

## THE ROLE OF THE TOUR GUIDE PROFESSION IN THE DRAVA AND SAVA REGIONS: COMMUNICATING ATTRACTIONS IN INCREASINGLY AESTHETICIZED TOURISM CONSUMPTION

### ULOGA ZANIMANJA TURISTIČKOG VODIČA NA PODRUČJU RIJEKA SAVE I DRAVE: KOMUNICIRANJE ATRAKCIJA U RASTUĆOJ ESTETIZIRANOJ TURISTIČKOJ POTROŠNJI

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#### ABSTRACT

*In the process of sustainable tourism development the role of tour guides is significant. They are not mere presenters of natural and cultural attractions, but ambassadors of cultures, sustainability and intercultural dialogue. It is thus essential that they are well educated, adequately trained and actively involved in the tourism planning processes. Especially important is their role when it comes to presenting attractions to tourists by employing their communication and professional skills. This article describes the experiment of presenting an object (attraction) without a tour guide on the one hand, and the experiments involving tour guides presenting an object (attraction) by using the method of description, and the*

*experiments involving tour guides using a description of an object (attraction) and an invitation to participants (tourists) to actively participate on the other. The experimental research was focused on the role of tour guides and on the experiencing the beautiful. The results showed that the participants (tourists) evaluated the object (attraction) as more beautiful when it was presented by a tour guide implicating the essential role of the tour guide in the process of presenting attractions, destinations, and cultures.*

**Key words:** tour guide, presentation, communication, attractions, dialogue, aesthetics

**Ključne riječi:** turistički vodič, prezentacija, komunikacija, atrakcije, dijalog, estetika

## INTRODUCTION – TOUR GUIDES AND COMMUNICATION

The momentum of tourism activities that we witness at the present stage of tourism development could, in some ways, be considered as a moment of creative destruction in Schumpeter's (1942) meaning of the term. If it is true for the entire modern economy that the culture in it has become an internal connecting element for productivity and growth (Roemer), then it is far truer for tourism at the national, but also at the international level. Modern tourists are not just passive passengers through a geographical area. In many respects they become co-creators of their tourism experience (Richards and Wilson, 2006). Culture in overall economic activity has become a significant element of creating a value chain (Porter, 1985) and, in particular, this role is indicated in touristic activity. What tourism has added to the whole economic system as its value-added is the increase in the pleasure of the tourist experience (Weiermair, 2000).

The perception of artistic works and the perception of objects in general has intrigued people, philosophers and scientists for centuries. Especially in the tourism industry, aesthetics modes – the beautiful, the sublime, and the picturesque – are significant (Knudsen et al. 2015, 179) and typical within the theoretical corpus of aesthetic judgement since the 18th century (Knudsen et al. 2015, 182). According to Urry (1995, 151), tourism consumption is increasingly aestheticized. What is essential in tourism is the subjective positive impression that stays after the tourist's visit. This subjective positive impression could also be called beauty (Knudsen et al., 2015, 180). Obviously, the aesthetic perception has to be incorporated into tourism planning to enable good memories for tourists (Wang et al., 2008, 207). A specific group of professionals who deal with aesthetic perception is Tour Guides. Their role in presenting the aesthetic dimension, the beautiful to tourists is, in fact, significant. But, what is beautiful? There is a well-known proverb saying that »Beauty is in the eye of the beholder«. Shelley points out David Hume's words that »beauty is no quality in things themselves,« but merely a sentiment in »the mind that contemplates them« (Shelley 2002, 48). Many experiments and treatises have shown that the appreciation of beauty is dependent upon »a wide array of social variables« (Porteous 1996, 24). Also, the art critic Newton (1950, 18) points out that perception of beauty varies according to positional, temporal, and personality variables:

*Beauty is a desirable commodity. But not all men are equally susceptible to it. Nor are all men agreed about its abode. Moreover, it varies with the period. It is subject to the laws that govern fashion ... It also varies with its geographical position ... Variations in national or racial standards of beauty are as noticeable as period standards.*

Even one of the greatest poets of all times, William Shakespeare, discussed beauty in a similar manner in his *Love's Labour's Lost* (1588). All these dimensions are also the reason that Tour Guides have presented an important part of the experiment described in the manuscript. The purpose of the experiment has been to induce the perception of the observed object. Prior to the experiment it was assumed that Tour Guides enhance the perception of the object presented to the participants. The participants evaluated a post-modern sculpture by Martina Vrbljanin, a student of arts at the University of Zagreb in Croatia. The sculpture served as a symbol of any observed object or attraction since, according to Carlson (2002, 551), »the new paradigm for aesthetic appreciation of environments is comparable to the new paradigm for appreciation of art«. Carlson (2002, 552) also points out that »environmental aesthetics embody the view that every environment, natural, rural or urban, large or small,

ordinary or extraordinary, offers much to see, to hear, to feel, much to appreciate aesthetically« and that the different world environments »can be aesthetically rich and rewarding as are the very best of our works of art« (ibid.).

