

## Historical–Geographic Overview Life Cycle of Tourism and Hospitality in Dojran and Dojran Lake in Republic of Macedonia

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**Abstract:** Dojran and Dojran Lake is a specific tourist area located in the southeast region in the Republic of Macedonia. The aim of this paper is to identify the beginning and explain the historical and geographical order of appearance, changes and processes in tourism and hospitality, and parallel to it determines the relationship of the life cycle of tourism in Dojran region. In this space tourism is based on the values of the natural triad, air–water–land, so most tourists use their time for various recreational, sports, health and other activities in and around the lake water. To confirm hypothesis we are using multiple research methods. Research starts with a descriptive method, continue with the evolutive and ends up with empirical method. In addition we use statistical, cartographic and other methods. According to the data from our research the lake and the settlement develop cyclically together with tourism. From the research we established a cycle which in the period of its maximum development is interrupted, and which soon begins to stabilize and rejuvenates with real indicators of tourism growth.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Dojran, lake, water, mud, fishing, gastronomic

### I. INTRODUCTION

A number of books have been published on the history, geography and tourism in Dojran and the Dojran Lake. This research looks into the beginnings of tourism and hospitality, its stages of development, and the concerns and problems faced by the municipality of Dojran and the Dojran Lake [2],[5],[6],[10],[14],[16].

Overall, literature about the Dojran region dates from the 20th century and our research contribution will be to make recommendations to the relevant institutions for the promotion of tourism and improvement of tourism action policy aimed at increasing the tourist offer and demand resulting in economic development of this region in the 21st century.

Generally, natural-geographic features are crucial for the development of tourism. The Dojran Lake and the Municipality of Dojran are situated on the southeast part end of the Republic of Macedonia is very attractive for tourists. The Dojran Lake is of tectonic origin formed in the lower Quarter-Pleistocene, over millions years ago. The lake is a remnant of the old Prasijasko or Peon Lake. Early in its genesis it occupied an area of 127 km<sup>2</sup>, with a maximum depth of about 100 meters and was located at 208 meters above sea level. The lake was three times higher and ten times deeper [14].



**Map 1:** Geographical location of the Dojran Lake in Macedonia (R=1:2.000.000 and 1:300.000)

Dojran is registered in the first map of Ptolemaeus in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Today, the lake has a typical oblong shape with an area of 43.1 km<sup>2</sup>, an altitude of 148 meters and a maximum depth of 10 meters. Air temperature in summer is between 23 and 27 °C and in July and August the temperature of the water surface is between 25 and 26 °C, and at noon up to 28 °C. With these temperatures the lake belongs to the group of lakes with excellent conditions for bathing and other water activities [14]. More than a century the surface of the Dojran Lake has been divided between two countries, the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Greece.

Dojran is a small settlement in the Republic of Macedonia, but with a history of nearly three millennia. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, Herodotus noticed that this settlement was a pile whose population is engaged in fishing [4]. Throughout history it changed its name from Prazijas, Dober and Taurijan by Poline and Dojran to Old Dojran [13], and there are many legends about its name. The settlement called Dojran is registered by Strabo—the father of geography. It was changing appearance with time and thus the function of a small pile fishing settlement became a town of over 9000 inhabitants, developed with unique fishing, trade and craftsmanship [5].

However, during the First World War (1914-1918) the city was bombarded and the entire population fled to neighboring cities and beyond. After the war, a smaller portion of the population, about 1,000 turned back in town and restored the neighborhood. A few years later, a new settlement was built adjacent to it. In this respect, two settlements were formed: Old and New Dojran. Old Dojran “sprouted” in the place of former city and Dojran as an entirely new settlement.

## II. METHODOLOGY

To confirm hypothesis that Dojran and the Dojran Lake from a specific tourist area with a long tradition presenting a typical example of the life cycle of natural and anthropogenic evolution based on air, water and land, are being used multiple methods. This research uses the following methods: descriptive (using bibliography, archive documentation), evolutionary (identification of chronological order and the life cycle of emergence, changes and processes), empirical (surveys, interviews), cartographic–photographic (production of thematic map and photos) and statistical methods (using statistics on population, visitors and nights).

