

“Geographic Assessment of Tourism and Recreational Potential of Racha”

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A b s t r a c t

The urgency of the topic of the master thesis is related to several key factors. Racha is one of the most problematic region in Georgia (characterized by depopulation, hard social and economic situation, forming new protected areas, large energy projects) which creates new challenges to the spatial arrangement. Tourism development can be considered as the way to improve social, economic and ecologic situation. Tourism development planning can be done by complete assessment of its potential.

The aim of the underlying research is complete and complex assessment of tourism and recreational resource (medical, educational, agrarian, adventure etc.) potential of Racha, that has not been done until now. This assessment gives us opportunity to determine the tourism centers (resource gathering) areas, which will be conferred as the priority areas for spatial arrangement and planning.

The following tasks are related to the aim of the research:

- 1. Assess the influence of natural environment, ecologic, demographic, social and economic situations in the mountainous areas (in concrete, in Racha);**
- 2. Analyze current and expected spatial peculiarities of economical projects;**
- 3. Reveal of tourism and recreational resource potential of Racha;**
- 4. Determine high, medium and low potential areas for tourism development in Racha;**

The research methodology is related to geographic analyze and synthesis, European experience in landscape planning, theoretical conception of central areas and analyze of statistical data.

After the implementation of the research, for the first time the tourism and recreational resource potential will be revealed and different areas for tourism development will be determined in Racha.