a surface of approximately 215 ha. Cazanele Mari lie on a surface of 3,8 km and are made up of calcareous massive Ciucaru Mare and Știrbatul and Cazanele Mici have a surface of 3,6 km and are made up of Ciucarul Mic and Știrbatul Mic.”(Association Tourism and recreation Danube’s Caldrons , <http://www.cazaneledunării.com.ro/obiective-turistice/rezervația-naturală-cazanele-mari-și-cazanele-mici.html>)
- *The volcanic neck Trescovăț* is a stony group which has an altitude of 755 m, considered as point of touristic attraction by the natural beauty of volcanic rocks as well as by the miraculous panorama on the Danube.
- *Baba Caia Rock* a name that comes from Turkish which means “the father’s stone” and is placed just next to the village, Coronini. The rock “is a natural monument, made up of calcar, having a height of 7 m above the water. There are many legends and stories regarding this rock.” (Popovici G., Mountainous Banat, http://issuu.com/banatulmontan/docs/doc48_stanca_babacaia?e=7997005/2682555);
- *The Cave The hole with Fly* placed on the left versant of the Danube Gorge;
- *Ponicova Cave*, named also the *Bats Cave* or *the Cave of the Water Mouth* has a length of 1.666 m and it is placed in the mountainous massive Ciucaru Mare;

- *The Veterans Cave* – named also *The Cave of the Mouth Cloth* is placed in the mountainous massive Ciucaru Mare, having a length of 64 m, was used for a period as a shelter for animals until the elaboration of the dam at the Iron Gates. This cave dates back to the times of the Dacians which considered it as the sanctuary of the god, Zamolxe. Nowadays, the cave can be visited preponderantly from spring until autumn, respectively May-October because it requires a special equipment.

In the *touristic area Băile Herculane*, we can identify three geographical elements which form a spectacular relief and of a unique beauty: Mehedinți Mountains, Cerna Mountains- Godeanu Mountains and the tectonic couloir of Cerna. The Mehedinți Mountains contain massive limestones, of white colour and with certain characteristics which determine their beauty. The peak of Mehedinți Mountains has an aspect of tectonic block which is oriented from the Mehedinți Plateau towards the Cerna Valley. The Godeanu Mountains have the highest peak (the peak Gugu 2291 m), and in these mountains there are a lot of rocks: sedimentary, crystalline and granitic, this is highlighted also by the crystalline schist, the limestones which formed some vertical walls which are very spectacular and the Cerna granite meaning the granite bodies are less massive and they have rounded peaks. In the highest area of Godeanu Mountains there are some glacial forms of relief such as: glacial cirques, pile basins, glacial valleys with glacial crossing, moraines. Also in this area there is the *Cave The Outlaws’ Den*. “in the framework of Godeanu Mountains we observe two steps of relief; a high step, placed at 2000 m, which form the main peak and the Northern massives and a low step, developed on the southern versant of the massive, having between 1400 and 1200 m altitude, which creates the general aspect of an amphitheatre. Three peaks dominate the high step of Godeanu namely: Top. Godeanu – 2229 m alt., Top Gugu – 2291 m alt. și Top Borascu – 2158 m alt. The line of high altitudes has the aspect of a powerful and spectacular peak as altitude, interrupted in the lowest part towards the southern part of the massive. Between Top Paltina and Godeanu the height of the massive is constantly maintained at over 2000 m: Top Platina – 2149 m.” (Băile Herculane Resort 2015, <https://ar.scribd.com/mobile/doc/313539931/statiunii-Baile-Herculane-2015>).