More specifically, research takes place in the following order:

Firstly, the survey consulted and used the extensive bibliography in several areas: geography, history, tourism, hospitality, institutional and private unpublished archival documents and various publications of relevant institutions.

Secondly, the focus of research is tourism and catering. For that purpose it has been conducted a questionnaire and interviews with relevant people active in tourism in the Municipality of Dojran. The defined quantitative variables dominate as well as the number of rooms, beds, tables, seats, tourist nights and employees.

Thirdly, the survey concludes that the area is considered specific with clear air, pleasant water, healing mud and algae, rich cuisine and the opportunity for recreational fishing.

Lastly suggestion has been given that there is a real need to further increase the sample qualitative research methods for collecting relevant data for the needs of tourists and improving the quality of tourist services.

## III. RESULTS

Based on an in–depth research separates chronological stages in the development of tourism and hospitality, which are not established by previous researchers. One purpose or main idea is identifying the beginning of tourism in this particular area, then giving the consequence analysis of tourism for some time, as well as starting a quantitative segregation of tourism. Causal analysis is presented in the section of the survey results, which intertwine into two segments namely the lake and the settlement, i.e. nature and man.

These two elements are important for tourism of Dojran and the Dojran Lake. The causal analysis of tourism and hospitality is displayed thoroughly and with images. According to the results about the capacity and the number of tourists, there was a continuous increase. In this direction goes the information provided by the responsible persons about the municipality stamps issued for construction of three hotels 5\* and the revitalization of the resorts on the north part of the lake which was abandoned for more than a quarter century.

Based on the data collected from research about the beginnings and development of tourism and hospitality in Dojran and the Dojran Lake one can establish two stages: pre-tourism and tourism stage.

In the pre-tourism stage two phases are singled out: first, from the end of 19th century to 1912, and a second from 1934 to 1941. Common for both stages is that they ceased with the starting of the war: the First Balkan War for the first and the start of World War II for the second phase. In the second stage, the tourist phase one can single out four phases: the first one starting from 1953 until 1960, then a second developmental phase from 1961 to 1988, a third one of stagnation from 1989 to 2004, the fourth of tourist revitalization or revitalization from 2005 onwards.

### **Pre-tourist phase**

The phase begins towards the end of the 19th century, when the city of Dojran had about 10.000 inhabitants with over 300 shopping stores and workshops. There were 25 restaurants in Dojran in various parts of the city, most of which were located on the lake shore, 3 hotels, 30 inns, 50 public fountains and several industrial facilities [5].

Similar data was registered shortly before the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), 3 hotels, well-equipped for that time, 14 cafes and bars that were along the coast, with balconies to the lake [11].

However, at that time the visits of the lake it were mainly local and insignificant, and only by traders who traveled from or to Thessaloniki stopping in Dojran. There were still no material conditions for the start of tourism, and there were no guests-tourists, only transit traders.

If one looks into the above data, it can conclude that Dojran belongs to the places where the first forms of transit tourism in the country appeared. Camel caravans of merchants who traveled from Thessaloniki to Macedonia and casually stopped a day/two in Dojran using the services of hotels, inns and taverns can attest to that.

These first forms of tourist activity are interrupted by the Balkan wars and the First World War, which had detrimental consequences for Dojran and the Republic of Macedonia. The 'no tourism' situation was changed years after the World War 2nd.

Still in 1934 in Old Dojran built a number of villas that were insufficient to stimulate tourism [16]. However, several years later, as a result of the Second World War, the attempt to start tourism in Dojran and the lake area have again been stopped.

### **Tourist phase**

Only ten years after World War II did tourism in Dojran begin to develop with the enthusiasts: athletes, scouts, students, high school and youth workers. Thus, in 1953 the resort Partisan started to be built with a restaurant built a year later. In 1953 in Star Dojran the first modern restaurant named Wooden Restaurant was opened. In 1954 the catering organization Dojran Lake adapted 16 old houses-villas in Old Dojran turning it into a resort with a capacity of 75 beds [22].

