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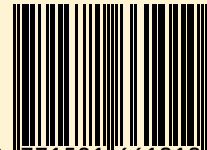
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63-1 • 2023

Contents

- Gordana JOVANOVIĆ**
The North Atlantic Oscillation influence on the Debeli Namet Glacier 7
- Maja GODINA GOLIJA**
Radically local supply chains through territorial brands: Insights from the 100% Local project 23
- Daniela NICOLAIE, Elena MATEI, Timothy John COOLEY, Iuliana VIJULIE,
David CUSHING, Marius Nicolae TRUȚESCU**
National geniuses' heritage as potential for the development of cultural tourism in Romania 35
- Sara ZUPAN, Elena BUŽAN, Tatjana ČELIK, Gregor KOVAČIČ, Jure JUGOVIC,
Martina LUŽNIK**
*Fire and flood occurrence in the habitats of the endangered butterfly *Coenonympha oedippus* in Slovenia* 55
- Eristian WIBISONO**
Encouraging research and development collaboration amidst geographical challenges in less developed regions of the European Union: A systematic literature review 73
- Tim GREGORČIČ, Andrej ROZMAN, Blaž REPE**
Predicting the potential ecological niche distribution of Slovenian forests under climate change using MaxEnt modelling 89
- Petra GOSTINČAR, Uroš STEPIŠNIK**
Extent and spatial distribution of karst in Slovenia 111

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Fotografija na naslovnici: Po močnejši nevihti je bila sicer karbonatna ravnina Nullarbor poplavljena zaradi nepropustne plasti gline (fotografija: Matej Lipar).

NATIONAL GENIUSES' HERITAGE AS POTENTIAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL TOURISM IN ROMANIA

Daniela Nicolaie, Elena Matei, Timothy John Cooley, Iuliana Vijulie,
David Cushing, Marius Nicolae Trușescu



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Daniela Nicolaie¹, Elena Matei², Timothy John Cooley³, Iuliana Vijulie², David Cushing⁴, Marius Nicolae Truțescu¹

National geniuses' heritage as potential for the development of cultural tourism in Romania

ABSTRACT: This article investigates how domestic tourists perceive the possibilities of boosting cultural heritage tourism in Romania, through the capitalization of national genius personalities. The methodology is based on the survey method. The research identified 22 geniuses, largely represented in national culture, and acknowledged and demanded by the market. The vast majority have been converted into tourist attractions, however those of international visibility are missing or are underrepresented in Romanian heritage tourism. An increased focus on geniuses would be highly valued by tourists and could reinforce the value of cultural heritage, consequently, boosting tourism resources. This would lead to multiple and sustainable benefits for destinations' development, but certain infrastructure and management gaps would need to be filled.

KEY WORDS: perception, cultural heritage, genius personalities, tourism, museums, Romania

Dediščina izjemnih osebnosti kot potencial za razvoj kulturnega turizma v Romuniji

POVZETEK: Avtorji v članku proučujejo mnenja domačih turistov o možnostih spodbujanja razvoja kulturnega turizma v Romuniji na podlagi izjemnih osebnosti iz romunske kulturne zgodovine. Uporabljena metodologija temelji na anketi, v kateri so vprašani izpostavili 22 romunskih kulturnih osebnosti, prepoznanih na trgu. Večina je bila preobražena v turistične zanimivosti, pri čemer pa v romunskem dediščinskem turizmu manjkajo mednarodno prepoznavne osebnosti ali so te slabo zastopane. Večji poudarek na tovrstnih osebnostih bi turisti zelo dobro sprejeli, hkrati bi se s tem povečala vrednost kulturne dediščine, kar bi posledično spodbudilo razvoj novih turističnih virov. Navedeno bi imelo različne trajnostne koristi za razvoj destinacij, treba pa bi bilo zapolniti nekatere vrzeli v infrastrukturi in upravljanju.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: mnenja, kulturna dediščina, izjemne osebnosti, turizem, muzeji, Romunija

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1 Introduction

Cultural heritage tourism is the economic interface through which the preserved and protected material and immaterial assets of designated human communities are commodified in order to create experiences for visitors. The cultural heritage that sustains cultural tourism – or more specifically cultural heritage tourism (Hall 1991; Yale 1991; Kirshenblat-Gimblett 1995; Seal 1996) – was derived from different actions, namely, the initiatives of certain institutions or communities. Thus, it is recognized, restored and preserved, and the generation of today is able to adequately manage it as a defined benefit in the present and may potentially pass it on to future generations (Pelegriani 2008; Bitušíková 2021). Cultural heritage has encountered continuous development, as interest in the preservation of human values has increased (Bucurescu 2015). Therefore, many outstanding monuments of the past have been added to the list of protected monuments, each with a unique contribution to human history (Li, Wu and Cai 2008).

Cultural heritage has economic benefits, especially through the development of cultural heritage tourism. According to UNWTO (World Tourism Organisation), cultural heritage accounted for almost 40% of the global tourism market in 2018. The capitalization of cultural heritage in both material and immaterial forms has been criticized as »commoditization« wherein cultural heritage loses its intrinsic meaning, when considered primarily in terms of its monetary exchange value (Greenwood 1977). However, other scholars, such as Cohen (1988) and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1995) show that commoditization or capitalization can give new meaning and value to heritage. Even if statistically the employment rate in cultural heritage is low, its multiplier effects through tourism are more valuable (Vita 2018). For example, in 2018, in Italy, known as the country with the highest number of UNESCO sites (Canale et al. 2019), an impressive 57% of the revenue produced by cultural heritage came from tourism, comprising 73% of culture staff. Only 2.1% of the total country employment represented jobs directly related to cultural heritage. In the same year in Romania, direct jobs in cultural heritage constituted only 0.3% of the total employment (Lykogianni et al. 2019).

The heritage of geniuses has, in general, not been a distinct element of cultural attraction in relation to tourism, perhaps because attributing this characteristic to a person is debatable. However, clarifications related to the topic of *genius* are acknowledged by the disciplines of medicine (Robertson 2018), psychology (Simonton 2018) and philosophy (Ostarić 2012). These have focused on the explanation of specific aspects related to the conceptualization, manifestation and processes of being classified as a genius. Thus, the concept is associated with exceptional intellectual abilities (Möller-Recondo and D'Amato 2020), the eminence of individuals identified as geniuses (Simonton 1996), augmented by talent (Nerubasska and Maksymchuk 2020) and the way in which creative, original contributions warrant worldwide recognition (Wolff 2001). Beyond these aspects, many publications refer to geniuses as Nobel prize winners (Fahy 2018), with the addition of the title of academician (Nicolaić 2015); other papers are simple eulogies in memory of famous people during their celebrations (Buttimer 1995). However, all definitions highlight the fact that they provided progress of humankind, while geniuses all over the world have, over the centuries, enriched the legacy of the peoples from which they have ascended (Hu and Rousseau 2017).

