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**THE CULTURE OF EVERYDAY LIFE AS AN OBJECT OF THE  
TOURIST ACTIVITY**

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***Abstract***

Tourism, as a basis of the interdependence of cultures, optimizes intercultural communication that is an adequate mutual understanding of the participants, which belong to different nations and cultures, in the interacting act. Therefore, ethno-tourism is one of the most popular types of tourist activity today. Its social significance involves the study of everyday culture as an element of the national tourist product. The author of the article attempts to analyse the daily Tajik culture as a potential for the development of ethno-tourism in Tajikistan. The relevance of the study is explained by the fact that this potential is practically not in demand purposefully and fully when a national tourist product is created in the Republic of Tajikistan. The article is devoted to the discussion of ethnic markers of the Tajik culture, which are distinguished by increased cultural and semantic significance. The author's conclusions are based on the results of ethnological expeditions, which were undertaken in 2016–2018 yrs. in the Khatlon and Sughd provinces, as well as in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) of the Republic of Tajikistan.

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**Keywords:** House, musical culture, carpet weaving, cookery.



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## 1. Introduction

The growth of intercultural communication is becoming a sign of the times. Many researchers in their work indicate this. Therefore, for instance, Mezhuev (2011) is convinced that nowadays a civilization of dialogue is being formed. A person's ability to lead an intercultural dialogue has largely provided not only technical progress, but also the development of spiritual culture. However, in the process of realizing the potential of intercultural dialogue there is plethora of problems, which are analysed in Ladygina's (2018) study. Despite the existing difficulties, there is no doubt that the dialogical relations between cultures promote mutual awareness and provide for the process of cultural identification of the individual.

One of the most significant means of intercultural communication today is tourism. This leisure industry contributes to the disclosure of the achievements of national and regional beliefs, provides an adequate and humane perception of other cultures. Tourism plays a unique role in strengthening the already existing common cultural foundation and in deepening the spiritual and moral solidarity of humanity.

## 2. Problem Statement

At the present time, cultural tourism is becoming an important component of the vacation industry, which includes a number of motivational tourist activities. Ethnological tourism deserves special attention among the subcategories of cultural tourism. The research papers of Barlukova (2010), Svyatoha and Filimonova (2014) are devoted to its status. Considering the types of ethno-tourism and the most important factors of its development, Monakhova (2010) notes that ethno-tourism is based on the interests of potential consumers to the real life of the people, to the acquaintance with their folk traditions, rituals, arts and culture. Ethno-tourism allows not only foreign tourists to get acquainted with the peculiarities of the modern "living" culture of the local residents, but also domestic tourists to see the heritage of their fellow countrymen, who preserve customs and traditions, elements of everyday life and economic activities.

The researches of Sunduev and Khyshiktuev (2009), Surtaev (2012), Strelnikova (2014) are dedicated to the study of the potential of ethnological tourism and its importance as a strategic direction contributing to the protection of cultural heritage. Immersion into the socio-cultural environment satisfies the natural curiosity of any person and his need to communicate with others.

The cultural self-expression of the individuals is accumulated in the space of everyday culture, where the centuries-old experience of the society is created and reproduced. The possibility of being included in the sociocultural environment, direct contact with "usto", the master, creating the visible and material world of culture, participation in rites and rituals, and preparing dishes of folk cuisine is becoming an important component of the tourist product.

The peculiarities of the world perception are formed and reproduced by different sign systems that are related to practical necessity, which is common to people of different nationalities. Therefore, these systems are understandable without any interpretation. For that reason, with all the disunity of languages, there are such laws that contribute to the convergence and understanding of different cultures.

Vedenin and Shulgin (1999) draw the attention to the other side of the direct cultural contacts. Interest in everyday culture causes a sense of pride among locals, motivating them to preserve and develop

their national traditions and cultural values. It promotes the growth of national identity. All this testifies to the fact that ethno-tourism has a powerful humanistic potential.

### **3. Research Questions**

The important task is to study the humanistic potential of ethno-tourism. The interaction of the tourists with the local population, their involvement in the world of everyday culture create conditions for mutual understanding and eliminating distrust of each other, preventing interethnic conflicts and intolerance, fostering respect and acceptance the “Others” – who are different, unlike me.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to consider the tourism potential of the daily culture of the Tajik people, to define its ethnic markers, which can become the elements of the national tourist product.