In Old Dojran the first modern hotel Polin with 75 beds was built in 1961. For several years, in 1964, the accommodation facilities on the shores of Lake Dojran already amounted to 1040 beds and realized 11.000 overnight stays. From 1961 to 1965 the following hotels: Polin, Dojran and Mercury Import were working. Over ten business organizations had their own camps on the shore of Lake Dojran [10].

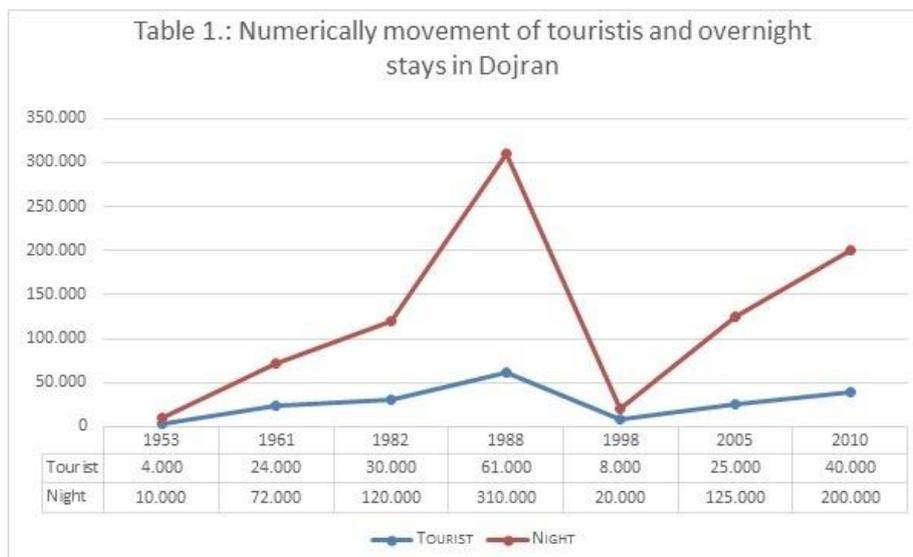
In 1973 the number of modern accommodation facilities accounted for about 10,3 of which were tourist-commercial hotels of high "B" category, and the rest of "C" category with a capacity of 400 [11], [6]. So, in the period 1965-1974, a total of 22 social catering-tourist accommodation facilities were built with approximately 1000 beds and 1.500 seats (in restaurants) [5]. In 1970, 15-17.000 tourists visited Dojran realizing over 75.000 overnight stays [1].

In 1975, 8 hotels, 21 social Resort, an auto-camp-bungalow operated in Dojran. The total accommodation capacity was 960 rooms with 2500 beds [2]. In 1975 the tourist resort Mrdaja, with a total capacity of 1.500 tourists. In 1978 another tourist resort Achik also with a capacity of 1500 tourists [5].

Tourism at Dojran Lake reaches its maximum in the eighties operating with 8 hotels, 1 motel, 2 auto-camps, 4 children's resorts, 40 workers resorts, 800 holiday homes, 150 studios, plus a private accommodation with a total of 12.730 beds and 23 restaurants with 1360 seats. Thus, in 1988 the next peak of 61.595 visitors and 312.114 overnight stays was registered. During that period, four major lake beaches received up to 7000 bathers. An excessive uncontrolled use of the water from the Dojran Lake led to environmental disaster, which caused a significant decline in tourism. Thus, in 1998 it recorded the lowest inflow of tourists of only 7428, with turnover of 19.571 nights [5].

The prolonged Dojran agony was brought to an end in 2002 with the star hydro system "Gjavato-Dojran," when additional quantities of water Gjavochko Field were infused in the lake. With the return of water slowly started the return of the life and splendor of Dojran Lake as an important tourist area in the Macedonia.

Thus, in Old Dojran from 2010 onwards tourism is rapidly improving. In 2012, 1216 rooms and 3891 beds, 49 restaurants, 142 employees, and were sold over 40.000 visitors' generated 200.000 overnight stays were registered. The most well-known hotels in Dojran include: hotel Romantic 4\*, Hotel casino Hit International, Hotel Casino Atlantic, hotel Polin hotel Macedonia, hotel Istatov 4\* in New Dojran, then resort Jaka, Alkaloid, Pelagonijain addition to 20 other accommodation capacities. Private accommodation is represented by 137 entities with approximately 1000 beds. [22].



