

# Multicultural Heritage in a New Nation-State – Case of Croatian Tourism

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## 1. Introduction

- funding: project “Historical Perspectives on Transnationalism and Intercultural Dialogue in the Austro-Hungarian Empire”
  - Croatian Science Foundation, PI Prof. Anita Sujoldžić), 2014-
- research : intersection of
  1. interest in contemporary culture
  2. specific focus on the legacy of the past

# 1. Introduction

- tourism & heritage
  - economical interest (culture – attractive image of a destination)
  - “display” of culture – anthropological and critical cultural research
  - in tourism, cultural heritage is almost synonymous with culture (Timothy 2011)
- Internet: the most popular new medium of advertisement (Cook 2003)
  - virtual environment
  - new place of anthropological fieldwork (Senjković and Pleše 2004) – culture, representation, identity...

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# 1. Introduction

- tourist boards websites
  - Croatian Tourist Board (*Hrvatska turistička zajednica*) + local
- official, dominant discourse(s) of tourism
- promotion of tourist destinations
  - cultural heritage as “semiotic resources” (Jaworski and Thurlow 2010; van Leeuwen 2005)
- main research questions:
  1. **Which** heritage is represented?
  2. **Whose** heritage is represented?

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## 2. Theoretical & methodological framework

- Stuart Hall's **theory of representation**
- representation – productive of meaning
  - practice of constructing meaning through the use of signs and language (Du Gay 2003)
  - constructivist view of representation
- approaches:
  - **semiotic** – way language produces meaning (“poetics”)
  - **discursive** – effects of representation (“politics”)
    - discourses are “ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice: a cluster (or *formation*) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society” (Hall 2003:6)

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## 2. Theoretical & methodological framework

- process of representation not only as a symbolic *expression* of cultural identity, but as a process of discursive identity *building*
- Wodak et al. (2009) – discursive construction of national identity
  - nations – “imagined communities” (Anderson 1983)
  - “‘national identity’ [is] a complex of similar conceptions and perceptual schemata... which bearers of this ‘national identity’ share collectively and which they have internalized through socialization (education, politics, the media, sports or everyday practices)” (2009:4)
- **multimodal discourse analysis** (Kress and Leeuwen 2001, Kress and Leeuwen 2006, etc.)
  - visual communication

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## 2. Theoretical & methodological framework

- sample:
  - Croatian Tourist Board
  - local tourist boards
- dimensions (variables)
  1. **types** of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible, further subtypes)
  2. **origin** of cultural heritage (which culture, nation, civilization, religion, etc. it belongs to)

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## 2. Theoretical & methodological framework

- types of heritage – Timothy (2010)
  - tangible heritage: historic settlements, religious attractions, military attractions, industrial attractions, archaeological sites, etc.
  - intangible heritage: arts, languages, folkways, music and performing arts, religion, sport, festivals and pageants, etc.

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### 3. Results

- **tangible heritage**
  - more prominent than intangible
  - esp. historical buildings
  - emphasis on the oldest and most monumental examples
- religious buildings (churches, cathedrals, monasteries, shrines, etc.)
  - Croatian early medieval religious architecture
    - Church of Saint Dunat (Krk), Church of the Holy Cross (Nin),
  - pre-Romanesque architecture
    - Church of Saint Nicholas (Nin)

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### 3. Results



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### 3. Results

- + religious artifacts
  - e.g. “Baptismal Font of Duke Višeslav“ (c. 800), described as a “witness to the time when Croats were Christianised”
- + intangible religious heritage
  - e.g. procession of St. Blaise in Dubrovnik



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### 3. Results

- ancient Roman temples



- negative analysis
  - very few examples of Orthodox Christian or Muslim heritage

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### 3. Results

- military attractions – also well represented
- city walls, forts and castles



- From the Medieval period to end of Austria-Hungarian Monarchy

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### 3. Results

- + Homeland War (1995)
- negative analysis:
  - very few examples of Yugoslav heritage
  - (only exception: island Vis)



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### 3. Results

- heritage time frame:
  - ancient Greece and Rome
  - the medieval Croatian kingdom
  - the Venetian Republic
  - Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy
- prehistorical – scarce
- archaeological heritage
  - rich resource of heritage of past cultures and civilizations
  - prehistorical caves and artifacts, necropolises, hillforts, remains of ancient buildings, etc.
  - Illyrian culture(s) – significantly missing