The climate in Caraș-Severin County, as compared to other areas, has certain light Mediterranean influences, with warm summers and milder winters, with moderate precipitations. The temperature, according to altitude, reaches a minimum of -23 °C in winter and a maximum of + 39 °C in summer (recorded in July 2016). The regime of atmospheric precipitations increases with the altitude from “666m in Bozovici to 1126 on the Semenic platform” .”(the Climate of Caraș-Severin County, <http://www.info-caras.ro/pagina-1/clima-judetului-caras-severin>);

The water and the hydrographic network in Caraș-Severin County is diversified, the majority of rivers starting from the versants of Semenic Mountains and a smaller part of the rivers coming out from the Locva Mountains and Almăj Mountains. The main rivers from which the hydrographic basins are formed are: Nera, Caraș, Bârzava, Pogăniș, Cerna and Timiș. On the large *rivers*, the tourists can practice instruction or pleasure navigation and on the small rivers they can practice: canoeing, fishing, boat or motorboats travels. The mineral, thermal, mesothermal, artesian *springs* are considered as attraction elements for tourists due to the properties they have for the treatment of certain diseases. The natural lakes existing in the area are *Lake Dracului* and *Lake Ochiul Beului*. In the area of *the lakes* the tourists can benefit of silence, rest and recreation by practising of some activities such as swimming, fishing, canoeing etc.

In the *touristic area Banat’s Aurora*, between the town Anina and the village Bozovici there is the *Bigăr Falls*. This “ seems like a little mushroom covered with moss. The water that runs here is very clear and blue. After some studies done by foreign researchers, the Bigăr Falls was declared as being the most beautiful fall in the world. Thus, it attracts tourists from all over the world.” (Bigăr Falls, <http://romanialapas.ro/cascada-bigar-din-romaniadeclarata-cea-mai-frumoasa-cascada-din-lume/>).

In the *touristic area Băile Herculane* there is the Cerna River with its affluent and the two artificial dams form the hydrographic network of the area. The dam Cerna-Motru-Tismana, is one of the dams of the hydro-energetic system and it is also called Lake Cerna or Iovan

According to the information about the endemic plants in Banat, available on <http://educatiachimbaviet.ro/campanie-3/plante-endemice-din-banat>, we can synthesise that the **vegetation** which enriches the landscapes of Caraș-Severin County is formed by numerous species of plants and trees among which in Clisura Dunării – the Banatian Carnation, the Banatian peony; on Cerna Valley - Rochell's Amber, *Edraianthus kitaibelii*; in Anina Mountains or on Cheile Nerei - Banatian Saffron, *Centaurea atropurpurea*, The bells of the caldron etc.

Generally the vegetation is formed by: *meadows* in which we can meet *cornel, tickle grass; shrub, juniper; shrub; beech, spruce, fir, holm, hornbeam, maple, ash; plant: savage lilac, black pine of Banat, butcher's broom, maple.*

In the *touristic area Clisura Dunarii*, the vegetation is diversified, the most representative components being: *the pine of Banat*- which rises isolated on the limous rocks and it is rarely found; *yew* – is a tree or a shrub very precious, of hard wood, it has approximately 15 m in height and it is often used for sculpture. It blooms in the months of February, March and April; *The Tulip of Caldron* – is a unique species on the entire earth, it blooms in April and May; *the butcher's broom* is a plant which raises at a height of approximately 70 cm, with flaky leaves, small flowers and red fruit. It is often used as decorative plants collected and sold illegally; Other species: *savage lilac, Turkish hazel, rock iris, black hawthorn, yellow crocus, Banatian field maple, butcher's broom, fleur-de-lis* etc.

In the *area Băile Herculane* we remark the richness of vegetation in which a high percent is represented by the pine forests also we can remark the beech forests. The floristic inventory in the area The National Park Domogled- Cerna Valley shows a diversity of an impressive floristic with 1110 species of superior plants. From the total of these species we can observe that 66 species are *endangered taxon* which are very rare and they exist only in the park and this leads to the development of scientific tourism.

The fauna of Caraș-Severin County is diversified by the existence of numerous species of animals of mediteranean nature: *the blackcock, boar, deer, bear, chamois, horned viper, scorpion, insects, snails, lizards, tritons, water marten, squirrel, lynx, turtle, salamanders, trout, burdock* etc.