**Table 1:** Numerically movement of tourists and overnight stays in Dojran

To summarise, in Table 1 it can be seen that the number of tourists increased to 36.000 tourists for a period of 57 years (1953-2010) at an average annual pace of 631 tourists per year, while overnight stays rose by 190.000 (2000%), with an average annual increase 3333 nights (35%).

In 1998 are recorded a minimum absolute number of tourists (8000) and nights (20.000), resulting in the extinction of the lake and the stagnation of tourism in Dojran. However, immediately after that several activities were implemented to save the lake resulting in the revitalization of life in the lake and revitalization as a tourist destination, with more than 40.000 visitors and 200.000 overnight stays, with an average stay of 5 days.

Tourists structure in the "Dojran tourism" is primarily dominated by domestic tourists and a negligible share of foreign tourists, especially Bulgarians and Greeks. Thus although tourism practiced more than half a century, Dojran and the Dojran lake are still has a national tourist destination.



**Figure 1:** Panorama of Dojran Lake [22]

#### IV. DISCUSSION

As above about Dojran and the Dojran Lake, there can be established a few specificities that are present in sublimated views of the Dojran Lake lifecycle, and life cycle of tourism in Dojran.

The discussion that basically stems from the widely accepted approach to lifecycle based on the authors [3], [8], [18].

Tourism and catering industry in Dojran and the Dojran Lake present the following general principles and relationships. Namely, through the example of the emergence and development of tourism and hospitality and Dojran and the Dojran Lake it can be perceived the relationship between the lake and the settlement, i.e. the nature and man in the struggle for survival. Research identifies the differences and similarities of the lake as a

natural and a human settlement. Therefore, the discussion that follows is dedicated to the two values represented by the evolution or lifecycle of Dojran and the Dojran Lake and as tourist destinations.

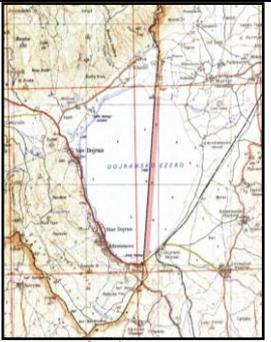
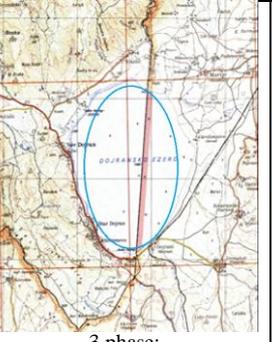
The revitalization of Dojran is vividly shown through the stages of development of the lake and by natural geographical characteristics of the air, water and earth as basic tenets of tourism and hospitality. The life cycle Dojran as a tourist destination is clearly shown by identifying more stages of the tourism product.

Our critically evaluation is based on perennial experiences, observations, interviews and other research on tourism in Dojran and the DojranLake. Generally, the subject area of research is a specific example of a long evolution of natural and anthropogenically created values, and the struggle of man and nature for survival. A similar example of the history of tourism and cycle of the lake can be compared with the Palic Lake in Serbia [15].

**Life cycle of Dojran Lake**

Dojran Lake is the third lake basin in the Macedonia several million years old,and according to its evolution is considered old. However,for a short period the lake faced an agony (death) as a result of several-year hydrological drought period and uncontrolled use of irrigation water from Greece.This situation caused disruption of the natural and ecological balance and biodiversity in the lake water.The state of agony of the lake lasted for fifteen years.With the start of the project "Save the Dojran Lake" im 2005 aimed for its revitalization the level of lake water and wildlife has return to the starting position, and thus tourism was reestablished.

