

TOURIST LOCALITIES IN SHARR MOUNTAIN

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Abstract

The basis for tourism nourishment is grounded in the attractions of natural and anthropogenic origin that are to be found in this area. Sharr Mountain represents a range of natural rarities and beauties, where each one represents certain rarities.

The subject of the debate in the research will be the most important characteristics and values that are encountered in the area of Sharr Mountain, such as geographical position and traffic connection of Sharri Mountain, geomorphologic characteristics, climate conditions, hydrographical characteristic, flora and fauna, where particular accent will be placed on these tourist locations: Brustovec, Leshnica, Sunny Hill (Popova Shapka), Luboten. Natural beauties or attractions that these localities contain are considered very interesting and represent a huge tourist offer.

This research has been done on score of different scientific methods. Method of analysis was used to study natural geographical characteristics of the given region, while, on the other hand, the method of valorization points out the verification of certain values that these tourist localities contain.

Based on the data and outcomes collected from the analysis of the natural factors, it can clearly be deduced that Sharr Mountain is the biggest mountain in the Republic of Macedonia and with its markedness and beauty there is a huge potential for the development of other tourist localities.

Sunny Hill is the only locality which has tourist infrastructure, but from a historic viewpoint we can conclude that this locality has been closer to the road and has had the opportunity to develop as first tourist centre.

Keywords: *Sharri Mountain, geographical position, geomorphologic characteristics, biodiversity, tourist localities.*

1. Geographical and tourist position and communication linkability

Sharr Mountain is one of the biggest and highest mountain massives in Republic of North Macedonia. It is located in the north-west of the Republic of North Macedonia. Sharr Mountain massive stretches to north-east, west, and north-west with a length of 76 km. It starts from the river Lepence and the ravine of Kacanik in the north-east, in the east the border is separated with the Polog valley, in the south-west with the river Stirovik and Radika springs, in the south with the Vardar river spring – Vrutok. Besides, that is a relatively high mountain, which besides its wonderful treasures, it attracts with greatness of its mass. The general look of Sharr most powerfully has been expressed from the south-east side, where above the Tetovo valley the mountain rises to the relative height of 2125 m. The peak Luboten occupies the most conspicuous position in Sharr Mountain, while the highest peak is Tito peak 2748 m. It belongs to the space named exactly after Sharr space, even in the internal zone (to which belong these mountains: Bistra, Stogov, Karaorman and Galicica). 56, 25% of the massive itself belongs to R. of North Macedonia, 43.12% to Republic of Kosovo, while the remainder of 0.63 % to Republic of Albania. Sharr Mountain is a high mountain, created to enchant and at the same time to magnetize with greatness of its mass and with its unique treasures. The French Amie Bue, who studied deeply Sharr Mountain, in a case he compared it to Pirineos ^[2].

Traffic connection is a very important precondition for the development of tourism as it enables the natural rarities and beauties to become accessible to the modern man, in fact it connects the tourist offer with tourist consumption.

At the foot of Sharr mountain there is a paved road of 18.5 km (from the town Tetovo to Sunny Hill), and it connects rural habitats and it serves as a starting point to all attractive parts of the mountain. This road was built in 1981, which made the tourist localities accessible for all visitors.

1.1. Natural-geographic characteristics as a factor for the enhancement of tourism

Sharr Mountain is characterized by phenomenon of natural specific and attractive motifs. From these motifs, we will be elaborating geomorphologic, hydrographic, climate and biogeography motifs and its significance in developing tourism in this mountain.

1.1.1. Geo-morphological characteristics

In general, to the formation of Sharr Mountain massive, as part of Sharr system, has contributed orogenesis hercines and alpes. Still, the structures created during the time of orogenesis hercionic mainly with alp orogenesis, during the tertiary they have been elaborated and changed intensively.

A big role in the expression of various geo-morphological forms and shapes of Sharr Mountain has had the different geological composition whose influence in the development of tourism is seen through the other elements of natural-geographical complex. In Sharr Mountain are encountered vast surfaces and steep crest, round and steep peaks, flat falls plateaus over which rise high rocky divisions. That is just a part of geomorphologic contrast of Sharr Mountain that other mountains with same geological composition do not have. Its mountain crest composes mainly of Paleozoic slats, with whose destruction composes the oval relief forms and falls with mild steep suitable for winter sport activities. On the other hand, over them rise high chalk peaks and rocky parts, which are suitable for climbing and alpinism ^[5].

For the development of tourism, and as a natural inheritance are rocky parts. They are considered very important to increase consumption for active holidays of people, in fact climbing, or to be more exact it highest grade alpinism. In Sharr Mountain there are many spaces and very qualitative spaces for alpinism.

