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## LANDSCAPE URBANISM. DIRECTION «GREEN CONSTRUCTION» IN MEGACITIES

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UDC 711.1

DOI: 10.17673/Vestnik.2022.01.13

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### CURRENT PREREQUISITES FOR DEVELOPMENT AGRO-TOURIST COMPLEXES: WORLD EXPERIENCE

*The article reveals the historical and logical approaches to the agro-tourism industry formation around the world, which is becoming an alternative to the lifestyle in urban megacities. The authors explain the prospects of this direction of tourist infrastructure, describe models of its development, based on examples of existing successfully functioning facilities and comparing them with each other.*

*Раскрываются исторический и логический подходы формирования агротуристической отрасли во всём мире, которая становится альтернативой образу жизни в городских мегаполисах. Показаны перспективы формирования данного направления туристической инфраструктуры, описаны модели ее развития, основываясь на примерах существующих успешно функционирующих объектов и сравнивая их между собой.*

**Keywords:** agritourism, rural tourism, degradation of rural regions

**Ключевые слова:** агротуризм, сельский туризм, деградация сельских регионов

The degradation of villages and hamlets, mass migration of population, and low wages is urgent in rural settlements in Russia and other countries. A promising sector that could solve this problem is rural tourism [1, 2]. Rural tourism (or agrotourism) is a sector of the tourism industry focused on using natural, cultural, historical, and other resources of the countryside and its characteristics to create a comprehensive tourism product. This type of tourism has become a compensatory alternative to the lifestyle in urban cities and is especially attractive to the residents of the largest cities around the world.

The need for a city dweller to be involved in rural activities has become urgent because this is directly related to the issue of ecology and raising a healthy generation. Innovative technologies for the production and processing of agricultural products, modern equipment, qualified personnel, and people willing to be involved in eco and agrotourism should be transferred from the city to the countryside. Moreover, rural infrastructure and design agricultural technical schools must be developed

[3]. The main reason for the emergence and development of rural tourism is the need for city dwellers with average incomes to relax in the existing rural environment with certain practical benefits and to be alone in nature. Rural settlements, their compositional, landscape, and human-scale qualities can favorably influence the mental condition of an urban resident, which makes the agritourism industry attractive, thus contributing to the development of tourism infrastructure throughout the region. Sources of involvement in tourist activities can originate from the residents of city and other regions, and even quite often from other countries.

During the work, for a complete analysis of the current situation in agritourism, such materials and methods were used for the analysis of prerequisites, comparative method, theoretical graphic modeling, and sociological research performed by specialized teams of marketers, as well as surveys conducted by the authors of this article.

In Europe, the development of rural tourism was earlier associated with the industrialization of agriculture. Increased technology has led to

increased commercialization of agriculture and a decline in the number of farmers, prices for agricultural commodities, and farm incomes. This entailed changes in agriculture as an economic sector. Concurrently, urban legalities began offering diverse recreation and tourism in rural areas [4].

In Russia, from the end of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century, the first programs aimed at the development of rural areas, including the development of social service infrastructure and its field, hospitality infrastructure. The main task of agrotourism complexes is to transfer rural settlements from the mono-production sphere to the sphere of multifunctional settlements, providing the opportunity to receive various service types. Thus, jobs are provided to the local population, residential units are updated, population outflow is reduced, and the settlement infrastructure is developed [5].

All agrotourism complexes can be classified into authentic and modern complexes. The wealth of culture and history, ancient monuments, sight-seeing attractions, art, traditions, and cuisine are the hallmarks of authentic tourism. The clearest representative of this trend is the agritourism complexes in Italy.

Modern models of agritourism represent such methods of recreation as extreme sports in a natural environment, event recreation, modern technologies for growing crops, and energy-efficient ecofriendly architecture, etc.

Agritourism in Russia, particularly in the Samara region, is a novel tourism industry. Nevertheless, Russia has enormous potential for the development of rural tourism, both authentic and modern.

Figure 1 illustrates the four stages of the gradual development of agritourism globally. Theoret-



Fig. 1. Graphic model of agritourism development

ical models are presented as four established characteristic directions according to nationality.

1. **Anglo-American model of rural tourism** (Fig. 2) (Great Britain, USA, Canada). The Anglo-American model arose in English-speaking countries in the postwar period, when the national economy was in a critical condition and required immediate measures to overcome the crisis. During this period, active construction of roads began and auto tourism intensified. Motor tourists have become the main consumers of agritourism services in English-speaking countries. This fact determined the characteristic features of this model, namely focus on domestic tourism; provision of basic services, since additional services are not in demand; neglect of national specifics (except England, where national specifics are expressed quite clearly) [5].