**Review 1:Life cycle of the Dojran Lake**

NATURAL AND ANTHROPOGENIC EVOLUTION OF LAKE DOJRAN			
PHASE I (youth)	PHASE II (nature)	PHASE III (ehtimiction)	PHASE IV (revitalization)
Million years ago*	From 5.000 to 1988	Form 1988 to 2004 year**	From 2005 to 2015 year***
127 km <sup>2</sup>	42,7 km <sup>2</sup>	31,2 km <sup>2</sup>	43,1 km <sup>2</sup>
208 m.a.sl.	148 m.a.sl.	140,3 m.a.sl.	148 m.a.sl.
110 m.depth	10 m.depth	4 m.depth	10 m.depth
Untouged nature, without the presence of man.	Use of water for irrigation and fishing. Since 1953 start of tourism.	Uncontrolled pumping. The lake is dying. Tourism in crisis. Eco movement to save the lake.	"Save the Lake" Controlled use of water. Revitalization of the lake and tourism.
			
1 st stage: The surface of Lake Dojran more than a million years	2 nd stage: The surface of Lake Dojran to 1998	3 phase: The surface of Lake Dojran during the ecological disaster	Stage 4: The surface of Lake Dojran today
*maximum values-peak; **its*lowest levelin November 2000 y.140,32 mm;***Values in the 2015 system "GjavatoField",inflow of clean water to 800 l/sek			

**Map 2.: Four stages of surface Dojran Lake**

Important segment of the natural tourism in Dojran are the water,the air and the earth.The water temperature,air bathing season,the abundance of water,medical algae and mud make the lake Dojran Lake a unique tourist destination.

**Review 2nd: Natural values of the Dojran Lake and Dojran**

Unique destiancija Dojran Lake	
WATER-AIR-LAND	
<b>T</b>	Average summer water temperature 24 ° C (May to 17-20°C 20-22°C Juni, July 23-26°C 24-27°C Avgust; September 20-24°C 20-16°C October ) Maximum water temperature 31,0°C (10 and 12 August 1967) Average annual air temperature 14,5°C;(Summer 24,3°C,Winter 4,7°C,15,7°C Autumn, Spring 12,8°C) Average annual temperature amplitude of air 20-22,0°C Average annual air temperature for July 23°C; for January 3°C; Maximum temperatures of 42°C;

<b>E</b>	Minimum temperatures of -13°C
<b>M</b>	Air temperature range of 55°C
<b>P</b>	Bathing season:3 months (June-August) to 6 (May to October)
<b>E</b>	Rainfall of 728 mm;Insolation of 2440 hours a year
<b>R</b>	Mediterranean climate: hot and dry summers, mild and rainy winters
<b>A</b>	From June to September,the average value of the air temperature is 25°C, and 22°C water.
<b>T</b>	Kapalishen lake and sports-recreational tourism.
<b>U</b>	Excellent therapeutic-travel conditions for swimming,sunbathing and sports-recreational
<b>R</b>	activities.(Swimming,rowing,sailing,water polo,cycling path around the lake and beyond,beach
<b>E</b>	volleyball,paragliding,triathlon,walking,etc.).
<b>A</b>	Dojran centuries is "natural spa".
<b>L</b>	Important actions during the stay in Dojran Dojran in terms of health tourism:swimming in the lake,deep inhalation and
<b>G</b>	exhalation,walks and stay by the lake and walks in the shallow waters.
<b>A</b>	Lake algae bloom from mid-August to September.Air and water rich in iodine and has healing properties in the treatment of
<b>E</b>	lung,tonsils,improving immunity,treating colds and respiratory problems, and other open wounds.
<b>-</b>	The water of Lake Dojran is captivating and mysterious When you enter it you feel the mud underfoot.You see the lake,
<b>I</b>	and from there constantly coming to the coast foam that you resemble foam soap.When you feel about all this, and when,
<b>O</b>	moreover breathe the scent of algae you feel that you are in the midst of a swamp.But it is due to blooming of algae in the
<b>D</b>	lake.The foam produced exactly their flower So,it is quite natural.It is only fifteen days a year,during the blooming of lake
<b>I</b>	algae.The water is then healthy.
<b>N</b>	
<b>E</b>	
<b>M</b>	Mud in Dojran is healing. Rubbing with lake mud, therapeutic in the period of August and September.
<b>U</b>	Procedure:Rubbing the body with mud-sun-drying mud-bathing in the lake.Repeat several times a day.Healing mud is
<b>D</b>	especially useful for the treatment of muscle and bone,for some skin diseases,wounds are closed,joint
	pain,arthritis,bronchitis,asthma, rheumatism,nail,skin rejuvenation and Fig.
<b>F</b>	The lake abounds in fish biomass represented by 17 species of fish
<b>I</b>	(crvenoperka,karash,belvica,perkija,bleak, fins,gushar,etc.).It is known fishing tradition in the V century BC. AD-Noted by
<b>S</b>	Herodotus.Unique ancient world and the only method of fishing in the traditional manner in fish hunting grounds "dairies"
<b>H</b>	and fishing with birds-cormorants.Fishermen catching birds cormorants, great hunters of fish, they clip the wings can not
	fly and play them in the lake to catch fish.Thus they are forcing the fish to flee and hide around the lake reeds.These
	fishermen stationed in pile fishing huts-dairies welcome them and hunt them in networks.Working with dairies a long
	process that takes about 6 months and begins in October and ends in late March.In the lake to hunt about 100 tons of fish a
	year (in 1950 caught 817 tonnes in 1961, 670 th in 1980 with 505 points in 1990, 314 t. In 1999, 174 t. etc.)
	The traditional method of fishing with cormorants and an opportunity dairies fish tourism.Dojran Gourmet fish specijalite:
	baking fish reed, stew fish, fish in the pan, grilled fish, burger and the roe mayonnaise and others.