Based on the issues described above we have created the following research questions:

1. Does the involvement of the Tour guide in the presentation of an object (which stands for an attraction) increase the perception of beauty with a certain object when observed by tourists?
2. Does the moving activity during the observation of the object (which stands for an attraction) increase the perception of beauty?

## ON THE PERCEPTION OF AESTHETICS AND BEAUTY

Perception and attention are significant parts of understanding the response of the viewers. Attention, according to Cray (2000, 5) is the individual observer's means of transcending the subjective limitations and making perception *his own* and, at the same time, a means by which the perceiver becomes open to control by external agencies. Cray (2000, 3) states that the term »perception« is problematic and defines it as a way of indicating a subject in terms of mixed-sense modalities (in terms of sight, hearing, touch etc.).

The beautiful in Western philosophy originates in Greek culture (Plato, 1953 in Knudsen et al, 2015). According to Budd ([www.rep.routledge.com/articles/aesthetics](http://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/aesthetics)), the term is derived from the Greek *aisthanomai*, which means perception by means of the senses, and it was coined by Alexander Baumgarten in the 18th century, but exploring the beautiful goes back to the ancient Greeks (Sporre, 2006). As the subject is now understood, it consists of two parts: The philosophy of art, and the philosophy of the aesthetic experience and character of objects or phenomena that are not art. Non-art items include both artefacts that possess aspects susceptible to aesthetic appreciation, and phenomena that lack any traces of human design by virtue of being products of nature, not humanity ([www.rep.routledge.com/articles/aesthetics](http://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/aesthetics)). Despite the fact that Plato's word »kalon« is translated as »beautiful«, the ancient concept of beauty is quite different from the modern aesthetic concept (Janaway 2002, 8). Plato, Aristotle, and St. Thomas Aquinas asserted that beauty is not subjected to observers' biased evaluations, but that it resides within an object (Beardsley, 1975 and Kirillova et al 2014, Margolis 2002, 33-37) and that beauty is the »expression of a universal quality« (Sporre 2006, 7). On the contrary, Hume (1757/2013) and Kant (1790/1987) believed that beauty involves a judgement and is subjective in nature (Sporre 2006, 7; Crawford 2002, 56). According to Kant (1987), »no argument or appeal to principles can convince us that an object is beautiful without our perceiving the object first-hand« (Goldman 2002, 259). Cekić (1991, 253), however, asserts that, according to many philosophers who follow Kant's thinking, man cannot think and know the world in the divine way because he is restricted to his human sensory organs and categorical structure of thinking. For Hutcheson (1973), the source of the pleasure of beauty lies in us, as well as in objects (Shelley 2002, 42).

Sibley (1959) speaks of aesthetic properties, and his list of properties includes: Being balanced, serene, powerful, delicate, sentimental, graceful and garish (Goldman 2002, 256). This list, which could easily be extended, represents the general concept of an aesthetic property (Goldman *ibid.*). Goldman (2002, 259) further on asserts that »aesthetic properties are not only relational, but relative« and that »the same objective properties produce different responses or experiences, hence different aesthetic properties for different observers«. Individual experience in aesthetics is also emphasised by Herwitz (2008, 19), who opines that aesthetics adjust art to experience, and experience to something happening in relative abstraction from the larger social ambit of the roles art has played in life (Herwitz 2008, 20-21).

Sporre (2006, 13) argues that the response to sculpture can be physical and mental, and enumerates characteristics of artwork, among them colour, mass, texture etc., which influence the perception of artwork (Sporre 2006, 46-67). Researches have shown that people perceive symmetric and round objects as beautiful (Silvia and Barona, 2009) and that smooth curved contours are preferred over angular contours (Carbon, 2010; Westerman et al. 2012; Palumbo and Bertamini, 2016; Bertamini et al., 2016). Beauty and other aesthetic properties are not only intrinsic properties of objects themselves, but essen-

tially involve responses on the part of the perceiving subjects (Goldman 2002, 260). According to Dewey (1958), aesthetic experience is »unified or coherent, and complete«, and from Kant through Dewey, with experience »the full engagement of all our mental capacities« is connected (Goldman 2002, 260). Dewey (1958) and Beardsley (1981) describe the aesthetic experience in only positive terms, while Zemach (1997) argues that we experience negative aesthetic properties as well (Goldman 2002, 261). Goldman (2002, 263) points out that, when people perceive objects other than artworks aesthetically, for example the natural environment, they use multiple senses and attend completely not only to sensuous and formal properties, but to the natural objects or scenes »as expressive, as uplifting or oppressive, majestic or delicate«. According to him (2002, 265):

To be fully engaged is not simply to pay close perceptual attention to formal detail and complex internal relations in the object's structure, but also to bring to bear one's cognitive grasp of those external and historical relations that inform one's aesthetic experience, and to be receptive to the expressive qualities that emerge through this interaction.