Usually, the cultural heritage of famous people refers to historical personalities (kings, queens, leaders of states, leading artists, etc.) who have impacted humankind through broader or narrower leadership, and have imposed material or immaterial cultural values, used or continued by their dynasties or their nations. Some of these cultural landmarks have been transformed into tourist attractions (e.g., Nelson Mandela; see Mgxekwa, Scholtz and Saayman 2019) or framed in the architectural or cultural landscape of an era (e.g., Egypt, Turkey) (Yilmaz and El-Gamil 2018). Italy remains a famous destination, where clusters of attractions are branded by geniuses such as Michelangelo, Da Vinci, Alighieri and many others (Bellini et al. 2014). There are cases where such personalities are considered to belong equally to a nation and the world. For example, Albert Einstein, assumed to be the world's greatest genius, is valued not only in Germany, his native country, but also in countries across the globe (Switzerland, Spain, Japan, the US, etc.) (Owens 2012) where he worked or where the influence of his work was felt.

Often, heritage is recognized by UNESCO and consequently, becomes widely known and appreciated in cultural tourism. In this regard, Italy, China, Spain, France and India are leaders of UNESCO cultural heritage sites (Lushchik 2021). Even in 2022, Romania benefitted from seven UNESCO cultural properties (see World Heritage List) yet none of these represent a legacy relating to famous people. However, on

the tentative list, the Constantin Brâncuși's open-air sculptures complex in Târgu-Jiu was considered for nomination (Șerban 2018).

Among its cultural icons, Romania counts remarkable personalities, whose scientific and technical contributions have produced positive changes nationally or worldwide, yet some are not recognized as part of Romania's national heritage. Simmons (1996) ranked the top 100 scholars in world history and stated that Romania has an advantageous position in the list boasting 6% of the world's geniuses, with Germany, the UK and the USA occupying the top position, followed by France, etc.

Starting from the assumption that for all countries around the world, cultural heritage sites are elements of national identity and branding that continue to influence the current values of societies (O'Connor 1993), it should be the duty of each nation, as well as humankind, to develop them carefully and equitably, so as to synthesize all the valuable assets of their peoples. These values might also include genius personalities and their life and work, whether this be artistic, scientific or technical. Nevertheless, such untapped patrimonial resources, which could enrich the offer of tourist attractions, is not being fully capitalized on in Romania (Nicolaie 2015).

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to analyse domestic tourists' perceptions of the development of cultural attractions, related to the heritage of genius personalities within Romanian culture. The objectives of the research are: (1) to identify and create a ranked list of the most recognized Romanian geniuses; (2) to analyse the visitors' statistics and perceptions of Romanian personalities' heritage sites; (3) to explore the needs and benefits of developing heritage sites associated with genius personalities.

1.1 A brief theoretical background

The topic of cultural heritage has been addressed in many scientific publications, which cover several fields of research, including that of tourism. Thus, the search for the »cultural heritage« keyword in the Web of Science (WoS) database, for the period 1990 to 2022, revealed 40,000 publications, which address the topic separately or in the context of cultural tourism; »cultural heritage tourism« generated around 7,000 works, of which 71% were classified as (original) scientific research articles.

The concept of cultural heritage, repeatedly addressed over the last five decades by international and national bodies, as well as scientists (Vlase and Lähdesmäki 2023), was defined by UNESCO for a global purpose in terms of its material, intangible and environmental values, which are of considerable importance to humanity (Ahmad 2006). The preservation and valorization of cultural heritage must take into account its global spread (Lowenthal 1998), the potential of each site (Król 2021) and its multiple roles in society (Kesar, Matečić and Hodak 2018).

In the case of tourism, cultural heritage is linked to two types of tourism: cultural tourism and cultural heritage tourism (Bitušíková 2021). For McIntosh and Goeldner (1986), as well as Edson (2004), cultural tourism includes cultural heritage both as processes and products, while Goeldner and Richie (2000) consider that cultural heritage tourism means visits to historical attractions and that cultural tourism may or may not be associated with the current elements of cultural life.

Cultural heritage supports cultural tourism, but, at the same time, research highlights its role as a driving force in the development of the community (Kausar and Nishikawa 2010), and settlements for urban regeneration (Lak, Gheitasi and Timothy 2020), the revitalization of small towns (Matei et al. 2013; Munjal 2019) or rural sustainability (Hidalgo 2020; Zang et al. 2020). Alternatively, cultural tourism is commonly considered an effective way of expressing an educational function through different activities (Ashworth and Turnbridge 2000; Lowenthal 1998; Light 2000; Dean, Morgan and Tan 2002). It helps governments influence public opinion and gain support to promote national aspirations (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber 2004), create a positive country image (Urry 1990; O'Connor 1993; Hall 1995; Pretes 2003) and shape national branding in order to distinguish countries and cultures from one other.

Therefore, the lack of concern of municipalities in preserving (Ștefănică et al. 2021) or enriching local heritage and tourism development (Wei et al. 2021; Arisanty et al. 2019) should be alleviated. It may be the case that geniuses' heritage, whose »places and anniversaries can function as sites of memory« (Fara 2000, 407) may contribute to the overall visitors' experience (Poria, Reichel and Biran 2006), as their distinctive characteristics are necessary for tourism development (Truong, Lenglet and Mothe 2018). The genius personalities' heritage and museums studies showed that the tourist preference depends on the individual tourists' background and education. Thus, Yue, Bender and Cheung (2011) revealed that the Chinese

are more focused on the heritage of meritorious personalities (science, technologies), while the research of Tang, Werner and Hofreiter (2018) on the Germans demonstrated that they are closer to the aesthetic domain (literature, arts, philosophy). In fact, all personalities, regardless of the field in which they excelled, must be valued, and the public's perception of who deserves to be invested in a museum, even at empirical level, should be taken into consideration (Schwartz 1998).

In the case of valuable products, tourists are willing to travel long distances (Panzera, de Graaff and de Groot 2020) or through rural surroundings (Bertacchini, Nuccio and Durio 2021). Cellini and Cuccica (2013) concluded that museums cannot influence the tourist flow, but can impact the length of their stay, while Carey et al. (2013) pointed out that museums attract tourists in urban areas and »star« sites, such as UNESCO, which can increase international visit flows (Panzera, de Graaff and de Groot 2020).

Research regarding the development of cultural tourism heritage highlights that local communities must be as sustainable as possible, but this depends on the economic and social background of each destination (Ngamsomsuke, Hwang and Huang 2018). Certain studies draw attention to the stimulation of over-tourism and the escalation of social, local conflicts (Murzyn-Kupisz and Holuj 2020), while others emphasize the multiple opportunities for locals (Catrina 2015). Moreover, all stakeholders participating in the development of heritage sites contribute to their success, which directly constitutes a safe development (Balažič 2010).

In the case of Romania, publications relating to cultural tourism heritage are either general approaches or theoretical aspects (Coccean 2006; Busuioc 2008). Other researchers analyse the tourism potential of destinations (Iașu and Bulai 2011), historical (Muntean and Stremtan 2012) or religious attractions, as well as UNESCO registered sites (Maxim and Chasovschi 2021). Some authors have studied the heritage site trends for sustainable development (Stoica et al. 2022; Merciu, Petrișor and Merciu 2021) or a museum's dynamics (Bogan, Constantin and Grigore 2018). Thus, the research on Romania's cultural tourism focuses on certain general ideas, but none of these include the heritage of a genius' life, works or material values.