Research has confirmed that Dojran and the Dojran Lake are typical examples of the life cycle of a tourist product. The period of 70 years have witnessed all stages of the life cycle of a tourist product, represented by tourist destination by means of: research, recruitment, development, maturity, stagnation, decline, and re-built tourism through the phase of stabilization and revitalization.

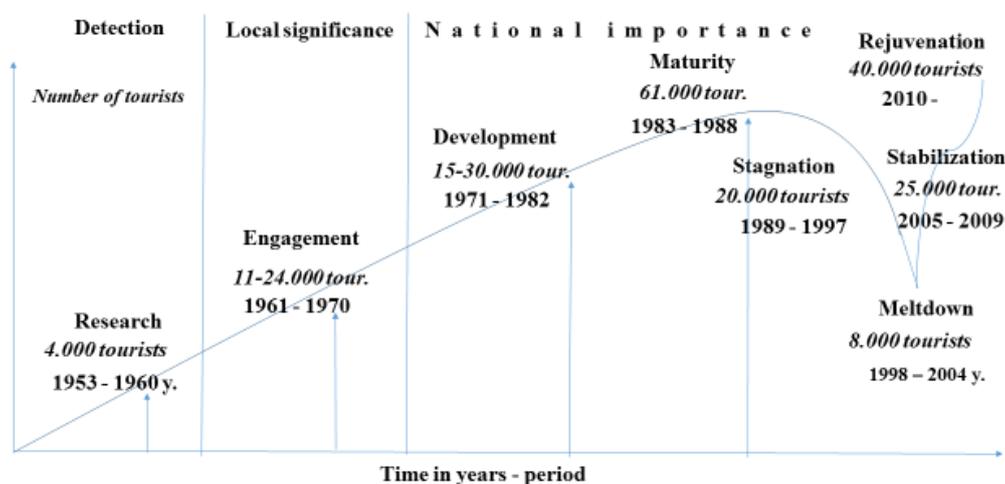
### Life cycle of Dojran as a tourist destination