### **5. Research Methods**

The features of the subject matter of the research imply an appeal to ethnographic methods based on a person’s ability to engage in observation and reflection, which, in turn, suggest participation in the daily life of people, consideration and interrogation. The ethnographic analysis is associated with the discovery of cultural patterns and key events.

Daily life is seen as a synthesis of the profane and the sacred in the space of private life, connecting life and being

### **6. Findings**

The touristic attractiveness of any territory is determined by its specificity, uniqueness, and a large number of ethnic markers. Obviously, for that reason, foreign tourists are so interested in Gorno-Badakhshan A.R., Yaghnob and those places in Tajikistan, which have almost unchangeably preserved the traditional way of life and methods of economic activity.

Ethnic markers are concentrated mainly in rural areas. Things, housing, clothing, behaviour, speech – all these are languages of culture, manifesting themselves in everyday life. Moreover, each of its elements has prominent geographical local characteristics.

One of the attractive cultural elements is the musical potential of the regions of Tajikistan. In Gorno-Badakhshan, tourists are surely shown subject dances, among which the dance with a horse is particularly expressive. In the Kuhistoni Mastchoh District, girls perform the dance “Ostin” (sleeves). As shashmaqam is a widespread musical genre in Sughd Region, so falak is – in Khatlon.

Lukov (2008) notes that culture of ordinary life is “the whole amount of culture, actualized in the human activity of today, here and now”. Everyday culture as a sociocultural environment with a unique appearance is attractive not only by the forms of daily routines but also by economic structure. It contains the recipes of folk cuisine and methods of educating children, folk art and memories of ancestors, legends and myths. For example, while sitting in the house of Yodgor in the village of Langar, Kuhistoni Mastchoh

District, during an ethnological expedition, its participants, along with foreign tourists, listened anxiously to his stories about peris, fantastic beings in the form of beautiful girls.

It is not about artificially created for tourists ethnical villages or ethno-parks, but about the real place of the people's everyday culture. The interest in how people lived before and live now has always existed. In order to understand the culture of the particular people, one must look into their home, in the space where one can see traditions, socio-ethical attitudes and aesthetic ideals, which are reflected in things and belongings. The way of life, achievements and features of culture are always replicated in the material-substantive being.

The house is a social universal with intensified cultural and semantic significance. For that reason, not only scientists, but also tourists are so interested in the Pamir dwelling – a chid. Its sacral and aesthetic parts are included in everyday life. While staying in the Pamir house, tourists can be acquainted with the peculiarities of architecture and its symbolism.

In the central part of the house there are three levels of flooring: the first level (chalak-sanj), near and around the place of making fire (otashdon), means “insensate world”; the second level (losnukh-sanj) means “flora” (“vegetative soul”); the third level of the flooring (barneh-sanj) means “fauna” (“sensual soul”) (Mamadnazarov & Yakubov, 1985).

Five wooden bearing pillars (columns), which are installed inside the house, also have their own semantics. During the spread of Zoroastrianism, they symbolized the angel of love, whom welfare and prosperity depended on; the keeper of fire, warmth of the home; the angel of the earth and the angel of fire that symbolized sunrise and sunset, a ray of light. The main pillar denoted the connection between heaven and earth. Over the centuries, these ideas from the format of Zoroastrianism converted to Islam. From the point of view of Isma'ilism, the pillars personify the “Five Pure Bodies” (Punch Tani Pok): the Prophet Muhammad, Imam Ali, Bibi Fotima Zahro (Imam Ali's wife), Imams Hassan and Husain (Imam Ali's children). The flat wide board “buchkiik”, a symbol of the sky, is installed between the pillars, symbolizing Imam Hassan and Imam Husain (Tilloev, 2017). Therefore, solar symbolism is carved on it: cross-shaped rays, wheels, and a swastika. “Buchkiik” points to the boundary between heaven and earth. The horns of a mountain goat, the sacred animal in the ideas of the Aryans, are installed on the “buchkiik” as an additional ancient sign of the Aryan civilization. Shokhumorov (1997) considers in his study that its protective function could be explained by the eighth and ninth incarnations of Verethragna, Bahram, i.e. the angel of the victory, when the divinity appears in the form of a wild goat. Obviously, the following belief of Badakhshanians is connected with the same circumstance: if you stand under the crossbar, you can turn to the owner of the house with any request and he is obliged to fulfil it.