2 Data and methods

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Thus, in order to explore the opinions of domestic tourists, we conducted an online survey. The data collected were analysed through statistical methods, aiming to establish an association among variables, the p value significance, score and frequencies. In addition, qualitative analysis was used for the open-ended responses. The statistics on visitors were collected from museums and memorial houses' reports, and from the National Institute of Statistics (NIS); visitors could be tourists and local people. The data refer to 2019 and therefore, are not skewed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which changed tourist flows and tourism functionalities (Park, Kim and Ho 2022; Turtureanu et al. 2022), and consequently the number of museum visitors. Mathematical formulas were utilized to compute the share of museums' visitors among respondents and tourists.

The survey was semi-structured, created in Google Forms and was sent via email and WhatsApp, starting from the Romanian authors' social networks within the general population, in January and February 2022. Due to the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the snowball technique was considered the most appropriate, being consistent with the respondents' ability to reply online or communicate using electronic devices (Matei et al. 2021). Therefore, in its introduction, there was a description of the aim of the research to encourage the voluntary participation of persons with the attribute in question, followed by instructions on how the questionnaire should be forwarded to at least one person of a different gender, age and profession. This technique improved population sampling and avoided keeping the configuration of the authors' social networks.

The sample size (385 respondents) was projected using Cochran's formula (1) to estimate the minimum sample for large populations, using a z score of 1.96 and, therefore, a confidence interval of 95% (Cochran 1977):

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2} \quad (1)$$

where e is defined as the margin of error (0.05), p is the proportion of the estimated population, which relates to the attribute in question (0.5) and q is $1-p$ (Ryan 2013).

The specificity of theme and online snowballing of the survey explain the structure of the final sample, characterized by a large majority of graduates and post-graduates (88.6%), with 38.2% being current students and mainly inhabitants of urban centres (86.3%). Gender, age groups or income structure are almost balanced. All respondents were proven to be visitors of at least one of the geniuses' heritage sites identified in this research. Therefore, we named them tourist respondents.

The survey was composed of five open-ended questions, five questions on a five-point Likert scale and two multiple-choice questions (Table 2). We also asked respondents to provide six demographic variables (gender, age group, education, place of residence, profession, income (Table 1).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the sample.

Variables		%	Variables		%
Gender	M	54.8	Profession	Art and culture	0.12
	F	45.2		Economist	4.6
Place of residence	Urban	86.3		Education	4.1
	Rural	13.7		Employer	4.1
Education	Gymnasium	0.7		Engineer (IT)	6.8
	Lyceum	10.7		Health	6.2
	Faculty	50.0		Judicial	1.2
	Post graduate	38.6		Media	3.1
Income (€)	<400	10.5		NGO	3.0
	401–800	40.6		Other	8.4
	801–1200	34.7		Research	2.9
	>1200	14.2		Retail	4.0
Age groups	18–20	22.1		Retired	0.6
	31–45	39.5		Security and defence	5.8
	46–60	32.3	Civil servant	2.3	
	60+	6.1	Student	38.2	
			Tourism	3.5	

Table 2: Content of the survey.

Type of question	Questions
Open-ended	Q1. Which personalities of Romanian culture (including science, technology, arts etc.) from any time period would you consider to be geniuses? Rank at least three names, please!
	Q2. Which tourist attractions, related to these personalities, have you visited? List them!
	Q3. Which of these attractions impressed you the most? Justify your choice.
	Q4. Which tourist attraction impressed you the least? Justify your choice.
	Q5. Did you identify any personality in your list with no tourist attraction? Name that personality and provide a brief comment!
Five-point Likert scale (score) 1 (very little) – 5 (very much)	Q6. How would you rate the start of a new tourist product, based on Romanian geniuses' heritage sites?
	Q7. How do you rate the quality of museum services (guide, information, etc.) in Romania?
	Q8. How do you rate the quality of road transport services in Romania for tourism?
	Q9. How do you rate the quality of tourist information points and services in Romania?
Multiple choice	Q10. How do you rate the quality of accommodation services in Romania?
	Q11. Who should implement the Romanian geniuses' heritage for tourism? a. Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Tourism; b. town halls; c. NGOs; d. county prefectures and county councils; e. custodians of these objectives united in an association; f. private entrepreneurial companies; g. other
	Q12. One of the principles in sustainable tourism development aims to involve the community in local business. How does this principle apply to capitalizing Romanian geniuses' heritage? Choose at least one option! a. local employment; b. boosting souvenir business; c. development of a project focusing on a genius; d. local guide qualification; e. renting a room for tourists; f. stimulating a project for tourism infrastructure; g. other

The demographic and multiple-choice answers were coded in SPSS (version 28) as nominal and ordinal scales. Questions based on the Likert scale (Q6→Q9) were weighted using a scoring scale between 1 and 5. The open-ended responses (Q1→Q5) were coded by the similarity of the contents considered as categorical data or selected manually for qualitative analysis.

The starting point was to use the open-ended responses to nominate at least three top genius personalities, ranking them according to their perceived importance (Q1). In this respect, nominations with at least 1% occurrence were considered, regardless of their rank (Figure 1) and were included in the correspondence analysis (CA) (Figure 2). The CA was applied to measure the association between the frequency of attributes (the first, the second, the third) and the nominations of personalities. As an exploratory method for categorical data, not based on specific hypotheses, CA explains the variance (inertia) in a model, breaking it down into the least number of dimensions (Doey and Kurta 2011). CA uses the Chi-square statistics or Euclidean distance measures for the association between variables ($p < 0.5$) on the biplot graph (Figure 2).

Questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 were analysed quantitatively (frequency of occurrence of the key words), and for 3 and 4, a qualitative approach was added (manual text analysis) (Figure 4).

The Student test and the ANOVA procedure with the Fisher test were applied, in order to test the impact of the tourists' socio-demographic characteristics in relation to their perception of the importance of genius heritage and Romanian tourist attractions. This was based on Sullivan and Artino's findings (2013) regarding the robustness of results given by the parametric tests of the Likert scale, including the mean score for the scale items.

3 Results

3.1 Identifying famous personalities considered geniuses by Romanian tourist respondents

In compliance with the 385 respondents' answers (Table 1), a total number of 130 personalities were nominated as geniuses. Most are historical (127) with only a few from the present time (three). Thirty have a percentage of frequency greater than 1%, and among these, 22 were nominated at least once for each of the first three places (Figure 1).