**Preview 3: Phases of the tourism product or Dojran as a tourist destination**

Phases (period)	Short description
<b>Research</b> (1953-1960)	characterized by a small number of people are discovering the destination through individual (non-institutional) arrangements-without the participation of a travel agent or other intermediary.Missing tourist facilities and infrastructure,the number of visitors is limited,poor road connection.
<b>Engagement</b> (1961 – 1970)	It is marked by an increased volume of tourists visiting or revisiting regularly.Tourists are drawn primarily from the still insufficiently known destination.The local community is starting to adapt to the development of tourism and a growing number of accommodation and catering facilities, important for tourism development.
<b>Development</b> (1971 – 1982)	characterized by a defined development of tourism infrastructure,construction of new hotels,resorts,restaurants,receptive and communicative elements,accurate and consistent market segmentation,extensive promotional activities (eg .:organizing the event "Dojran handshakes" and others.).The number of tourists mainly in tourist season, far exceeds the local population.
<b>Maturity</b> (1983 – 1988)	the number of visitors reaches its maximum.Develop tourist/business centers as separate entities within the destination (eg.: "Mrdaja", "Achikot").Observable and local efforts to extend the season and market expansion.Most of the tourism economy is linked to tourism.
<b>Stagnation</b> (1989 – 1997)	destination faces a problem (ex .:environmental disaster,water shortages,economic hardships etc) and is no longer in vogue.Frequent changes of owners of buildings are rarely built new facilities.
<b>Meltdown</b> 1998 – 2004	is the last and undesirable for tourism as lost hikers, close or leave capacity for other purposes and so on.It is undesirable scenario for tourism,which is in crisis and sinks.
<b>Stabilization</b> 2005 – 2009	It relies on certain activities aimed at modification of the product or market the tourist destination (eg.:salvation of Dojran by bringing water from Gjavato Field).Gradual increase in capacity,the number of tourists and overnight stays.

**Review 4: Life cycle of Dojran as a tourist destination**

**LIFE CYCLE OF DOJRAN AS A TOURIST DESTINATION**



Phases	Number of tourist - hospitality and facilities	Tourists	
		Attendance	Night
<b>Research</b> (1953/54-1960)	Home initiative: 16 three-room houses-villas,1 Resort 1 small hotel 1 restaurants and a few other restaurants. 1960 340 beds. (1953 = 3.953 tourists; 1960 = 17,000 tourists)	4,000–18.000	10.000-35.000
<b>Engagement</b> (1961-1970)	Construction of hotels: 3 Hotels ("Beton","Dojran","Mercury"), resort,camp resorts. In 1970 more than 1,500 beds.	11.000-24.000	50.000-80.000
<b>Development</b> (1971-1982)	Expansion and construction of new tourist facilities: 8 hotels 1 auto-bugalovi 21 Social resorts.A total of 960 rooms with 2068 beds, no private placement.	15.000–30.000	70.000–120.000
<b>Maturity</b> (1983-1988)	Maximum values: 8 hotels,1 motel, 2 auto-camps,resorts 4 children,40 workers resorts,800 holiday homes,150 studios,plus private accommodation.A total of 12,730 beds,23 restaurants with 1360 seats	Maximum 1988 r.= 61.595 tourist	Maximum 1988 r.= 312.114 nights
<b>Stagnation</b> (1989-1997)	Reduction: Cause reduction of the water and dry period.Visiting tourists and continuously decreases.	20.000	100.000
<b>Meltdown</b> (1998-2004)	Minimum values: Over 6,500 beds,plus private accommodation. (1998=7428 tourists; 1998=19,5671 nights).	8.000	20.000
<b>Stabilization</b> (2005-2009)	Gradual growth: The water level in the pond increases. Increasing the number of tourists over 2,500 beds,plus private accommodation, 25 accommodation facilities.	25.000	125.000
<b>Rejuvenation</b> (2010-2015*)	New investments: 49 accommodation with 1216 rooms,3891 bed;plus 137 entities for private accommodation with over 1000 beds and 18 restaurants with about 1000 seats	40.000*	200.000*

**V. CONCLUSION**

From all the above, it is obvious that Dojran and the Dojran Lake is an area that attracts everyone's attention and provides opportunities to meet numerous desires of tourists. This region has a natural beauty, good geographical position, favorable climate, numerous events and cultural and historical sites, tourist characteristics specific and unique and should take maximum advantage of the capacity of attracting tourists and increased visits.

The Dojran Lake and Dojran region today practice several types of tourism such as:lake, health,fishing,sports-recreational,cultural,gastronomic,entertaining and other alternative forms.Overall, Dojran-Dojran Lakeregion is a specific tourist destination in the country positioned as the fourth major destination after Ohrid,Skopje and Struga.

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