Fluvial relief forms and shapes are very pronounced in Sharr Mountain. The most important among them are river valleys that in certain places have ravine character. These kinds of rivers in the mountain are many. They descend from the high parts to Pollog valley. Their flowing troughs are rocky with high fall that has made it possible to build numerous small waterfalls. The most attractive and the biggest waterfall is in the river Beloviska, known with the name Lower Scale 1100 m above sea level and the smaller waterfall Upper Scale 1200 m above sea level.

Sharr Mountain during the time of delivium was occupied with intensive glasials, which in its relief has left deep tracks, in fact various glacial forms important for tourism and the science. They are various erosive and acculative glacial forms, whose results are numerous circles, then valves and morains. Inside Sharr Mountain, to be more exact, in that part that form the main mountain crest is divided with the river Shkumbini, namely it's flowing in region, are located glacial tracks in the mountain (Stojmiolov, 2002).

It can be summarised that Sharr Mountain with its geomorphological forms, primarily its height, vastness and glacial tracks can satisfy even the finest tourist clientele.

1.1.2. Climate characteristics

Concerning the climate, Sharr Mountain has interesting climate markedness that reflects in different micro and macro variations and in which the meteorological elements have specific daily and yearly impact. In Sharr Mountain prevails mountain climate. The average annual temperature is very low, while daily and yearly oscillation of the temperature is reduced and very quiet. By with the data from meteorological agency that we have, Sunny Mountain has 5,3° C average yearly temperature and this is 6 °C lower than the average yearly temperature in Tetova. Due to high radiation power of snow, which is present for a long time in winter and spring months, air is exposed to intensive coldness. Very frequent are the so-called air inversions, which mean the temperature does not reduce with high, but it rises. During the inversion, averagely, the temperature in Sharr is 5 °C higher around Pologue.

The average annual quantity of rains, estimated in the region of Jelak and Sunny Mountain amounts to 1200 mm. Snow cap appears in percentage form October and it takes uninterruptedly to April, in higher places even to May and June, but some places do not manage to get rid of snow cap all year round. In Sunny Mountain, the average height of snow covers during the skiing season amounts to 100 – 150 cm, while the average number of days with snow in this tourist center, during the year, is 135 days, which is considered a very good condition for winter tourism enhancement. Snow avalanche are rare, but not excluded completely.

In Sharr Mountain dominates winds majorly from west, south-west and south-east directions. In terrains and plateaus that are surrounded with higher peaks, the speed of winds is markedly reduced juxtaposed with peaks itself where winds blow with high speed, especially in winter months. Concerning the development of winter tourism, winds have a negative influence as they dissipate the snow. Numerous peaks that harbor lowlands diminish their speed; by this they help snow stay longer unmelted [4].

1.1.3. Hydrographic characteristics

Sharr Mountain is abundant with various hydrographic objects that should be studied and valorized, and turned into active tourist attractions. Primarily this has to do with many springs, steep mountain cascades and of course, the most known glacial lakes. In Sharr Mountain are to be found 39 lakes, from which 25 are permanent and 14 temporaries. Today in the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia have been confirmed 27 lakes, from which 19 are permanent, and 8 are temporary glacial lakes [2].

Sharri Mountain has a massive number of springs. The most distinguished are Skumbini in Tetova, while the most attractive are the springs of the River of Kameniane that compose a system of 8 springs, while the total width of 28 m., which are located 2100 m above sea level. - Vrutok (700 m above sea level and 50 m wide).

The river Shkumbini is the biggest mountain river branch from the river Vardar. Its width reaches 29,7 km. Other bigger rivers of Sharr are: Bistrica, the river Belovishka, Poroj, Mazdrac, the river of Lesnica, Karanikola, Brodec, Vrapcishte, Luboten, Bogovine, Recica, Vratnice (Rakita), Kamenjane, etc.

In Sharr represented are mineral springs too, that are the least used treasure of Sharr. The biggest number of springs with mineral water is located in village Big Recica. Springs of mineral water are to be found in villages Lower Palciste, Neprosten, and Lesok. Of course, we cannot go without mentioning the Bath Hisar that is called Banice by locals.

Sharr Mountain, which according to its treasure, belongs to the group of mountains rich with waters, not only in North Macedonia, but in the whole Balkans peninsula. No doubt that these hydrographic objects are marked with colossal attraction and can be activated form a tourist standpoint.