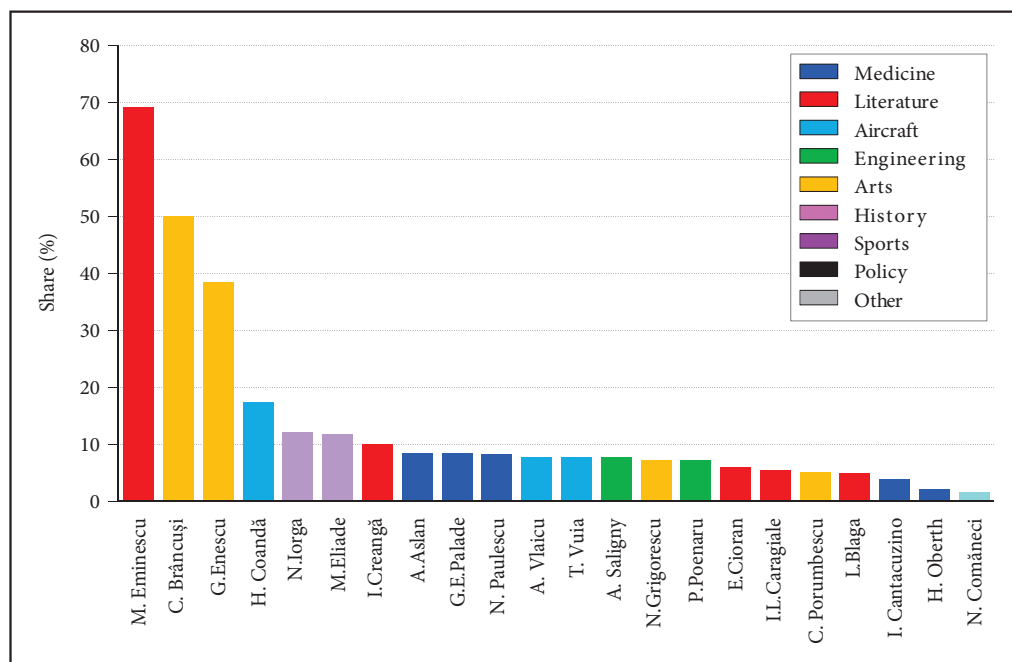


Figure 1: The frequency (more than 1%) of geniuses cited in respondents' nominations, based on the first three nominees.

The first three personalities are Mihai Eminescu (69.4%), Constantin Brâncuși (50.1%) and George Enescu (38.4%). The next four personalities, cited by respondents, with a frequency between 10% and 20% are Henri Coandă (17.4%), Nicolae Iorga (12.2%), Mircea Eliade (11.7%) and Ion Creangă (10.1%) (Figure 1).

In the field of medicine, the respondents listed academicians (each with 8.6%): Ana Aslan (geriatrist) and George Emil Palade, the winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1974 in modern cell biology (Bot 2009). Next was Nicolae Paulescu for insulin research, a discovery that generated controversies related to the Nobel Prize (Diem et al. 2022) and Ioan Cantacuzino (3.9%).

Another key group related to engineering, namely, Traian Vuia and Aurel Vlaicu (aircraft), Anghel Saligny (bridge builder) and Petrache Poenaru (stylus inventor) (Găină 2019).

Two other personalities that attracted attention were Herman Oberth, a pioneer of rocketry and astronautics (Neufeld 1996) and considered famous by only 2.1% of respondents, and Nadia Comăneci (gymnastics), possibly one of the country's most famous cultural icons outside of Romania (Miklowitz 1977).

The CA results of the association between the frequency of attributes (the first, the second, the third) and the nominations of personalities are acceptable for $p < 0.01$. They have a Chi-square value of 202.883 and are indicative in the case of total inertia. For the first dimension, the proportion of inertia accounting for this dimension is 79.4%, $\sigma = 0.030$, while the second dimension accounted for 20.6% of total inertia and $\sigma = 0.034$ (Table 3).

Figure 2 shows the popularity between M. Eminescu and the first place. C. Brâncuși corresponds equally to the first and second ranks. Enescu is associated both with the second and third ranks. M. Eliade, H. Oberth, P. Poenaru and I. Cantacuzino are closer to the second rank, while H. Coandă, T. Vuia, A. Vlaicu and N. Iorga are nearer to the third rank.

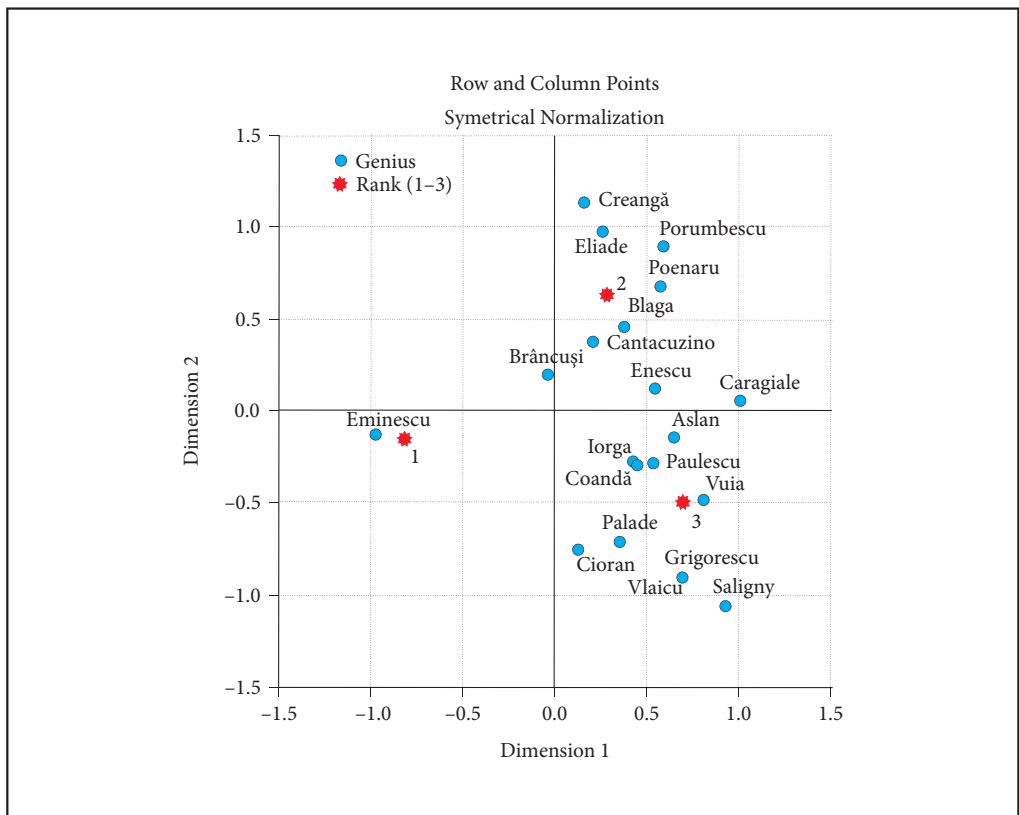


Figure 2: Correspondence map for the top 22 geniuses by frequency and rank from the perspective of the respondents.

Table 3: Summary of correspondence analysis of nominations and ranks.

Summary								
Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation 2
1	0.421	0.177			0.794	0.794	0.030	0.112
2	0.214	0.046			0.206	1.000	0.034	
Total		0.223	202.883	<.001 ^a	1.000	1.000		

^a 42 degrees of freedom

3.2 Heritage of Romanian genius personalities and tourist demand and perception

In 2022, Romania had 762 museums and collections, licensed as having national, regional, county or local importance. These include both public (state) and private museums and collections (Law 311/2003). Collectively, they attracted over 18 million visitors in 2019, in comparison with 13.3 million tourist arrivals registered in Romania in the same year (based on data provided by NIS).