## ON AESTHETICS AND BEAUTY IN TOURISM

Aesthetics is vital to the »human sense of well-being« and industries involved in »catering to aesthetic satisfactions /.../ are thriving economic enterprises« (Porteous 1996, 5). It seems that beauty and beautiful represent the essence of tourism and tourism communication, which has always also involved aesthetics, which is, according to Prall (1929, 45), basic to human nature. According to Di et al. (2010), aesthetic values are at the centre of destinations' perception. Aesthetic value is also one of the significant criteria in the evaluation of application for natural areas to be designated as World Natural Heritage Sites by UNESCO (Di Feng et al. 2010, 59). In the first half of the 1980s, Zube et al. (1982) dealt with landscape perception and, in the recent decades, especially since the 1980s, the growth of the tourist industry has led leaders and politicians to reconsider landscapes as revenue generators (Porteous 1996, 10). Aesthetics explores the nature of beauty and comprises one of the five classical fields of philosophical inquiry – together with Epistemology, Ethics, Logic and Metaphysics (Sporre 2006, 7), and is often discussed in tourism literature (Austin, 2007, Knudsen and Greer, 2001, Scarles, 2007, etc.). To create a pleasant experience for travellers and to present attractions and destinations as beautiful is one of the goals of tourism marketing (Kirillova et al. 2014) and, consequently, the aesthetic dimension of an attraction or a destination is significant, despite the fact that the term aesthetics is highly disputable in philosophy (Todd, 2012, 65). Knudsen et. al. (2015, 179) speak of three threads of aesthetics in tourism: 1) Tourism from the point of view of semiotics (MacCannell, 1976), 2) Foucauldian discourse analysis as an ocularcentric activity (Urry, 1990), 3) Anthropologic origin which states that tourism has much in common with ritual performance (Graburn, 2001; Turner, 1969).

Lee, Jeon & Kim (2011) argue that the aesthetic characteristics of an attraction or a destination influence the experiences and satisfaction of tourists and that they also contribute to their wish to return to the destination. According to Alegre and Garau (2010), a destination's aesthetic characteristics have been an essential element of many perception and satisfaction image scales used in tourism research. Herwitz (2008, 25) asks whether beauty is a property of the thing judged (the sculpture) or the person judging. In the current research, the central questions are responses to the object, artwork – sculpture, which stands for an attraction, and perception of the artwork. Thus, the question of experience, which is also »a critical concept in tourism marketing and management literature« (Kirillova 2012, 282). In the experiment the research team tried to imitate the tourism experience. One of the essential questions was how the sculpture stimulated the senses of the observers. It should be noted, however, that tourism aesthetics could possess its own characteristics in that »the tourism experience involves the full immersion of an individual into an environment that may be distinct from his/her everyday living surroundings« (Volo, 2009 in Kirillova, 2016, 283). Whether tourists perceive an attraction as beautiful could be related to their home environments (Maitland and Smith, 2009). On the other hand, facility aesthetics are also significant (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Ha and Jang, 2012).

It should be observed, however, that »sometimes we are simply struck by the aesthetic qualities of an art work or natural scene« (Goldman 2002, 265-266). What is more, in appreciation of the observed

landscape, »what is aesthetically relevant is knowledge of why it is, what it is, and what it is like, whether or not that knowledge is, strictly speaking, scientific« (Carlson 2002, 549). Thus, according to Carlson (ibid.), who speaks of the »aesthetic relevance of information«, information about an observed object's histories, functions, their roles in our lives, is crucial, and Tour Guides are those who provide that significant information. Consequently, a lot is dependent upon how the presentations of objects/attractions are presented by the Tour Guides. In fact, the Tour Guides' information plays a central role in the perception of an object/attraction. »The aesthetic relevance of such information seems especially evident for environments that constitute important places in the histories and cultures of particular peoples« (Carlson 2002, 550). What is important is »an emotionally and cognitively rich engagement with a cultural artifact, intentionally created by a designing intellect, informed by both art-historical traditions and art-critical practices, and deeply embedded in a complex, many-faceted art world« and/or »emotionally and cognitively rich engagement with an environment, created by natural and cultural forces, informed by both scientific knowledge and cultural traditions« (Carlson 2002, 551).