1.1.4. Biogeography characteristics

Sharr Mountain massive is characterized with abundant flora and fauna. From mountain treasure, in this mountain represented are several kinds of woods. The region of deciduous vegetation is located in the lower parts and occupies about 60% of lowlands. This region is composed primarily from oak, pine and chestnut woods. Pine woods occupy a surface from 3000 ha. Chestnut is to be found in 1200 m above sea level. Oak woods are rarer than the rest and for this there are no numerical data. Considered, deciduous vegetation, besides tall trees, is also represented by bushes. Above the deciduous strap there is a narrow zone of bushes. In this zone, fir and juniper are relatively more distributed. Nowadays, differently for the past, the fir is much more suppressed than juniper. Highlands's meadow occupies a surface of about 45000 ha. Understandably, they are distributed or dissipated above the bush zone. Sharr Mountain is our richest mountain with grass, which grow even in the highest parts of the mountain. Representation of thick, various and juicy is a precondition for the development of stockbreeding, especially sheep breeding. From the blossom flora, in Sharr Mountain the most represented is encainer. Representation of fauna also is high with more than 44 kinds of games, where natural factors have given more contribution, and the poor human inhabitation.

From the animal world, we have separated the following kinds: lynx, which today is a natural rarity in Sharr. It lives one in high mountain parts and belongs to the group of dangerous species as it harms the useful game, especially the rabbit. Wolves are regular "escort" of sheep herds. During winter, they descend to lower portions in search for food. Bears in Sharr Mountain live far from people in the thick woods, at time they attach domestic animals. Their permanent habitats are in shallow trees, pits and caves covered with grass. Boars are rare in Sharr, the same as wolves, they in summer descend to lower parts, in search of dry leaves and acorn. Doe, during summer move to higher parts as they feed on grass. In summer they search for shelter under the spread trees and in the depths of cliffs. Wild goats can be spotted in high and remote parts of Sharr. Frequently they form groups of 15 members. During winters they hide in pine woods, due to lack of grass, they feed by gnawing small trees and branches. It's worth to be mentioned that there is a cliff at the foot of Luboten named after wild goats which rarely walk around the part of the cliff. This cliff is called Goat Cliff or popularly known as, Goat Rock. From the smaller animals in Sharr are encountered foxes, marten, squirrels, rabbits, wild cats, and badgers. Of birds, worth to be mentioned is the presence of eagles, falcons and goshawks. In the woods we can find nightingale, swallow, the raven, magpie etc. When we talk about mountain fauna, it is necessary to accentuate the Sharr dog, an endemic kind and pride of Sharr Mountain and North Macedonia.

With 147 species of butterflies, Sharr Mountain is the most abundant in Europe, and it has more than 200 species of birds (eagle, griffon vulture, ashen eagle, capercaillie). In the mountain spaces survive golden marten, otter, but also wild bear, lynx, bear and wild goat. Still the most famous is Sharr dog, shepherd dog that took the name after the mountain.

1.2. Tourist localities in Sharr Mountain

1.2.1. Tourist locality Lesnica

One of the most beautiful and the most picturesque parts of Sharr Mountain in Sharr Mountain is the locality Lesnica. This locality is one of the most distributed surfaces in Sharr Mountain and occupies the spring part of the river Shkumbin. Its borders stretch in south to the peak Trpesnica (2.610 m), from which to northeast stretches to the peak Turcin (2.748 m) and Bakrdan (2.700 m). Its stretches to the north through Kasan, goes through 2.577 m and 2.559 m

and declines to the rocky parts Plat (2.396 m) where it turn to west, following the valley of the river Shkumbin and through Babasanica goes to the border of Republic of Kosovo through which it goes to Trpesnica In this space can be found attractive spaces of: Karanikolo, Plat, Babasanica, Lower Lesnica, Upper Lesnica, Krivo Shija and Gini Geb.

Through this space can be paved five skiing paths, with total delevel from 2.200 m. The best skiing paths may be paved through the medium part of Kriva Shija. Starting from the higher parts of the cycle, above the lake with height of 2.500 m, where the paths divide into left and right from the lake and go to the foot where can be blocked the rocky parts.

With these characteristics of the terrain we can say that Lesnica represents a locality with bigger potential in Sharr Mountain. Unfortunately, tourism almost is not developed. Because in this space is to be found L. Lesnica where there is realized a certain turnover form summer tourism. The remained kinds of tourism are not represented due to the lack of available roads and accommodation capacities.

1.2.2. Tourist locality Brustovec

The wider space of this part of Sharr Mountain took the name from the highest peak in all its south part. The peak of Brustovec has a height of 2.662m and in the north and south part it borders with valves and circles where there are parts, while the remained sides are even more flat so it looks like a mass that widely stretches in the surrounding. To this space attaches Rudoka to (2.658 m) in whose foot can be found more circles, while in it registered are various relief per glacial phenomena especially in the falls of Lake Rock where do exist a fossilized rocky glacier with length 1,5 km.