“An Englishman’s home is his castle,” says a popular proverb. Southern England represents a distinct and unique type of rural tourism. There are green spaces and 18<sup>th</sup>-century estates in the original Georgian and Gothic styles, where Jane Austen, Thomas Hardy, and William Shakespeare lived. Jane Austen describes the Wiltshire countryside as a nostalgic, drowsy place that evokes déjà vu, with “thatched roofs, narrow windows with lace curtains, walls covered with a veil of roses.”

These are places of powerful love and living force. Today, visitors from all over the world make a pilgrimage to Chawton Cottage, which is now a museum [6].

2. **Western European model of rural tourism** (Fig. 3) (France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Austria, and other Western European countries). The Western European model emerged in the 1970s in France and Italy against the agricultural crisis associated with the loss of competitiveness of agricultural products on the international market [4]. In this case, agritourism became a measure adopted by the European Union to prevent degradation and depopulation of the agricultural sector [5].

Italy is the most obvious representative of agritourism in Europe. The most popular regions are Tuscany, with 25% of the territory being agritourism estates, as well as Sicily, Sardinia, Calabria, and the northern foothills of Italy. In Italy, several national rural tourism organizations exist, with the most famous ones being Terra Nostra, Turismo Verde, and Agriturist. They maintain relations with the parliament, ministries, and administrative authorities [7].

The Relais Borgo Santo Pietro hotel is located in the medieval village of Chiusdino, in the heart of Tuscany, which was once a retreat location for



Fig. 2. Chawton Cottage in Hampshire

medieval pilgrims. Chiusdino is the birthplace of Saint Galgano. Construction of the church began around 1220 and was completed approximately six decades later. Today, it comprises a large 300-acre agritourism complex with a hotel and a spa. The philosophy used here is “farm-to-plate,” implying that everything on your plate is grown on site. Tourists can visit the historical center of Siena, which has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and is among the most visited tourist attractions in Italy [8].

3. **Asian model of rural tourism** (Fig. 4) (Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Japan). The Asian model is the complete opposite of the Anglo-American model, since it involves a national flavor, several additional services, and accommodation of agritourists in especially built “VIP villages” or expensive national hotels in rural areas. The Asian model of agritourism development can only be practiced in countries where a vast hospitality culture has been developed, the tourism industry is at a rather high level, with a stable influx of foreign tourists each year [5].

In China, mass migration of the population from rural areas to large cities, which has been occurring for decades, has led to the formation of several abandoned villages throughout the country. Revitalization requires diverse measures, including the development of tourism, which will provide new workspaces. The low-rise Grotto Retreat Xiyaotou was built in Xiyaotou Village as a part of the Zhangjiakou Prefecture rural revitalization program. The village was converted into a community farm, and a low-rise complex of nine buildings was constructed to provide farmers with additional income through rental housing, events, and selling local cuisine [9].

4. **Eastern European model of rural tourism** (Fig. 5) (Bulgaria, Poland, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Cyprus, Greece). The Eastern European model of rural tourism is widespread in the countries of Eastern Europe, namely Bulgaria, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Greece and Cyprus.

The formation of this model occurred under conditions of poorly developed housing and communal funds of the rural sector, and therefore,



Fig. 3. Territory of Relais Borgo Santo Pietro

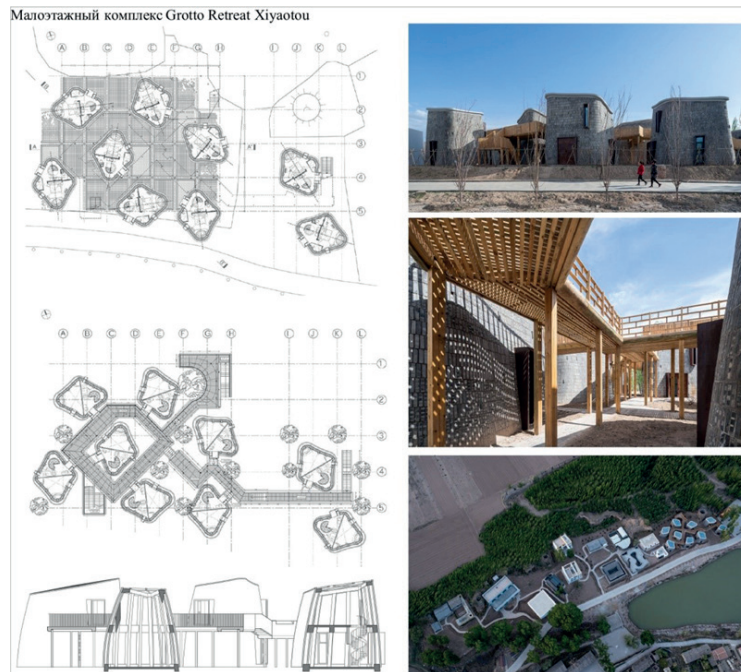


Fig. 4. Grotto Retreat Xiyatou, Xiyatou, China, 2021

required the development of programs for the reconstruction of villages; accordingly, this model, unlike the Western European model, is more expensive [5].