Among Romania's museums and collections, 65 cultural sites connected with the 22 Romanian geniuses were identified by the respondents, but only 44.6% of the total were memorial houses and museums that capitalize on their assets, while others belonged to many personalities or vice versa.

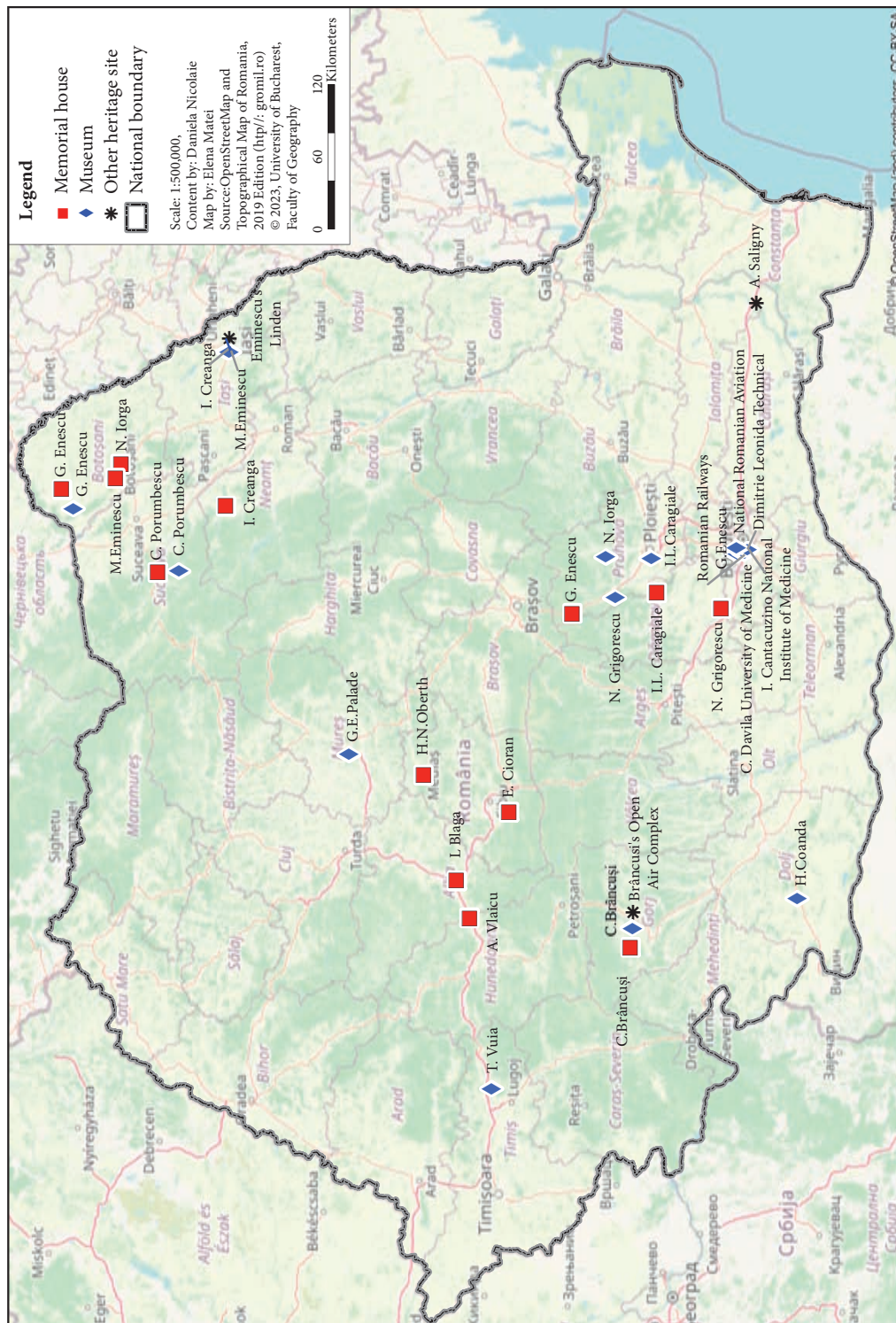
Memorial houses constitute the category of cultural attractions that evoke the life and activity of remarkable people, based on their native material assets. From the 22 chosen personalities, almost 60% of them

Table 4: The memorial houses of personalities: history, state, share of respondents and tourists' visits. Data collected from NIS and museums' reports.

Personality	Place of birth (county)	Establishment and state of memorial house	Share of respondents' visits (%)	No. of memorial visitors (their share among the tourist arrivals in the settlements), 2019
M. Eminescu	Ipotești (Botoșani)	1940, functioning	23.1%	16,536 (345.7%)
I. Creangă	Humulești (Neamț)	1951, functioning	6.4%	40,000 (237.5%)
G. Enescu	G. Enescu (Botoșani)	1968, poor condition	5.7%	1,046 (1,046%)
	Sinaia (Prahova) ¹	1995, functioning	6.7%	23,520 (7.7%)
C-tin Brăncuși	Hobița-Peștișani (Gorj)	1971, property conflicts	5.4%	11,292 (3,163%)
N. Grigorescu	Potlogi (Dâmbovița)	2019, functioning	2.5%	1,800 (186.9%)
N. Iorga	Botoșani (Botoșani)	1971, functioning	1.9%	1,719 (4.2%)
C. Porumbescu	Stupca (Suceava)	1953, functioning	1.8%	12,145 (391.3%)
E. Cioran	Rășinari (Sibiu)	1911, property conflicts	1.3%	600 (9.6%)
A. Vlaicu	Geoagiu (Hunedoara)	1952, functioning	1.0%	2,346 (4.5%)
L. Blaga	Lancrăm-Sebeș (Alba)	1998, functioning	1.3%	5,745 (21.5%)
H. Oberth	Mediaș (Sibiu)	1994, functioning	1.3%	1,005 (3.4%)
I. L. Caragiale	I. L. Caragiale (Dâmbovița)	1979, functioning	0.0%	1,174 (200%)
Romania's museum visitors: 18,197,586 and tourist arrivals: 13,374,943 (2019)				95,408 (19.5%)

Note: ¹G. Enescu's residence during his life.

Figure 3. Famous heritage sites of personalities in Romania. ► p. 44



have such a heritage building. Not all recognized personalities are valorized in Romanian cultural heritage, with an identifiable building or other location, often due to conflicts relating to specific properties or houses, the physical degradation or even disappearance of some sites and other issues (Table 4; Figure 3).

All the geniuses' memorial houses were established over the last 110 years, most since the Second World War, yet tourist demand is still low, with only 0.5% of tourists visiting Romania's museums. However, in the present case study, more than half of the respondents (58.4%) confirmed past visits to these memorial houses. The frequency of visits to attractions, exemplified by the respondents in our survey is not in the same order as the nominations' rank (Figure 1) and differs from the number of museum visitors in the official statistics for 2019 provided by NIS. In particular, museum visitors showed a great interest in the Ion Creangă Memorial House, as Ion Creangă has remained in the collective memory of visitors as being the greatest narrator of his childhood in an authentic way (Diaconu 2002). The next site is the G. Enescu Memorial in Sinaia, a destination dependent upon the mountain tourism market, followed by the Eminescu Memorial in Ipotești village. By comparison, the respondents in this survey preferred the Mihai Eminescu Memorial House, followed by the Ion Creangă Memorial House, both with modern, interpretive-interactive amenities, destinations which registered a higher number of memorial visitors than tourist arrivals in 2019 (Table 4).