This locality stretches from Terpaznica (2.610 m), to the north to Korzelino (2.629 m) in the south. In the north part in the wider valve under the peak Brustovec is to be found the biggest lake or Sharr Mountain –the Lake of Bogovina while on the other side of the peak surrounded with Rudoka in the west is to be found the Black Lake. In the vicinity of the Lake of Bogovina to the west is to be found the White Lake.

This space enables tracing of the skiing paths, especially form Brustovec and from its peak 2.662 m. According to A. Stomilov the total delevel of the skiing paths amount to 5.960 m that has a high probability. Still, because of the impassibility of the terrain for winter sports it has not been done an inclusive analysis for this region yet.

This tourist locality has a potential for development of these kinds of tourism: Winter – sports, summer stationary, excursions, fishing, hunting, health and ecotourism.

1.2.3. Tourist locality Sunny Hill

In the heart of Sharr Mountain 1.700m above sea level is located our oldest and most famous tourist center Sunny Hill. One of the most beautiful skiing challenges is Sunny Hill, where since we arrive there it feels as if you turn off your everyday life and it carries us into a special winter story. Sunny Hill is a paradise for skiers, one of the oldest winter-recreative and mountain centers in Macedonia and in Balkans. Mountain climbing started in 1929 forming the alpinism association Luboten, skiing also started to develop in 1929 forming skiing sections. In the vicinity of Sunny Hill is the locality Jelak, Lesnica and Ceripasina, where the three together increase the attractiveness of this tourist locality.

Sunny Hill is abundant with amazing suitable terrains for skiing and sledging that are linked with ski-lifts and cable car. Skiing center is endowed with skiing tracks with length of 35 km, three homogenized tracks complying with FIC standards, with 9 ski-lifts and 2 two-seats. Skiing tracks are suitable for more skiing disciplines and these are very attractive to adventurous skiers.

In this centre is organized the Traditional International Cup of Sharr Mountain. Sunny Hill's beauty does not fade away even in summer. The clean air is useful for all persons with blood problems; cold water from springs continuous increases the appetite for food. Endless things can be told for Sunny Hill, but one and only one thing is clear, it is the unique locality which is valorized and has a built infrastructure [1].

1.2.4. Tourist locality Luboten

Tourist locality Luboten is located in the far north-east part of Sharr Mountain. It occupies the peak Luboten (2.499 m) with its foot. Although it's not the tallest peak of Sharr Mountain, because of division, the sharp lines and pyramid forms represent one of the most beautiful and most impressive mountain peaks.

From a tourist standpoint, Luboten is the best known and earliest visited mountain part in Sharr Mountain. With its dominance it attracted the first climbers, skiers and fans of nature in Sharr Mountain. Because of this in 1923 two accommodation objects of Luboten where took shelter the first climbers. The first mountain shelter in Sharr Mountain and at the same time in Republic of North Macedonia was built in 1930.

The shelter was located 1.700 m above sea level and it had three rooms and 15 beds. Today this shelter has been revitalized and has 40 beds. Though here enhanced the first steps of tourist movement, this locality has been left behind and in the future must be taken measures to revitalize it [8].

The locality can develop health tourism due to its climate. We may infer that in these localities a tourist turnover has been harvested only from winter-sport and summer stationary tourism, but the following forms of tourism may also develop: camping, extreme tourism, alpinism, fishing, hunting and eco-tourism.

Concerning it utility, this monastery is fully prepared to accommodate visitors, is doing it under certain conditions and regime of accommodation.

Conclusion

Sharr Mountain possesses various tourist motives that can be valorized and to represent an important tourist attraction. In the abstract and the whole research, we have exposed all natural conditions that may be found in Sharr Mountain massive for development of many possible tourist localities.

During the whole research natural characteristics have been stressed as precondition for the enhancement of a tourist locality, we found out that natural beauties, climate elements, water flows, glacial lakes and many springs, flora and fauna, the highest peaks are a big number of elements that can serve for building an abundant tourist offer.

I think that we should stimulate establishing of an tourist chamber under the umbrella of the municipality that will deal with organizing, promotion of all tourist possibilities that Sharr Mountain offers. It should also aim at attracting investments to develop other tourist localities. Besides Sunny Hill as a locality, also Lesnica is another locality that has very suitable conditions for tourist infrastructure building, there would have had even longer skiing tracks because exposition of the terrain enables this.

It also requires more commitment and cooperation from the government with the locals so as Sharr Mountain to shine as it used to in the bygone years.

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