In the *touristic area Clisura Dunării* the most important elements of fauna are: *scorpion* – 4 cm long, it is not dangerous, its sting is not venomous, dangerous; *horned viper* – has 50-60 cm can be recognised after the small horn on the upper jaw. It is venomous and it can kill small vertebrates; *little aigrette* - can be found in the reservation Balta Nerei.

In the *area Băile Herculane*, fauna contains more species which have a Mediterranean origin. We can say that in this area we find big mammals such as: *the bear* (which is mainly met in the areas of Domogled, *the deer* (this is rarely met) at higher altitudes towards the Cerna Srings, we meet *the chamois, boar, fox, hedgehog* etc. Likewise we find numerous species of birds and reptiles. *The horned viper* is very known in this area, this is a part of the faunistic species of Mediterranean origin. The esculap snake is met in Domogled, and *the glass snake* on the grass of the meadows. In the Cerna river we find: *trout, burdocks* etc.

The anthropic touristic potential of Caraș-Severin County

In the *touristic area of Semenici* we present the anthropic touristic potential in the towns of Reșița and Bocșa.

The town Reșița, seat of Caras-Severin County since 1968 is placed in the North-West. If in the past, in 1771 with the construction of the factories in Reșița, it was called the most important industrial center in Romania, today it is only called *the oldest iron and steel centre in Romania*. In the factories of din Reșița, in 1872, the first steam locomotive was assembled and designed which subsequently, in 1873, was presented at the exhibition of Wien. Today, Reșița is known also for the arrangement of *the steam locomotives park* which is placed in the area Triaj. In Reșița, another

touristic objective is *the artesian fountain* in the centre of Reșița, which was created by the sculptor Constantin Lucaci from stainless steel.

Also in Reșița, the tourist can visit *The Museum of Mountainous Banat*. “The Museum of Mountainous Banat lies in the area Victoria. Here we find 76000 pieces. These collections of pieces dates back 4 decades and contain: glass bracelets, ports, coins, tools, lamps and many other valuable objects.” (The Museum of Mountainous Banat, http://www.infopeniuni.ro/cazare-resita/obiective-turistice-resita/muzeul-banatului-montan-resita_5396).

The town *Bocșa*, placed at 18 km distance from Reșița, can be promoted from the touristic point of view with the Museum „*Constantin Lucaci – Space and Light*”, which contains 37 pieces of sculptures in stainless steel. The first museum with similar works is in Italy and the museum which is in our country is considered the second one in size in the world. Another touristic objective is the *Monastery Saint Ilie (Elijah)*”The monastery was built in 1905 in only 3 months. Today, the monastery owns accommodation places for those who need silence, within it there are: a library, spaces for painting, tailoring and a field for gardening.” (Vasiova Monastery, article written in *Express de Banat*, <http://expressdebanat.ro/foto-manastirea-vasiova-o-oaza-de-liniste-si-spiritualitate-pentru-bocseni/>).

Barrier lakes - *Văliug (Breazova)*, *Secu*, *Trei Ape* are considered an attraction point for tourists in the area.

The spa-climatic resort Semenici placed at a distance of 40km from Reșița and at an altitude of 1400 m, is a resort of national interest. It owns a tele-ski and six ski slopes which have the following lengths: Semenici (350 m), Goznuța (700 m), Crucea de brazi 1 (700 m) and 2 (530 m), Slalom uriaș (1250 m), Slalom special (800 m).

Stațiunea climatică Crivaia, de interes national, poziționată la o distanță de 31 km de Municipiul Reșița și la o altitudine de peste 650 m, este amplasată în partea de sud a Lacului de acumulare Văliug, unde sunt amenajate patru pontoane cu echipamente pentru practicarea sportului nautic, înot și plajă. În zonă există două partii de schi cu o lungime de: Casa Baraj (800 m, cu tun de zăpadă și nocturnă), Semenici-Văliug (5800 m).

The climatic resort Crivaia, of national interest placed at a distance of 31km from Reșița and an altitude of 650 m, is placed in the south of the barrier lake Văliug, where there are four pontoons with equipment for the practice of nautical sport, swimming and sunbathing. In the area there are also two ski slopes with the following length: Casa Baraj (800 m, with snow cannon and floodlights), Semenici-Văliug (5800 m).