Museums are institutions in the service of society that play a crucial role in preserving local or national heritage assets for educative, research and leisure purposes (Foley and McPherson 2010). In the case of the 22 chosen geniuses, 50% benefit from fully customized cultural institutions, 30% have sections in museums

Table 5: The museums of personalities: history, location and share of respondents' and tourists' visits in 2019. Data collected from NIS and museum reports.

Personality	Foundation year	Location (county)	Share of respondents' visits (%)	No. of museum visitors, 2019 (their share among the tourist arrivals in the settlements)
M. Eminescu	1989	Iași (Iași)	2.3%	14,259 (4.6%)
G. Enescu	1956	Bucharest	7.3 %	56,668 (2.8%)
	1957	Dorohoi (Botoșani)	0.0%	1,201 (31.0%)
C-tin Brâncuși	2020	Târgu Jiu (Gorj)	0.0%	No data
H. Coandă	2007	Perișor (Dolj)	0.0%	380 (76.2%)
	1990	Bucharest ¹	1.6 %	17,892 (0.9%)
	1909	Bucharest ⁵	1.8%	8,841 (0.4%)
T. Vuia	2012	Traian Vuia (Timiș)	1.0 %	1,764 (598%)
	1909	Bucharest ⁵	1.8%	8,841 (0.4%)
N. Paulescu	2013	Bucharest ²	0.3%	No data
Ioan Cantacuzino	2013	Bucharest ³	0.6%	No data
Anghel Saligny	1969	Bucharest ⁴	1.8%	15,582 (0.8%)
I. L. Caragiale	1962	Ploiești (Prahova)	1.0%	6,026 (9.9%)
N. Iorga	1997	Vălenii de Munte (Prahova)	5.7%	28,012 ⁶ (375.4%)
P. Poenaru	1909	Bucharest ⁵	1.8%	8,841 (0.4%)
H. Oberth	1909	Bucharest ⁵	1.8%	8,841 (0.4%)
G.E. Palade	2022	Târgu Mureș (Mureș)	0.3%	No data
I. Creangă	1918	Iași (Iași)	2.3%	56,759 ⁶ (18.3%)
N. Grigorescu	1957	Câmpina (Prahova)	2.3%	11,123 (74.0%)
C. Porumbescu	1971	C. Porumbescu (Suceava)	1.0%	12,145 ⁶ (391.3%)
Romania's museum visitors: 18,197,586 and tourist arrivals: 13,374,943 (2019)				197,504 (1.2%)

¹A section in the National Romanian Aviation Museum; ²inside »Carol Davila« University of Medicine and Pharmacy; ³ inside »Ioan Cantacuzino« National Institute of Medicine; ⁴ a section in a Romanian railway museum; ⁵ a section in D. Leonida Technical Museum, Bucharest. ⁶Based on NIS.

and 20% currently have no institutional representation (Table 5). As more complex cultural institutions, these museums attract a larger number of visitors than memorial houses, 1% from the total number of Romanian museum visitors and only 34.7% of the survey respondents. Museums dedicated to one personality attract more visitors and respondents than thematic institutions relating to science, technology and engineering.

Monuments, individual statues and cultural ensembles are tourist attractions mentioned and visited by the respondents. The monuments nominated most frequently by the respondents are, in fact, those located in well-known destinations (Bucharest, Iasi, Târgu Jiu etc.), either in cultural ensembles with the other genius heritage destinations of outstanding art value or positioned in cities, whose cultural life has been marked by them. Brâncuși's outdoor sculptures (The Gate of the Kiss, the Table of Silence and the Column of Infinity) from Târgu Jiu City are visited regularly by the respondents (34.5%). Of those interviewed, 12% had seen the Eminescu monument of the lime-tree in Iași. Less interest was shown in the Saligny Bridge (Carol I King) over the Danube River (Fetești-Cernavodă), designed by the engineer A. Saligny at the end of the 19th century (Băjenaru 2012). All these monuments are freely accessible, are subjected to mass tourism and are often affected by the negative behaviours of tourists (graffiti, garbage, scribbles, etc.) (Spiridon et al. 2017).

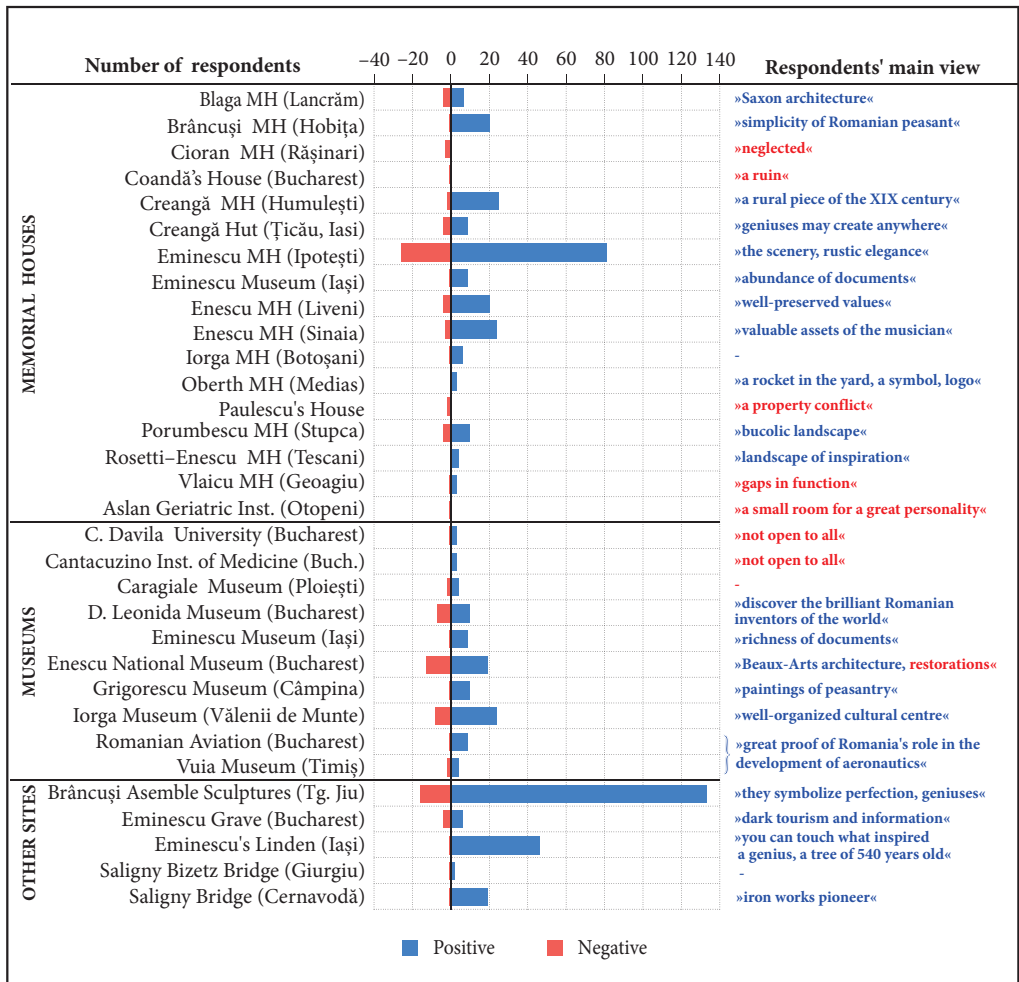


Figure 4: Frequency of positive and negative (red text) remarks regarding the visited sites from the tourist respondents' perspective.