Since the aesthetic component as judged by consumers was neglected in the past (Kirillova 2014, 283), the experiment focused on this component specifically. According to Ittelson (1978), tourism aesthetics involves multi-sensory experiences, which may incorporate many relations besides that between a tourist and the environment. Also, a tourist's background is a factor (Kirillova 2014, 283). In the past several models of nature appreciation were developed (Natural environmental model - Carlson 1979, Arousal model - Carroll 1995, Sceptical view - Budd 2002, Mystery model - Godlovitch 2004, Engagement model - Berleant 2005). However, it should be noted that aesthetic judgements are relative as is nature itself (Kirillova 2016, 284). According to Todd (2009), tourism experience is often dominated by oversimplification, falsification, romanticization and lack of authenticity.

When discussing the role of Tour Guides, communication of the landscape and its attractions is of great importance. According to Brochu and Merriman (2008, 1) the world »relies on interpersonal communication«, and modern society teaches about cultural topics in many ways, also with Tour Guides, who help audiences connect with history, culture, and the attractions on Earth (Brochu and Merriman, 2008, 3). As far as interpreting is concerned, the authors point out the following:

There is always more to know about the resources to be interpreted, the audiences to be served, or the variety of communication techniques available. The journey of self-improvement in the interpretative profession will never grow old because of this continual effort to change and apply new and innovative ideas. The responsibility to improve belongs to each individual as a professional (Brochu and Merriman, 2008, 4).

On tours, tourists are confronted by images and objects, many of which are unfamiliar to them and must be interpreted (Eco, 1976). As the experiment has shown, languages play a significant role in understanding and in the perception of the world. Cohen (1985, 16) points out Tour Guide's interpretation skills and the representation of attractions »through the use of appropriate language«. According to Arbib (2012, 31), languages »are acquired anew (and may be modified slightly thereby) in each generation«. Further on he mentions co-speech gestures and sign language (2012, 39-40), which can be used to complement the speech. Also Topolinski et al. (2013, 174) discuss sign language in a way, claiming that »motor components play a key role in fluency effects«. It can be concluded that signs and movements (gestures) are additional factors in tourism communication, more precisely in the communication of Tour Guides. Topolinski (2011: 260) argues that bodily processes are significant for »several essential mental faculties, such as processing emotions /.../, representing abstract meaning /.../, or building memory /.../.« According to Topolinski (ibid.), »sensorimotor processes contribute to memory retrieval, to metacognitive judgements concerning memory content, and to recognising emotional faces.« The brain also has an important role in understanding and interpreting art (Livingstone, 2002). And, what is more, aesthetics is an important form of additional knowledge that helps in shaping interpretations (Knudsen et al., 2015, 188), and also creating stories.

Interestingly enough, the word »interpret« comes up often when it comes to tour guiding. Tilden (1957) described interpretation as an educational activity aimed at revealing meanings and relationships to people. Weiler and Ham (2001) transferred this knowledge of interpretation into the relation between

Tour Guides and tourists or, as they call them, visitors, by introducing the following five principles of interpretation within this relation:

- Interpretation is not teaching or »instruction« in an academic sense.
- Interpretation must be enjoyable for visitors.
- Interpretation must be relevant for visitors.
- Interpretation must be well organised so that visitors can follow it easily.
- Interpretation should have a theme not just a topic.

The profession of a Tour Guide may seem relatively new, but it is not, as Pond (1993) explains that the first forms of tour guiding were already seen as far back as Ancient Greece and Ancient Roman times, where there was a professional that they named an »interpreter«. Those were people that interpreted the history of certain towns or areas to people who came through these towns or areas for payment, as it seems it was also on the other side of the world in Asia where, as indicated by Hu (2007, 14), we have written testimonies of people who had the job of interpreting the history of certain areas to rulers who travelled around the country. In both cases we can see the role of a Tour Guide being focused on a narrow group of people or even an individual; this is quite some distance apart from the profession of a Tour Guide as we know it today. Cohen (1985,10) has found that the mediatory sphere of the tourist guide's role, noted later, »is much wider and more complex than the simple direction of tourists' attention to such objects« and, in a way, an extension of the earlier role, so the tourist guide has to be »a teacher, a confidant and guru,« (McKean, 1976,13) and Schmidt (1979, 458) compares him to a shaman. The Cohen's model (1985) of two basic roles (»outer-directed« and »inner-directed« tourist's guides roles) has been expanded (Wiler & Davis, 1993) with the third, which is »resource management«, but the communicative role of the tourist guides has not yet clearly been investigated (Rendall & Rollins, 2008).