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### 3. Results

- 20th century
  - until the end of Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy
  - Yugoslav socialist heritage – significantly missing
- industrial heritage
  - underrepresented
  - pre-industrial (“traditional” mills, workshops...)
  - industrial: Austrian-Hungarian period
  - post-World War Two industrial heritage – significantly missing

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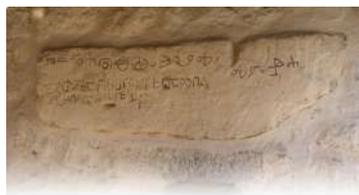
### 3. Results



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### 3. Results

- intangible heritage
  - less prevalent, often absent
  - often represented outside of “heritage”
  - exceptions: intangible heritage connected to national culture
    - e.g. Glagolitic alphabet



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### 3. Results

- findings fit into the concept of **authorized heritage discourse** - “a dominant Western discourse about heritage... that works to naturalize a range of assumptions about the nature and meaning of heritage” (Smith 2006:4)
  - aesthetically pleasing material objects, buildings and sites, defined as national treasure
  - common identity, esp. national
  - origins: 19th century Western European upper-middle class ideology
    - “as much a discourse of nationalism and patriotism as it is of certain class experiences and social and aesthetic value” (Smith 2006:28)

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### 3. Results

- discourse of a **unified national heritage** “functions by excluding traditions which it cannot incorporate” (Waterton 2015)
  - selection of heritage and embedding it into the national narrative
- identity implies a struggle for control over meaning, and one of the most important resources in that struggle is a control over past (Allcock 1995)

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### 3. Results

- discourse of heritage legitimizes some cultural meanings as a part of the national narrative, and rejects the others
- “priming” and “burying” (Pauwels 2012)
- heritage - “discourse which is concerned with the negotiation and regulation of social meanings and practices associated with the creation and recreation of ‘identity’” (Smith 2006:5)

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### 4. Conclusion

- heritage
  - the most powerful expression culture, esp. in the visually dominant media such as the World Wide Web
  - one of the most important motivator of tourist interest (Burns 1999)
- cultural diversity, both in diachronic and synchronic perspectives, should represent a valuable resource in tourism, “symbolic capital”(Bourdieu 1997)
- but: analysis shows that cultural heritage is not represented to its full extent
  - selection

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## 4. Conclusion

- heritage
  - national past (e.g. the medieval Croatian kingdom or modern Croatia)
  - Mediterranean, West and Central European (ancient Greece and Rome, the Venetian Republic, Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy)
- *not-heritage*:
  - pre-historical heritage of Balkan cultures (e.g. Illyrians)
  - Ottoman Empire
  - socialist Yugoslavia (including e.g. industrial and military heritage)

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## 4. Conclusion

- heritage is not only about the past, but about using the past “to construct, reconstruct and negotiate a range of identities and social and cultural values and meanings in the present” (Smith 2006:3)
- cultural heritage – one of the most important aspects of the national culture
  - nation-state articulating its place on the geopolitical and cultural map
  - especially important in a country asserting itself as a new nation state
  - belated nation-building

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## 4. Conclusion

- discursive construction of national identity
- national narrative – Croatia as a part of the West, i.e. of Europe
  - cultural belonging to the Mediterranean and to Central Europe
  - contrast to the negative heritage of the “East”
- “polar” identification – *antemurale* myth (Kolstø 2003, Žanić 2003), i.e. “bulwark myth”
  - nation as the first line of defense against the “Other”, i.e. the enemy
  - Croatia as *antemurale christianitatis* (“bulwark of Christianity”)
    - against the “East”: Muslim Ottomans, Communist Yugoslavia, Orthodox (Serbian) Christians...

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## 4. Conclusion

- cultural heritage – discursive tool for drawing symbolic borders around the idea of the nation, establishing the relations of positive identification with the ideologically desirable cultures and negative with the “Others”
- “Discursive constructs of nations and national identities... primarily *emphasise* national uniqueness and *intra-national uniformity* but largely *ignore intra-national differences*. In imagining national singularity and homogeneity, members of a national community simultaneously *construct the distinctions between themselves and other nations*” (Wodak 2009:4, our emphasis)

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