The respondents' positive opinions outrank the negative opinions; 42% did not find anything they disliked, stating that »all were impressive«. On the other hand, there are sites that were neither mentioned as positive nor negative examples. Overall, the most exulted tourist attraction was Brâncuși's outdoor sculptures, open to the general public free of charge. The comments regarding each of the three exhibited pieces were exemplified by keywords, such as »uniqueness«, »greatness«, »perfection«, »genius«, »a sculptor of the modern art era, whose works are exhibited in the great museums of the world« (Figure 4).

Furthermore, both the M. Eminescu memorial house from Ipotești and his lime-tree, a secular tree in Copoul Park (Iași), were viewed positively, references to it being related to »the unique poetic vision about cosmic theory« and Eminescu's »role in the introduction of modern language in literature«. The respondents also identified the memorial houses of G. Enescu and I. Creangă, and the N. Iorga Museum, either for their organization, the preservation of their buildings or their representation of historic 19th and 20th century houses of different social categories, namely the peasantry (I. Creangă), the upper class (G. Enescu) and politicians (N. Iorga), all with a remarkable collection of assets.

Among the perceptions of those interviewed, negative issues were reported in the case of the G. Enescu Museum (Bucharest), organized in the Cantacuzino Palace and an impressive example of Beaux-Arts architecture, purchased by the artist (Beimel 2013). Controversially, this museum needed »urgent restoration works«, while the A. Vlaicu Memorial House had »poor guide services« or »insufficient road signage«. Unexploited heritage buildings were also reported, such as the N. Paulescu and H. Coandă houses, both in Bucharest City, as well as museums established within medical institutions but not open to the general public (Figure 4), such as Ana Aslan, I. Cantacuzino and N. Paulescu.

3.3 Heritage development of genius personalities: needs and benefits

Exploring the perception of a specific tourist product, which unifies the heritage dedicated to genius personalities, reveals a remarkably high rate of interest among respondents, with a mean score of 4.46 (on a scale from 1 to 5). The Student test and Fisher test (ANOVA method) results show that there is no difference among the groups of populations, except for three items relating to accommodation, as $p < 0.05$ (Table 6). The overall quality of the main components that characterize tourism: accommodation (3.39), access-transport (2.72), museum services (3.32) and tourist information (guidance, interpretation) (2.52) are considered satisfactory in terms of moderate values (Table 6). However, the higher the respondents' educational level, the more robust the incomes, and the more mature the groups, the lower the average scores. Therefore, when analysing the table of scores, the key expectations of the respondents regarding the new tourist package of geniuses, in the context of good museum services or accommodation, encompass needs such as the improvement of access-transport and tourist information services.

The establishment of a unified product of geniuses and the resolution of the identified needs are seen as equal prerogatives of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Tourism (70%), then the responsibility of counties and local authorities (about 50%), followed by NGOs and other entities.

The benefits as a result of geniuses' heritage development would have multiplier effects on tourism, on settlements and on culture, etc. It is believed that initiating projects focused on adding to the heritage of geniuses, in particular, local personalities, would play a greater role in the education of the population (68.3%). Almost half of the respondents pay attention to the employment of positive inputs, either in relation to guiding (51.2%), museums' management (40%) or boosting local businesses based on souvenir stores (35.1%). Almost one fourth point to the augmentation of accommodation-based businesses, either by »rent a room« (28.1%) or through specific infrastructure (21.6%).

4 Discussion

Among the survey responses, 130 personalities were listed but only 22 were frequently nominated. This accords with the research of Schwartz (1998) whose empirical findings show that famous personalities are recognized by a large number of people. In the case of the Romanian personalities ranked in the first three places (M. Eminescu, C. Brâncuși and G. Enescu), it can be concluded that there is a stereotypical perception of geniuses, similar to the research results relating to Einstein and revealed in Smith and Wright's study (2000). Added to this is a statement by Smith and Wright (2000) that Mozart's nomination as a genius

Table 6: The results of testing the differences in genius heritage scores and the main tourism service scores in Romania, in relation to the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics.

Variables	Genius heritage		Museum services		Information services		Transport services		Accommodation		Test
	Mean score	Test value	Mean score	Test value	Mean score	Test value	Mean score	Test value	Mean score	Test value	
<i>Overall sample</i>	4.46		3.32		2.52		2.72		3.39		
Gender											
M	4.51	198.209 (0.000)	3.28	252.11 (0.000)	2.44	197.604 (0.000)	2.75	197.60 (0.000)	3.28	0.84 (0.772)	t
F	4.42		3.37		2.61		2.78		3.41		
Location											
Urban	4.44	239.610 (0.000)	3.30	252.11 (0.000)	2.53	239.757 (0.000)	2.75	239.75 (0.000)	3.33	2.995 (0.084)	
Rural	4.69		3.44		2.47		2.47		3.40		
Studies											
Gymnasium	5.00	16.683 (0.001)	3.71	21.638 (0.001)	2.71	9.261 (0.001)	3.00	38.080 (0.001)	4.00	1.057 (0.367)	
Lyceum	4.67		3.16		2.62		2.89		3.22		
Faculty	4.40		3.41		2.81		2.57		3.35		
Post.gr.	4.48		3.23		2.43		2.54		3.34		
Income (€)											
<400	4.42	17.553 (0.001)	3.07	27.222 (0.001)	2.86	24.613 (0.001)	2.98	28.844 (0.001)	3.38	0.265 (0.851)	
401-800	4.42		3.42		2.51		2.72		3.37		
801-1200	4.43		3.33		2.47		2.73		3.29		
> 1200	4.69		3.17		2.42		2.47		3.33		
Age groups											
18-20	4.43	14.738 (0.001)	3.28	6.250 (0.001)	2.46	18.819 (0.001)	2.98	25.245 (0.001)	3.36	0.666 (0.573)	
31-45	4.46		3.31		2.46		2.72		3.32		
46-60	4.54		3.38		2.67		2.75		3.39		
60+	4.60		3.16		2.34		2.47		3.15		
Profession											
Art	3.75	12.782 (0.001)	2.50	12.965 (0.001)	3.00	11.926 (0.001)	3.00	16.779 (0.001)	3.60	1.622 (0.045)	Fisher test (ANOVA)
Cults	4.50		3.50		2.50		3.50		3.50		
Economist	4.06		3.13		2.63		2.98		3.24		
Education	4.46		2.95		2.80		3.20		3.41		
Employer	4.51		3.15		2.37		2.51		3.46		
Engineer	4.44		3.30		2.48		2.89		3.13		
Health	4.26		3.10		2.05		2.29		3.35		
IT	4.56		3.22		2.39		2.91		2.72		
Judicial	4.17		3.08		2.08		2.58		2.67		
Media	4.58		3.19		2.48		2.97		3.00		
NGO	5.00		2.87		2.33		2.20		3.30		
None	4.27		3.40		2.53		2.60		3.50		
Other	4.87		3.34		2.92		2.81		3.25		
Research	4.34		3.59		2.79		2.76		3.67		
Retail	4.54		3.10		2.60		2.67		3.80		
Retired	4.27		3.00		1.67		1.33		3.33		
Security	4.00		3.56		2.64		2.78		2.75		
Servant	4.75		3.43		2.78		2.74		3.32		
Student	4.30		3.48		2.53		2.64		3.33		
Tourism	4.54		3.20		2.17		2.83		3.29		
Worker	4.84		3.05		2.57		3.14		3.50		