The theme of guidance (spiritual and geographical) is present also in literature. Cohen (1985, 8) mentions Virgil and Beatrice in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the Interpreter in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Process*, and Mephisto in Goethe's *Faust*, but there are many more works of literature, also contemporary ones, dealing with the guiding and guides, among them J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* (Gandalf is a mentor/guide to Frodo) and J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* (Albus Dumbledore is a Professor). It was not until the late 18th century when the first organised trip that could be considered as a tourist product was made in Great Britain, where Thomas Cook made an organised trip by train from Leicester to Loughborough that attracted some 570 people, and this is the time where we can say that the profession of a Tour Guide emerged. Cohen (1985, 6 -13) argues that »guiding is a complex concept« (6), involving many roles and activities, among them organizing, leading the way, taking responsibility for the safety of a group, animating the group, etc. In addition, the Tour Guide's is »a boundary role« (Cohen 1985, 22) – the Tour Guide is the connection between the employer, the tourists and the natives of the site visited. Also »the demands and expectations of twenty-first century visitors have grown and evolved« (Weiler and Walker, 2014, 91) and the significance of public speaking skills, i. e. the quality of voice, diction, etc. is therefore crucial. The communicative aspect of guiding, and especially the knowledge of languages is very important in the profession of guides, who are significant actors in »the process of folklorizing, ethnicizing, and exoticizing a destination« (Salazar, 2006, 834). Tour Guides need to be able to choose the appropriate from a given code - in order to satisfy the needs of a certain selected situation (Turner, 1973, 7). However, for tourist guides not only the knowledge of their mother tongues and foreign languages is significant, but also the mastering of »the currently popular global discourse« (Salazar, 2006, 240).

Huang and others (2010) have confirmed that tour guide performance has a direct effect on tourists' satisfaction with the guiding service and an indirect effect on tourism experience, and that the tourist guide has to be able to »to provide tourists with a transformative tourism experience, leading to positive change in attitudes and values by offering tourists a different way of seeing the world« (Io, 2013, 904). Also, during the onsite activities, their role is to create happiness, let them to experience positive emotions (joy, interest and contentment) (Filep & Deery, 2010) which is connected with positive psychology

and satisfaction (Pearce, 2009) and to get emotional, rather than educational experience (Poria et al., 2009).

The purpose of the research was to understand the more precise role of a tourist guide when presenting art facilities on tourist destinations. Thus, in theory, it is possible to find out which form of tourist guide activity is deeper into the experience of beauty with people who are listening to it. Whether it is academic accuracy and precision of data, or an attempt to experience a beautiful experience by inviting tourists to some form of activity associated with the object being watched. The practical purpose of this research is to deepen and expand the education of tourist guides in order to make a deeper impression of tourist trips on tourists. If tourism activity is to develop into something more than the desire of organizers to make profits, then the tourist's experience of beauty is the main goal of designing every tourist product.

## METHODOLOGY

In the years 2015 and 2016, the study was conducted according to the experimental design involving two groups and the so-called pretest-posttest technique. The experiment was of laboratory type. Instead of the real objects of a tourist offer, an art sculpture was used as a laboratory tool. As the experimental facility the sculpture, titled »Together« was chosen by the young lady-sculptor Martina Vrbljanin from Zagreb, Croatia. The research team reviewed a series of sculptures that was offered generously by the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, Croatia. In the experiment Vrbljanin's was used from among the five shortlisted sculptures which were chosen.

The sculpture was a three-dimensional full-round object, made of terracotta. Two separate figures are connected by threads of wool. In further research of this topic it will surely be necessary to carry out experimental research in the field with real and concrete objects of cultural heritage located around and offered to tourists during the tourist visits, according to the experiences obtained in the laboratory experiment.

The study involved professional Tourist Guides who volunteered for the study and undertook the task of the experimenters. The target and the method of the experiment were explained to them. Then they were asked to self-reflect on how to perform their tasks in front of the participants of the experiment. The idea proposed by the Tourist Guides was coordinated carefully with the research design. Then all the details were trained and coordinated with the members of the research team.

Two groups of participants were formed randomly out of the participants who agreed to take part. When the participants entered the room where the experiment was being carried out, they were directed to the sculpture that stood on a table in the middle of the room. The participants were asked to take a good look at the sculpture from all sides.

Simultaneously, a short video was projected presenting the sculpture from all perspectives. Students were asked to rate the beauty of the sculpture using the scale provided. The experiment was performed in a large room, so that every student could find their own »private« space from which they could observe the sculpture from their own perspective and rate its beauty. The participants could observe the details of the sculpture from the video that was projected continuously, and they had the opportunity to be closer to the sculpture if they had need of a more direct contact with the object. Once they had made the assessment of the sculpture they were asked to put their papers into an envelope. After that, the students participated in the performance of the second part of the experiment.