The two main transverse support beams connecting the pillars of Muhammad and Ali, Fatima and Hassan / Husain, symbolize the World Mind (nous) and the World Soul as well as two worlds: material and spiritual, reflecting cosmological ideas of the Aryan civilization.

The final element of the Pamir house is a “chorkhona”, a stepped four-tiered dome, which is fixed above the beams in the middle of the room. Each tier symbolizes a certain element: earth, water, wind and fire. At the same time, the fourth tier symbolizes the sun; it is open to the penetration of light and is set last. It is believed that the natural and divine ray of light passes into the house through this opening. The inhabitants of the house think that the connection of the house with the heavens is through this hole.

Subsequently, the internal space of the house reflects the ideas about the world and its creation through the system of cosmological symbols, whereas religious-mystical ideas define aesthetic ideals.

The construction of the house does not make sense without the central element of the Pamir house – the hearth “kitsor” (otashdon) – a fireplace, a place for making fire. It is one of the ritual necessities for celebrations and religious events. The deification of the hearth is a characteristic pattern of traditional cultures. This is clear and comprehensible by the representative of any culture. The Pamir house gives the tourist, who stays for the night, not only shelter and rest, protection and food, but also emotionally positive communication, the opportunity to feel the joy of life, because it is built on the spiritual values of culture, providing mutual understanding of people.

The house determines the attitude of man to nature, the material arrangement of life, children and old people, historical traditions and their modern transformations. This attitude reveals the spiritual potential of culture and contributes to its realization.

Home is a concentration and awareness of the way of living. People eat, sleep, lead together household in it. The entire life cycle of a person, i.e. the most important events life like birth, wedding, and funeral, takes place in it. Not without reason, wedding ceremonies, which have local specifics, are the most popular among tourists. The participation in ritual ceremonies can be an important component of ethno-tourism.

National traditions of food and feast rituals are of particular interest to tourists. Even now, the pagan custom to sit on the ground, while eating, has been preserved by the Tajiks. The common meal is a symbol of unity. The participants of the feast are a kind of collective body, which makes it natural to use a shared bowl or a plate at the dastarkhan. People eat with fingers. Perhaps this is due to the realization of the significance of the human hand in its transforming activity just as in the archaic period. The human palm was one of the first representations in the Palaeolithic wall art. The image of the hand demonstrated the organic unity of various aspects of its functions in the culture, which it symbolically represented. Shokhumorov (1997) writes, that in the era of the Aryan civilization the palm was revered as an attribute of the one God, Ahura Mazda, in addition it symbolized the five divine rays. In the Indian culture, the five fingers of the hand personify five elements, namely: water, air, fire, sky, ether – which remind us the basics of the Aryan culture. People believed that by taking food with hands, the divine energy of the five elements was transmitted to the whole body through their fingers. With the adoption of Islam, the palm became known as “The Five Brave Men of Caliph Ali”. We can assume that the desire of the Tajiks to spiritualize everyday life have contributed to the sustainability of custom – to eat with their fingers.

Guests are seated for the covered dastarkhan in a special guest room, i.e. mehmonhona. Every person has this room in his home, regardless of the wealth. The dastarkhan abounds with treats: sweets, fruit, homemade cakes, scones. As Tokhirzoda (2017) writes in his book “The Culture of the Tajik Cuisine”: “Treating guests starts with tea. Black and green tea or tea from herbs and cumin seeds is poured from teapots into porcelain piyālas (small ceramic bowls). After a cup of tea, eating sweets and fruit, leisurely conversation, the main dishes are served in turn. After eating, tea is resumed with fruit and sweets” (Tokhirzoda, 2017). Welcoming hospitality, modest lifestyle, natural open-mindedness and friendly communication are important elements of the life of the Tajik people. For that reason, they are very pleased about having visitors; they try to treat guests with the ingenious and unpretentious meal, but nourishing and

health giving. People are sincerely offended if you do not visit their house, do not share the meal with them. The refusal to eat something hurts the feelings of the owner of a house.

The concepts of “guest” and “treat” have a great semantic meaning in the Tajik culture. They reflect the benevolent attitude of the people to the guest. Valieva (2018) in her study reveals the content of the concepts “guest” and “treat” in the Tajik language, thus characterizing the ethno-linguistic specifics of hospitality and generosity. Hospitality, being an important element of the Tajik culture, contributes to the promotion of the tourist product.

