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The Synergies of Tourism and Agriculture for Rural Restructuring

Torres, R. M. and Momsen, J. H. (eds.), 2011. *Tourism and Agriculture – New Geographies of Consumption, Production and Rural Restructuring*, Abingdon-Oxon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, pp. 223.

The purpose of this paper is, first of all, to present a summary of the above book edited by two leading researchers and professors, who collected in total 13 international case studies on the linkage between tourism and agriculture. Secondly, it aims to offer the work to the academic society, because its involvement in education definitely enriches the teachers' tutoring activities. Meanwhile, it helps students to understand the synergies of these two special and very different sectors. All the theoretical and practical views of the case studies focus on the wide range of opportunities, how agriculture and tourism assert the multi-functionality and sustainability of rural areas. Along with the issue of sustainable development, the cases in this book are useful for all projects as well as management strategies. They also target the entrepreneurs by integrating all rural activities in a complex vision that sustains development and by preserving rural society. The studies summarize best practices concerning tourism, agriculture and rural restructuring from Hungary, Ghana, Japan and Mexico; define challenges and potential on linkage of tourism and agriculture in the case of the Fiji Islands and the Caribbean region, like Jamaica and Barbados. Last, but not least, the book finishes with a perspective on new forms of tourism, agricultural production and consumption while showing how these activities have been developed to increase the value added to the primary sector's production in Italy, the United States, England and Spain.

The first book in the series 'Contemporary Geographies of Leisure, Tourism and Mobility' by Hall, C. M. (ed.) was published in 2002. This edition is the 32nd in the row. It is interesting, innovative and has a global perspective.

Tourism and Agriculture: both sectors provide a different supply for consumers' needs as agriculture offers food and basic products for the first level of *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* (1943), and tourism helps people on the level of self-esteem as well as self-actualization.. (A. Maslow's need-type summary of tourism is shown in Table 1.)

Table 1. Travel motivations in the context of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow-type need	Travel motivation	References from tourist literature	Examples of services and supply
Physiological	Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical recreation - The canalization of stress - Fresh air 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well-developed infrastructure - Nice, sound environment - The work of front staff - Easy accessibility, parking
Safety	Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health - Regeneration - Prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sports facilities - Wellness-services - Health services
Belongingness	Love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family togetherness - Fellowship, friends - Social relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To organize family programmes - To organize events regarding birthdays or other holidays
Self-esteem	Reaching existence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prestige, social, professional reputation - Personal development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Place for training and conferences - Team-building training
Self-actualization	Be aware of ourselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-discovery and evaluation, to satisfy internal desires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To organize special programmes (sightseeing from a helicopter)
Cognitive	Knowledge Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural/pedagogical - Knowing new cultures - Mental relaxation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local products in souvenir shops - Tasting wine, cheese and palinka - Library and music room, exhibitions
Aesthetic need	The evaluation of beauty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment - Landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parked promenade - Petting zoo, playground - Pond, flower-garden

Source: Own compilation, 2011 (based on Mill-Morrison; 1985 – Lengyel Márton; 1992).

The world is undergoing global change. Key terms like globalization, competition, financial and economic crises, innovation, multi-functionality, sustainability, diversification, environmental aspects and climate change determine the frame of entrepreneurs', farmers' and experts' work. They are forced to develop their own contribution to the market, and global processes based on previous experiences brought from the past directed to the 'sustainable' future. As a result of this new perspective the linkage of these two poles of the economy gives the value added for both agriculture and tourism.

As the editors write (Torres, Momsen 2011), new challenges and opportunities were born for rural producers while shifting global consumption patterns and attitudes towards FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) products and leisure activities in the 21st century. But what does rural tourism really mean? There are a range of definitions available all over the world. But sometimes even the literature does not help us have a clear vision: it uses terms such as agritourism, ecotourism, wine tourism, active tourism, farm tourism, water tourism, etc. These terms are hard to define, because of their different root: this root is the rural development concept. Rural development has a stronger agricultural approach for instance in Poland and Hungary; in the Netherlands it was and is rather a social activity in connection with the well-being of people living in rural areas. Actually, these terms mentioned before are all part of rural tourism depending on the national specificity. Anyway, tourism interlinked with agricultural aspects and vice versa may provide new solutions for a number of challenges in rural life nowadays, while giving interesting destinations for tourists, who have, on the one hand, had plenty of 'mass-tourism experiences' and need diversity and placidity, on the other hand, they may have to search for alternative destinations because of lack of discretionary income. It should not be forgotten that this linkage creates new needs for a labour force, a new way of thinking and a more consumer-focused approach of companies.

Part I of the book discusses tourism, agriculture and rural restructuring in the case of Hungary, while unfolding the topic of rural areas as a post-productivist transition or a new function. The chapter also covers the nexus between the two sectors in Ghana, as a case of unexploited development potential. A Mexican example shows besides the agricultural and tourism aspects a third one as well: the migration problem. Part I ends with a study on female empowerment through agritourism in Japan. This structure also shows the uniqueness of the edition, namely its global vision taking studies from the European, African, American and Asian continents.

Part II specifies sustainability as a challenge and potential of rural tourism while summarizing the linking of agriculture and the food industry with tourism aspects in the Fiji Islands; showing a Caribbean case of linking conventional constraints and contemporary solutions; a Jamaican study on the hotel sub-sector as an agritourism actor; as well as the changing relationship between agriculture and tourism in Barbados.

Part III shows the variety of new forms of agriculture, tourism production and consumption: farmers are diversifying their activity; tourists are seeking out new experiences, destinations and new types of service consumption concerning food, place, leisure and entertainment. Terms such as rural, pro-poor, sustainable, responsible, farm, gastronomic, wine and agritourism are discussed in this chapter. The cases summarize American (California, Michigan) and European examples from England, Italy and Spain.

As a personal point of view, this book brings an interesting concept in discussion, that of new global approaches, created by merging rural literature with scientific issues. It reflects more than 420 international literatures, which also shows the complexity of the edition. Although we could observe the interlinkage between agriculture and tourism in many countries in recent decades, this book brings along new dimensions of rural tourism. Regarding the style of writing, it stands at the edge between the scientific and informative, so it is suitable for teaching materials, because it helps to understand synergies between the sectors of agriculture and tourism and it gives a good base for discussion. It is also recommended for entrepreneurs and farmers, who would like to widen their business and strategic approach. Why is it worth reading? Simply because while reading we start to think about more possible future directions on this strategic 'marriage', which means a 'win-win' situation for both sectors: agriculture + tourism = agritourism.

References

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