The climatic resort Trei Ape, of national interest, placed at a distance of 30 km from Reșița, at an altitude of 850 m, is placed in the North-Eastern part of the Semenici mountains, next to the Lake Trei Ape, being known for its fairy-like landscapes in each season.

The climatic resort Secu, of local interest, placed at a distance of 10 km from Reșița and an altitude of 280 m, is placed in the eastern part of the Barrier Lake Secu.

In *the touristic area Aurora Banatului*, there is anthropic touristic potential in the towns Oravița and Anina.

The town Oravița, known as the town where the first theatre was built—*Mihai Eminescu Theatre*, in 1817, the first CFR railway station in 1849, the first mountain road and field road in 1854-1863 and the first natural pharmacy was opened in 1973. The building of *the railway Anina-Oravița*, due to its uniqueness, beauty and naturalness of the landscapes the traveller circulates through, after 1990 is considered a special attraction source of the tourists for the train journey. The train journey on the route Anina-Oravița on a distance of 33,4 km, 14 tunnels carved in stone are crossed. We should mention that the tunnels were achieved by some Italians who decided to move in Romania due to the uniqueness of the area.

In *the touristic area Aurora Banatului*, there are two barrier lakes *Mărghitaș* and *Buhui*, which is the first anthropic lake built in Romania in 1904 and it is placed at 640 m altitude. The length of Lake Buhui is 1.6km and the depth is 27 m. Due to the fauna and flora existing in the area

and the recreation elements present in the area, the lake attracts a large number of tourists every year.

In the touristic area *Clisura Dunării* there is anthropic potential such as:

- *Decebal statue* – „is a stone sculpture placed between the localities Eșelnița and Dubova, having a length of 55 m and a width of 25 m and it is the highest in Europe.” (Touristic Guides, Decebal's face, <http://www.ghiduri-turistice.info/ghid-turistic-chipul-lui-decebal-%E2%80%93-cea-mai-mare-sculptură-realizată-în-piatră-de-pe-teritoriul-europei>).
- *Tabula Traiana* is a memorial plate, old about 2000 years which has a length of 4 m and a height of 1,75 m. On it there are drawn two dolphins which float, an eagle on the sky and the following text:
„IMP. CAESAR. DIVI. NERVAE. F NERVA TRAIANVS. AVG. GERM PONTIF MAXIMUS TRIB POT III PATER PATRIAE COS III MONTIBVVS EXCISI(S) ANCO(mi)BVS SVBLAT(i)S VIA(m)
Otto Benndorf was the one who translated the text from Latin, saying that it means: “The emperor Nerva the son of the divine Nerva, Nerva Traian, Augustus, Germanicus, Pontifex Maximus, invested four times as tribune, Father of the Country, Consul for the third time, excavating rocks from the mountains and using wood logs and he made this bridge.” (Tabula Traiana, http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabula_Traiana).
- *Mraconia Monastery* was built in 1523 on the place where the former monastery with the same name was. The initial monastery was destroyed due to the war Russian-Austrian-Turkish (1787-1792), being then renovated and remade in 1968.
- *Saint Ana Monastery* was placed in the town Orșova, it being raised by the journalist Pamfil Șeicaru, sub-lieutenant at the 17 Infantry Regiment who fought in the First World War. He raised this monastery as gratitude to God that he escaped alive after an explosion which happened beside him and his colleague.
- *The ruins of Drencova* borough has a length of 15 m but in the future due to the river erosion it will be history beside the other walls which are deep under water. Drencova borough was built in 1419 on the Danube's bank. Although it had a strong foundation, belonging to the family of Iancu de Hunedoara, it was attacked and ruined by Turks.

In the touristic area *Scorillo*, there are the towns Caransebeș and Oțelu Roșu and the resorts Small Mountain and Poiana Mărului.