To Group 1 a tour guide was presented who described the sculpture in the usual form used by the majority of Tour Guides. This means that the Tour Guide stood in front of the whole group, sometimes pointing a hand at the object that was presented and told the story of this object.

To group 2 a Tour Guide was introduced who, in addition to the description of the sculpture, asked the participants to take part in the presentation of the sculpture by their movements. The Tour Guide asked the participants to cooperate so as to get a ball of ropes, and everyone was asked to tell a member of the group a few phrases associated with the object of the research and deliver the ball to a partner – another participant, the partner should wrap the rope around them twice and then deliver the ball with a few sentences associated with the sculpture. Thus, a closed circle of interconnectedness was created

between group members. At the end of the story the Tour Guide cut the rope with which they connected participants during the experiment with scissors.

## INSTRUMENT

The instrument was used to examine the extent to which respondents evaluated the displayed object as a beautiful one. The respondents evaluated 45 words that are synonyms in all three languages (Croatian, Serbian and Slovenian) and refer to some of the dimensions of beauty. The scale was five-degree, with rating 1 in the sense that the respondent does not in any case experience sculpture as beautiful, and the grade 5 that the respondent perceived the sculpture as perfectly beautiful. The terms are divided into five factors: 1. Authenticity, 2. Colouring 3. Fascination, 4. Perfection and the fifth component is 5. Characteristics of the person. Internal scale consistency is very high, Crombach's alpha is .97.

## PARTICIPANTS

The participants in the experiment were students of the Faculties of Tourism in Brežice, (Slovenia), in Zagreb (Croatia) and in Novi Sad (Serbia). The first group involved 27 students from Zagreb, 59 students from Brežice and 30 students from Novi Sad. In the second group 23 students participated from Zagreb, 40 from Brežice and 35 from Novi Sad. The first group included a total of 116 students, and 98 students participated in the second group. A total of 214 students participated in this project. Of these, a total of 125 were young women and 61 men. A total of 28 had not marked their gender in the protocols. The proportion of young men and young women corresponds to the proportions of sexes at the Faculties of Tourism in this region. Proportionally, a far greater number of women than men choose to study Tourism in this region. The average age of students is 21,86 with a Standard Deviation of 3,34. The Value Mode was 20, which means that the largest number of students was 20 years old. This figure corresponds to the real extent of the reality as well. The largest numbers of students at the universities in the region are students in the first year of studies and, in the subsequent years, that number is decreasing.

As in most other experimental researches of similar nature this was a student convenience sample (Tucisny, 2017:416). Groups were formed randomly from the sample. But the nature of experimental research in social sciences generally and tourism use of the results are not direct and immediate. Groups were composed of students who were in the facilities of the university on the day of the experiment. They were invited to participate voluntarily in the experiment. Before starting the experiment the experimenter explained to them that the aim of the project was to explore the best model of work of the tourist guides. After the experiment, students were told in detail the techniques of experimental design of this project.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to check whether the test results in groups affected only the independent variable and not some other factor, the difference between the arithmetic mean of both groups was calculated at the pretest. This means that we compared whether the sculpture which was chosen as the independent variable had the same effect on the participants in the two different groups. In the pretest phase the participants of both groups had the opportunity to see the sculpture and then evaluate the beauty of these sculptures on a scale of 1 to 5.

As can be seen from Table 1 rating the beauty of the sculpture was equal in both groups of participants in the experiment before the Tour Guides presented the sculpture, so that means that the sculpture was liked equally by all research participants. This is a key result for the further course of the study. In the next step of the experiment the participants will be affected by independent variables differing in their content. In the pretest phase of study in the two separate groups of participants their assessment of the beauty of the sculpture was influenced only by their personal experience of the sculpture, and no other effect. If this situation is projected as an event in the tourism industry, then it would represent



tourists who find themselves in front of an object of local culture and assess the beauty of that object without any kind of influence from the Tour Guide.

The average score for each of the factors was calculated that made an overall assessment of the concept of beautiful. They are represented in the following Table. As the number of items in the different components is different, the arithmetic mean was calculated in order to compare between components.

It is very interesting that the greatest value was achieved on the item of fascination, and the lowest on the item authenticity. We would say that the students acted on the model of an average tourist, who is very interested in the feeling of beautiful and less for the authenticity of art objects. Tourists are searching for a sense of the beautiful.