Note: the significance level (p) of the test in the brackets.

is boosted during national cultural events. The three famous Romanians from this survey benefit from celebrations, such as the National Day of Culture organized on the 15th January since 2010 (Eminescu's birthday), Brâncuși Day, held on the 19th February since 2015 (Brâncuși's birthday) and the George Enescu Festival (established in 1958, on 4th September).

Considering their domains of excellence, geniuses of the arts, literature and philosophy (areas of aesthetic salience) are first nominated, followed by inventors and scientists (meritorious areas). This pattern was also highlighted by Yue, Bender and Cheung et al. (2011) and Tang, Werner and Hofreiter (2018) and was explained by popular educational orientation towards culture and then towards technical information or vice-versa.

The undisputed first place of M. Eminescu is explained by his mythification as a national poet, a genius of Romanian literature (Mironescu 2018). Otherwise, the works of M. Eminescu, C. Brâncuși, G. Enescu, M. Eliade, I. Creangă, L. Blaga, I. L. Caragiale and C. Porumbescu are taught during school education in Romania (see Ministry of Education national curricula; <https://edu.ro>). By comparison, the inventors and scientists' list, despite including a Nobel prize winner (G. E. Palade) or a contribution to the development of humankind (H. Coandă, T. Vuia, A. Vlaicu, N. Paulescu, P. Poenaru, H. Oberth, I. Cantacuzino, A. Aslan, A. Saligny) is mentioned mostly by health personnel and IT engineers, probably due to the ease of accessing information (Tang, Werner and Hofreiter 2018).

Concerning the capitalization of the heritage of genius personalities in relation to tourism, the results converge on several characteristics. For this reason, each situation (personality, region, nation and so forth) will require its own approaches. In this regard, the present study shows that the Romanian genius nominations are overlaid with the spread of their attractions (M. Eminescu, three landmarks; G. Enescu, four sites, etc.).

Museums dedicated to famous people outnumber memorial houses, as they are usually large public cultural institutions, designated to a group (Railway Museum, Technical Museum) or a single personality (G. Enescu) and are established in city settings, mainly Bucharest (Bogan, Constantin and Grigore 2018). Memorial houses are often private initiatives (foundations, family properties etc.) and are smaller in size, as many are linked to the native places of the subjects in rural or remote areas. In some cases, their setting up or function are influenced by legal processes of buildings restitution after the communist period (Bejtja and Bejtja 2015). Therefore, certain initiatives were blocked by ownership conflicts (E. Cioran and C. Brâncuși) or changed into residencies by descendants (P. Poenaru), while others were demolished and replaced by blocks of flats during communism (M. Eliade). In other cases, the accomplishments of outstanding personalities were organized exclusively within the institutions in which they worked, and information about them is not accessible to the general public (e.g., Palade, Paulescu, Cantacuzino and Aslan).

The data covering the visits to museums include both tourists and some residents, as official statistics do not differentiate between the two. This explains why the museum visitors outnumber tourist arrivals in our study. On the other hand, research has revealed that tourists in rural destinations tend to visit residential surroundings first (Bertacchini, Nuccio and Durio 2021 2021), while cities capture large numbers of visitors, due to the significant concentration of tourist attractions (Bogan, Constantin and Grigore 2018). These two findings could be used to explain why tourists and respondents visit memorial houses and museums in Bucharest or Iași with greater frequency. Furthermore, Cellini and Cuccica (2013) demonstrated that museums may influence the length of a tourist stays in particular destinations. Additionally, offers such as free entrance during the Museums Night event is a modifier of tourist numbers. Similarly, free access to open-air heritage sites, such as Brâncuși's outdoor sculptures and Eminescu's lime-tree in Iași, never captured in tourism statistics, could to a certain extent be comparable with the higher visitor rate noted by respondents.

The above ideas explain the partial overlapping of people with genius ranking and the statistics of visited sites, respectively, in the case of those personalities who are more generally promoted in Romanian culture and whose heritage is more adequately preserved and presented to the general public.

Moreover, respondents revealed the need for an improved valorization of famous personalities' heritage as a UNESCO site, which would bring multiple benefits to cultural tourism. Panzera, de Graaff and de Groot (2020) demonstrated that national and international (UNESCO) added values play the role of pull factors and may reduce the distance decay effect.

The frequently chosen strengths (accommodation, museum services) or needs (conservation, signage in the territory, promotion, the quality of the guidance, the maintenance or organization and the spatial

accessibility) influence the demands of cultural heritage. Thus, more careful exploitation and the implicit preservation of heritage related to genius personalities is clearly perceived as increasing tourism resources and the number of direct and indirect jobs, as well as revenues in the field of culture and tourism or heritage-oriented activities (Murzyn-Kupisz 2012). These are targets of the local sustainable tourism development, increasingly often argued for in tourism studies (Lanzinger and Garlandini 2019; Pop et al. 2019). The specificity and the spatial dispersion of such objectives requires the mitigation of certain deficiencies related to transport accessibility and signage (Wu and Guo 2013). The implementation of such a concept of tourism capitalization requires the combined and consistent effort of all stakeholders, from NGOs to local and national authorities, and even the EU in relation to the country's spaces (Surugiu and Surugiu 2013).

5 Conclusions

This article analysed the way in which Romanian tourists perceive the opportunities to boost cultural heritage tourism in Romania, by capitalizing on famous personalities at national and international level. According to the tourists, 22 geniuses were validated from different fields and were recognized and requested by the national tourist market.

Regarding the heritage of genius personalities from the perspective of visitors, around 60% of the personalities identified by respondents were represented by one or more heritage buildings (Eminescu, Brâncuși, Enescu). These were either visited regularly and were well preserved or required certain conservation work, extra signage or information. The remaining 40% of personalities, identified by the respondents, are not commemorated in Romanian cultural heritage with memorial houses for several reasons, such as conflicts related to properties, the physical degradation of the building or the disappearance of the sites.

In relation to the development of the heritage of genius personalities and the consideration of needs and benefits, it was found that setting up special projects based on their heritage and improving the quality of museum services were greatly appreciated among the respondents, while tourist information (guidance, interpretation) and the accessibility of these objectives to tourists required improvement. Moreover, the respondents regard that the development of the heritage of famous personalities would generate socio-economic benefits for the members of local communities.

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