After the collapse of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, Romania experienced a long-term economic crisis. In this situation, tourism promotion has become an important tool for bringing rural areas out of depression. In 1993, the Romanian government initiated the development of a tourism development strategy, published in 1994. Transylvania is a region in the northwest of Romania. Transylvania is surrounded by the Carpathians from the East and the South. The historical region of Bran in Transylvania was considered the most important region for the development of rural tourism, which comprises 13 villages, including Bran. It originated as a guard post on the ancient trade route from Transylvania to Wallachia but gained particular fame due to the 10<sup>th</sup> century castle, which is considered the abode of Count Dracula, the world-famous character in B. Stoker's book [10].

**5. Agritourism in Russia** In Russia, agrotourism manifested in the form of summer houses or dachas at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the development of this industry was suppressed by the war years, decline in the country, and the subsequent years of restoration of the destroyed economy, primarily industry and housing stock. Agritourism started gaining popularity only in the last decade against the growth of urban agglomer-

ations and large cities as an alternative recreational activity.

Ecopark Yasno-Pole is an association of several farms in an area of 500 hectares in the Yasnogorsk district of the Tula region, conducting agricultural and agrotourism activities, thereby creating conditions for the development of surrounding villages and settlements. Agricultural and tourism activities are conducted throughout the territory (Fig. 6).

There are areas for growing animal feed, pastures, fruit gardens, plant nurseries, berry bushes and vegetable plantations, and greenhouses. The most isolated part of the eco-park territory, adjacent to the Vosma River, is reserved for an eco-laboratory. Through the joint efforts of architects from different countries, examples of modern and comfortable houses will be created based on energy-efficient and environmentally friendly technologies (Fig. 7).

**Conclusions.** Ultimately, considering international and Russian experiences and ways of developing agrotourism in different countries, agrotourism arguably has a beneficial effect on the economic situation and solves some problems within the region, such as, it prevents the degradation of rural settlements, contributes to the restoration of the historical fund in a particular settlement (reconstruction and restoration of objects), reducing the outflow of the local population from villages and hamlets; the anthropogenic psychological load on a metropolis resident is reduced; the tourism sector is developing as an economic

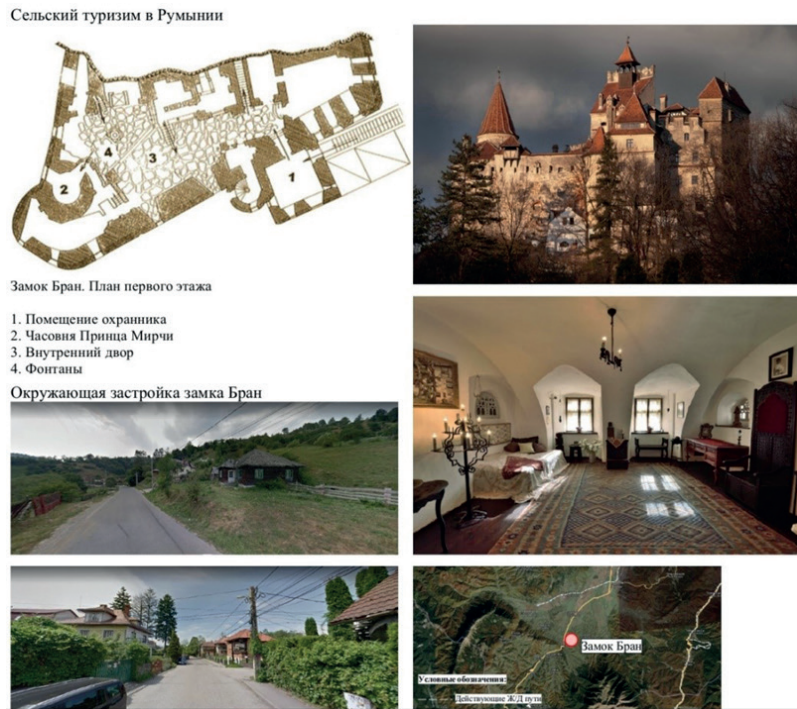


Fig. 5. Bran Castle, Transylvania, Romania



Fig. 6. Ecopark "Yasno-Pole," Tula region, 2013



Fig. 7. Theoretical model of the architectural and urban planning organization of agrotourism complexes

sector of the region; city dwellers become interested in the history and culture of rural settlements, the region and the country.

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For citation: Gud' T.A., Akhmedova E.A. Current Prerequisites for Development Agro-tourist complexes: World Experience *Gradostroitel'stvo i arhitektura* [Urban Construction and Architecture], 2022, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 104-111. (in Russian) DOI: 10.17673/Vestnik.2022.01.13