The town of Caransebeș, placed when we circulate between Timișoara towards Reșița, at the intersection of meeting of three rivers Timiș, Bistra and Sebeș and it interferes in the crossroads of four roads which continues from Timișoara, towards Reșița, Orșova or Hațeg. As touristic objectives in the framework of the town Caransebeș, we can remember Sf. Gheorghe Church, Sf. Ioan Botezătorul Church, Memorial House General Drăgălina, the building of the City Hall Caransebeș, Former Ranger's Barrack, Ruins of Roman Castrum Tibiscum, Zervești etc.

The town Oțelu Roșu, placed at approximately 20 km from Caransebeș, has the touristic objectives: Corner Borough, Poiana Ruscă Mountains, Bistra River, Recreation area Gura Jgheabului.

The climatic resort Small Mountain in the north-west part of the massive Țarcu-Godeanu. “The resort is endowed with 5 ski slopes, their length being up to 12000 m.” (Muntele Mic Resort, <http://stirileprotv.ro/stiri/schi-vest/statiunea-muntele-mic.html>). In 1976 the operation of the tele-chair in the resort, and their line is considered as being the longest in the country and it has a length of 3,36 km.

The climatic resort Poiana Mărului, of local interest, is placed at an altitude of 600 m, at a distance of 21 km of the town Oțelul Roșu, at the mountain feet of Muntele Mic and Muntele Țarcu. „Due to the unique natural landscapes which can be visited and because of the componse of the air in the area, the tourists who spend their holiday in the resort can heal from lung diseases. The first who tested this „pill” was the emperor of Wien himself.” (Stațiunea Poiana Mărului, <https://motosudvestresita.wordpress.com/2012/02/20/statiunea-poiana-marului-caras-severin/>).

The touristic area Băile Herculane, at an altitude of 168 m, there is the balneo-climatic resort *Băile Herculane*, of national interest, built starting with the year 153 d.Hr., being considered as one of the oldest spa resorts in the world and the oldest of Romania.

This is known and searched in the whole world for the miraculous effects of thermal waters and for the naturalness and uniqueness of the place where it is placed. Diseases as chronic rheumatism, diseases of locomotor apparatus, gynaecological diseases, diabetes can be defeated by the power of mineral, bicarbonate and sulphurous waters. The air in Băile Herculane: “it is ionised as a result of the 20 mineral springs, of the pine and beech and also of the falls and vegetation in the area. For all these properties, “ Băile Herculane was visited in countless times by high personalities such as: emperor Iosif al II- lea, Carol I, Vasile Alecsandri, Liviu Rebreanu, Mihail Sadoveanu or Princess Sissi.”(Popovici G., (2014), p. 441).

The most important point of attraction is the barrier lake from *Porțile de Fier*. (Iron Gates)

The anthropic potential of this resort is very valuable, the history of this place goes back 1850 years. The richness of the popular traditions, numerous constructions of the past civilizations, the contemporary technical-economic achievements show the continuity of life in these places and the achievement of a cultural-historic place which came to be appreciated from the point of view of the tourism both on the local, internal and international plan. The anthropic touristic potential is highlighted by the value and beauty that the archaeological vestiges, historical and art monuments, popular tradition have. The most important are:

- *Religious touristic objectives*: the Orthodox Church (19 th century) and Catholic Church (1838).
- *Vestiges and archeologic sites*:
 - the Roman site, point Cazino area, Central Park (aqueduct, baths, votive tabulas);
 - Roman baths (in the Roman Hotel), with Hercules bas relief, on the bank of Cerna at about 400 m up from the Roman-Catholic Church;
 - the archeologic site in the Thieves Cave.
- *Museums*: The History Museum of the resort Băile Herculane which functions in the precinct of the building Cazinou and was built in 1886 in baroc style.
- *Architecture historic monuments* (buildings in the present which have diverse functions):
 - The CFR railway station with the annex building (1886) achieved in baroc style with Arabic murals
 - The stone bridge built on the Cerna Valley in 1864
 - The cast iron bridge, built on the Cerna Valley in front of the Neptun Bath, the 20th century
 - the assembly of spa architecture in the Hercules Square, 18th-19th century containing: Horia bath, Pavilionul cu baile Crisan. (the Pavilion with Crisan baths)
 - the Roman bath with Hercules bas-relief (18th century) at the ground floor of Roman Hotel
 - Venera Baths (1838), 35 Castanilor Street
 - Diana Bath (1910 with changes and reconstruction in 1859 and 1929), no. 1 Izvorului Street
 - the kiosk for the brass band (beginning of the 20th century), 6-8 Cerna Street in front of the Cazino
 - Hercules statue (1874), P-ța Hercules.”(Analysis and development of touristic potential in the Băile Herculane resort, <https://www.scribd.com/mobile/doc/135986618/Analiza-Si-Dezvoltarea-Potentialului-Turistic-in-Statiunea-Baile-Herculane>).

In the resort Băile Herculane, more cultural manifestations take place and some events that are considered a tradition of the town: the days of Băile Herculane, The festival of the Black pine of Banat, The International Fair of the Spa Tourism, The Days of the Resort Băile Herculane (Nedeia Băilor), the Congress of the Romanian spirituality. All these have the same purpose: to attract tourists in the area. The most important touristic objectives in the resort Băile Herculane can be considered: Crucea Albă (the White Cross), Statuia lui Hercules (Hercules Statue), Grota cu

Aburi (the Steam Cave), Grota Haiducilor (the outlaws cave), Muzeul de istorie Băile Herculane(the museum of history Băile Herculane), Valea Cernei (Cerna Valley) etc.

3. Conclusions

The tourism is a dynamic industry which is meant to satisfy the people’s needs to travel and to know the beauty and uniqueness of the resources existing in the area.

The Caraș-Severin County is divided into 5 touristic area, it is a touristic destination with a generous touristic potential from the point of view of natural and anthropic resources where the tourists’ requirements regarding the recreation activities can be fulfilled according to the tourists’ needs thus, we can practice recreation activities such as: hiking, mountain climbing, winter sports, hunting, fishing.

Having a developed touristic potential there can be several forms of tourism such as: mountain tourism, adventure tourism, religious tourism, speo-tourism, ecotourism, agro-tourism, rural tourism, hunting and fishing tourism, cultural tourism, scientific tourism, thematic tourism.

Regarding the touristic infrastructure, we could precise the fact that the touristic areas in Caraș-Severin are touristic destinations with an excellent potential, due to the accommodation units existing there, the alimentation units, ways of access, recreation and treatment activities, which led to the increase of the touristic activity lately, by the number of comings and the number of nights spent by tourists.

We could appreciate that in the Caraș-Severin County the five areas are not valorised at their full potential due to the deficiencies in transport infrastructure, thus it is imposed a higher involvement from the part of the Romanian State’s authorities.

Having in view the improvement of the deficiencies existing in the present we propose: the intensive development of the accommodation structure, of infrastructure, making some decisions by the authorities regarding the excessive clearance of forests, educating the young generation regarding the rural customs and traditions, thus they could not be lost, restauration of the cultural houses, monuments and statues which degraded during the time. Likewise, we could organise some adventures on rivers along the villages which are isolated and poorly developed, thus, this could bring income to that population.

Tourism is an important factor by its contribution to the economic increase at the life standard of the population thus, it can become the change instrument of the trend in a positive way, by using the optimal programs and strategies for the actual needs of society. For the development of the touristic areas in Caraș-Severin there must be collaboration between the public and private sector, in the direction of promoting the existing touristic potential which leads to the increase of encashment at the level of economic operators and implicitly at the state budget by contributions, taxes, increase of employees in tourism, respectively the reduction of unemployment. WE must conceive and put in practice some promotion strategies at local level, role which goes to the local public administration, and county administration and to all the economic operators in tourism in that area. Each operator in the tourism industry must establish individually their own promotion policies in the touristic offer.

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