The basic idea of performing this experiment was to examine whether the experience of beauty depends on the level of participation of tourists during a visit to a cultural object. Therefore, one group of participants in the experiment had a »classic« treatment. In that treatment a professional Tour Guide introduced the object by the most commonly used method. She stood in front of the participants of the experiment and spoke of the sculpture in the same way as she would work explaining to tourists some of the cultural monuments of southern Italy to which she most often travels with tourists. The central part of this presentation was the story told by the creator of the sculpture on how the sculpture was created.

In the experimental group the Tour Guide asked for the active participation of the students during the tour of the object. The Guide who participated with the experimental group, told the participants of the experiment the same story as his colleague on the origins of the sculpture. In addition to that, he invited them to participate in the way that was already described.

The Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) test was applied to identify possible statistical differences in the respondents' perceptions of beauty based on their participation in the experimental groups. The main hypothesis was that students who participated in the group in which they were required to participate actively in the observation of artistic artefacts had a more intense experience of the beauty than the students who were just watching and listening to the Guide.

All multivariate tests are significant which means that the hypothesis should be rejected that there was no statistically significant difference between groups of respondents. This means that there was a statistically significant difference between groups that experimented using a different model.

In the first place it should be emphasised that the experience of beauty associated with observing the sculpture has changed in both groups. In both groups the sense of the beauty connected with a view of the sculpture increased significantly statistically. The importance of Tour Guides in modern tourism is not emphasised sufficiently in literature. In an earlier survey that is now in the stage of publishing the results, we proved the very important position of the Tour Guides as cultural ambassadors. The contemporary influence of neo-liberal logic in tourism weakened the importance of Tour Guides significantly. An almost sacrosanct demand for reduction of operating costs, which appears to be the general trend of neoliberal capitalism in particular, struck

**Table 1:** Rating beauty of the sculpture before the participation of Tour Guides

Group	Mean	St. Deviation	Significance
Story only	127.82	36.64	.119
Story with participation	119.67	31.02	.124

  

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fascination	1,00	4,67	3,00	,899
Colourful	1,00	4,90	2,92	,888
Perfection	1,00	4,50	2,70	,910
Personality	1,00	5,00	2,69	,941
Authenticity	1,00	4,25	2,29	,715

#### Multivariate tests

Test	Value	F	Sig.
Pillai's Trace	,301	6,441	,000
Wilks' Lambda	,723	6,589	,000
Hotelling's Trace	,351	6,696	,000
Roy's Largest Root	,199	11,519	,000

**MANOVA**

		Mean Square	F	Sig.
Beauty	Between Groups	9809,025	7,846	,000
	Within Groups	1250,271		
Authenticity	Between Groups	3111,765	10,132	,000
	Within Groups	307,112		
Colourful	Between Groups	1274,530	15,613	,000
	Within Groups	81,635		
Fascinating	Between Groups	308,644	4,849	,003
	Within Groups	63,656		
Perfection	Between Groups	62,443	3,824	,010
	Within Groups	16,329		
Characteristics of the person	Between Groups	17,823	4,920	,002
	Within Groups	3,622		

exactly the position of guides in tourism. The costs were, in fact, mostly decreased just by engaging Tour Guides, who have become more technical companions of tourists than their guides.

With the help of Scheffel's method, we identified differences in values between the pretests and potests in these two different experimental situations.

As can be seen from the Table 2, in all the components and the general assessment of beauty, better results were obtained in the experimental group in which participants were invited to the activity. Thus, participation in activities linked to some cultural objects is a factor that would implant perception of that object as beautiful deeper and stronger in the memory of tourists. Participation of tourists in an activity in tourism is nothing new. Tour Guides have long been trying in very different ways to activate and animate tourists, and this is not just the question of the interest of tourists in the activity itself. Here is

**Table 2**

Group	Number of participants	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Beauty - general</b>			
Story only	83	138,83	35,89
Story with participation	102	143,05	36,84
<b>Authenticity</b>			
Story only	93	53,77	17,61
Story with participation	110	59,80	18,67
<b>Colourful</b>			
Story only	110	34,86	8,80
Story with participation	92	36,71	9,63
<b>Fascinating</b>			
Story only	113	29,47	7,80
Story with participation	92	30,52	8,39
<b>Perfection</b>			
Story only	96	10,49	4,07
Story with participation	113	12,20	4,13
<b>Characteristic of the person</b>			
Story only	116	6,16	1,92
Story with participation	96	6,22	1,89

a discussion about a more sensitive and a lot more sensible process in the tourism industry. This process seems to us only at the beginning in those dimensions of tourism activities that are related to art and different artefacts of art that Tour Guides are presenting to the tourists on tourists' trips.