The spectrum of culinary technologies in the Tajik culture is remarkably wide. For example, the preparation of pilaf and the composition of its ingredients have certain differences in different regions of Tajikistan. In the Kuhistoni Mastchoh District, every qishloq (village) has its own technology of cooking another national dish – qurotob. In Tajikistan, the gastronomic component of tourism is rich in its diversity.

Hostesses will gladly not only tell the tourists about the peculiarities of cooking, but also show the technology of their preparation. Although tourists might take part in this process. So, for example, with pleasure and excitement tourists beat the butter with the help of a traditional wooden churn in the village of Dzhilandi, GBAO. While students from the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University diligently learned to cook noodles for shurbo in the house of Shamsiddin in the village of Vitkont, Kuhistoni Mastchoh District.

Tourists can participate in other daily activities of local residents. Qishloqs Zimtud, Guitan, Ven of the Voru jamoat are centers of homemade carpet weaving. Thus, in Guitan and Ven women use different types of technology for the manufacture of carpets. In Guitan, women of the Toshev family are occupied with carpet weaving. They acquire this skill from childhood. Ahdiya Tosheva, the eldest daughter in the family, learned it from her mother Lubat Dustalievna. The grandmother of Lubat was also busy with carpet weaving. Four people can do one carpet at once. Simple design carpets are woven for 5 days, and compound design ones – up to 10 days. One thread fits tightly on another with the help of special tools that look like a flat stick and a comb. Tourists can make sure how difficult this work is by working along with the craftswomen. The loom, on which the girls work, is called “Dukoni Gilembofi”. It is made of wood by local artisans. Women make themselves threads from sheep wool. They wash, dry, and twist the wool on a special stick – “urchuk”. Then they dye them. Most often, women use natural colors for dyeing like green, red, and black, taken from pomegranate peel, walnut, and other food. According to the ancient traditions, the interior of the Tajik dwelling is completely filled with decorative embroidery, fabrics, palaces, felts, and carpets. Things, along with the practical functions, have an axiological one, reflecting the attitude of object being to the spiritual needs of man. For that reason, things can be described as carriers of certain values. To reveal these values is to understand the culture of the people.

Carpet production has its local identity, a variety of technology and different purposes of the usage. Folk artisans never deviate from the canons and traditions worked out over the centuries. They occasionally add small accents to them in the spirit of the times. It can be assumed that many carpet products have not changed their look for several centuries. They have stayed unchanged, only with variations of some details of the pattern, without altering their traditional character as a whole. The richness of the textile traditions of the Tajik people has been manifested in various types of carpet weaving.

The manufacture of felt carpets can be found, for instance, in the village of Dasht, Kuhistoni Mastchoh District, Sughd Region. In the same place in several houses, there are wooden looms on which

women make adras that is in great demand among the local population. In the *qishloqs* Padrokh and Esiz, folk crafts centers are opened, where 15–20 women work. There they sew, embroider, weave, make traditional bead jewelry and teach local schoolgirls.

In traditional cultures, information is encoded not only verbally, but also in visual images. Visual perception of reality is reflected in the decorative and applied art, through which the world is understood and expressed. As Bolshakov (2018) rightly points out, that it is replicated in the specific design of matter, in the aesthetic organization of sensory-perceptible signs. The images created by the masters capture the ideas of harmony and beauty of the world. The main content of artistic activity is the creating, storing, functioning and transmitting the spiritual values of culture.

## 7. Conclusion

Mastering of everyday life by tourists allows through the carefully penetrating the microcosms of a person, time, history to move into another culture, and not only to find its identification meanings, but also to build a positive dialogue with it.

Unlike the common world practice of establishing ethnic villages where cultural space is being reconstructed, ethno-tourism can be organized on the basis of tourists' living in kishlaks and familiarizing them with the traditional culture of the Tajik people in their natural environment of functioning, without disrupting their everyday life and historical appearance of the territory. A tourist is not a spectator of the ethno-show. He becomes a part of the cultural world, a participant in creating a harmonious way of life: he joins the labour process in the fields and pastures, in the forge and at the stove, behind a loom and sewing machine.

The everyday culture of the inhabitants of kishlaks (villagers) has certain axiological and psychological aspects that allow them to immerse themselves in the cultural space, to see the living thread of time.

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