## CONCLUSION

The current experiment unveils a new understanding of the significance of Tour Guides in perceiving attractions as beautiful by exploring the dimensions of the observer's (tourist's) aesthetic judgement. The results have answered the first research question and confirmed that the objects (which stood for an attraction in the experiment) are perceived as more beautiful when they are presented by Tour Guides. Thus, this pioneering experiment makes an essential contribution to the existing knowledge of the significance of aesthetics in the tourist experience. The experiment also showed that the participants evaluated the object as more beautiful when it was presented by a Tour Guide organising an activity in which the participants were involved actively in the presentation of the object. Those participating actively had a deeper and stronger implant of the object as beautiful in their memories, the results showed. The research obviously gave a positive answer to the second research question. Thus, it was confirmed that the Engagement model, which emphasised »the subject's active, multisensory engagement in the environment, and the holistic, perceptual unity of the subject immersed in and continuous with their surroundings« (Todd 2009, 161) is relevant in aesthetic judgement in tourism. It was also confirmed in the experiment not only that the perception of beauty varies, but also that the perception of beauty can be influenced. The latter is a central finding for the tourism industry. When Tour Guides were involved in the presentation of an object, the object was perceived as more beautiful. Consequently, it can be assumed that objects and attractions/destinations are perceived as more beautiful when they are presented by professional Tour Guides. Thus, it can be concluded that the profession of a Tour Guide is still among the essential ones in the tourism sector. Tour Guides, providing that they do their job professionally, are ambassadors of destinations, and what is more, ambassadors of cultures.

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## APPENDIX

### EXPERIMENT 1

The story about two connected people presented by the guides in the Croatian language:

Two connected people, the author Martina Vrbljanin. The author was born in Zagreb, where she finished her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of Zagreb. She has the need to express herself, which is why she has chosen the study of sculpture. There are some artists who are her inspiration, including Maja Ujčević, Kiki Smith, Niki de Sanfal, but her main inspiration is always her life and everything that happens in it.

Here, in front of you, you can see a sculpture, which we might call *two connected people*. This is a figurative sculpture, where you can see a face clearly, which means that we are talking about two people. There is some space between the sculptures, and the space is defined exactly. Each person is wrapped in lots of rope, but with only one thin piece of rope connected to the second figure (person). There could be many ropes but, because of aesthetics there is only one. The sculpture is small, so it's more personal, and the material of the sculpture is terracotta (baked clay), which expresses warmth through colour. The rope is woollen, since wool is warm and soft.

The author got her inspiration for this sculpture in her dreams. She dreamed of strangers who followed her around the narrow streets of Dubrovnik (associations to the film Game of Thrones), she heard some mumbling and got scared. Because she could not understand what her followers wanted, she had negative feelings and thus she decided to communicate with them. Communication turned out to be a positive decision and the negative feelings disappeared. It was these dreams that became the motive for the sculpture you are observing.

The connection happens when you communicate something that you keep inside yourself and put it in the form of conversation. The end, which is wrapped around the body figures. The thread around the two sculptures presents a conversation and the sculptures communicate with each other. This is what we could all understand. We would also say that communication can occur in different ways. It is important to talk, to say things, because only in this way can the connection happen. Is the sculpture perhaps very topical? What does the object represent in your opinion?

## SAŽETAK

Uloga zanimanja turističkog vodiča na području rijeka Save i Drave: komuniciranje atrakcija u rastućoj estetiziranoj turističkoj potrošnji

U procesu razvoja održivog turizma uloga turističkog vodiča iznimno je značajna. Turistički vodiči nisu samo prezenteri prirodnih i kulturnih atrakcija, već ambasadori kulture, održivosti i interkulturalnog dijaloga. Iz tog je razloga od ključne važnosti da vodiči imaju dobro obrazovanje, da su dobro obučeni za svoj posao i da su aktivno uključeni u proces planiranja razvoja turizma. Njihova je uloga osobito značajna kada govorimo o prezentiranju atrakcija turistima pomoću komunikacijskih i stručnih vještina. Ovaj rad opisuje testiranje prezentiranja objekta (atrakcije) bez vodiča i testiranje gdje su objekt (atrakciju) prezentirali turistički vodiči, i to pomoću metode deskripcije, te testiranja gdje su turistički vodiči koristili opis objekta (atrakcije), i pozivali sudionike (turiste) na aktivno sudjelovanje. Eksperimentalno istraživanje bilo je fokusirano na ulogu turističkih vodiča i na doživljaj ljepote. Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju da su sudionici (turisti) ljepšim ocijenili onaj objekt (atrakciju) kojeg je prezentirao turistički vodič, čime se implicira ključna uloga turističkih vodiča u procesu prezentiranja atrakcija, destinacija i kultura.