

DANCE AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN CROATIA¹

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study discusses Croatian cultural tourism by looking into existing Croatian tourist brochures from the national tourist offer that define and present Croatian culture. An analysis is conducted by juxtaposing efforts of Croatian tourist authorities in presenting country as a place of rich culture, and analysis of tourist brochures and cultural calendar with an attempt to identify how authorities present culture in Croatian official tourist offer, as well as to discuss why dance would be an important part of the cultural tourism. Research has been conducted using the qualitative discourse analysis of tourist brochures and cultural calendar, and by juxtaposing these findings against acknowledged importance of dance as a form of art, and nonetheless ethnic form of art. The conclusion of the paper is that Croatian authorities do not understand the term culture in either sociological or anthropological sense, importance of dance and art in general for cultural tourism, and thus fail to present the country properly.

Keywords: dance, cultural tourism, Croatia, ethnicity, art

INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses Croatian cultural tourism by looking into existing Croatian tourist brochures from the national tourist offer that define and present Croatian culture. The main goal of the paper is to assess how Croatian authorities understand culture, and to discuss position of dance in cultural tourism. As I will discuss, dance is not included in national tourist offer even though dance has an import place in the national history, and even though it is often considered as a form of art and, nonetheless, an ethnic form of art. The fact that dances can be considered to be an ethnic form of art is important because Croatian authorities largely present Croatia through its ethnic history and tradition while claiming they are presenting the Croatian culture. I do not assume that dance necessarily presents a part of ethnic identity, however, since Croatian authorities (as I will show in the paper) emphasize

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elements of national ethnic history and long historical statehood of Croatia, it is surprising they do not include dance and Croatian dance history in Croatian cultural tourist offer if for nothing else, but to prove that Croats have a long history of artistic expressionism, and that Croatia has a rich culture.

In the remaining part of the paper, I will therefore discuss importance of dance. After that, I will discuss dance(s) in Croatia and their importance for Croatian national identity creation process. After that, I will proceed with researching the position of dance in Croatian tourist offer by firstly analysing Croatian main tourist brochures and the way they present Croatia and its (ethnic) culture, and secondly by analysing Croatian cultural calendar that enlists all major cultural events in 2014.

The analysis will show that Croatian main tourist brochures largely present Croatian culture through diversity, and diversity is understood as geographical position and interplay of various cultures in Croatian regions. On the other hand, culture is also understood through history and tradition, and this is how Croatia mainly presents itself. When it comes to cultural calendar, it comes as no surprise that Croatia gives most attention to events that emphasize Croatian history and tradition, however, it does come as a surprise that Croatia fails to emphasize its dance culture even though local communities in Croatia (in Dalmatia in particular) have numerous dance manifestations that could be presented as an attraction to visitors, and that could show that Croatia has a history of artistic expressionism.

Importance of Dance

Merriam Webster's dictionary defines dance through performance and moving, i.e. dance is identified as an action "to move your body in a way that goes with the rhythm and style of music that is being played; to move with and guide (someone) as music plays: to dance with (someone); to perform (a particular type of dance)". On the other hand, scholars rarely engage into defining dance. Instead, analyses mostly start with discussing particular dances and/or issues in dancing profession, expressions while dancing, etc. Articles that do make an attempt to define dance are those written by Kealiinohomoku (1980 [1970]) and Wilcox (2010). In that, Kealiinohomoku (1980 [1970]: 38) defined dance as

"a transient mode of expression, performed in a given form and style by the human body moving in space. Dance occurs through purposefully selected and controlled rhythmic movements; the resulting phenomenon is recognized as dance both by the performer and the observing members of a given group."

On the other hand, Wilcox (2010: 314) identified dance as "a movement in a liminal dance" that can be compared with migration. Differences between three definitions are that Merriam Webster's dictionary and Wilcox (2010) define dance through moving while Kealiinohomoku identifies dance as an expression that happens while human body is moving, and dance has to be recognized as dance by both performer and observers. This discrepancy in defining dance, as well as lack of suitable definitions shows that like in many other fields in social sciences and humanities dance is not a field where there is an agreement on its meaning.

There is also a dichotomy in method on researching dance. In that, major portion of research on dance falls on studies of dance as part of culture. Additionally, there are

differences between European and American researches where European researches concentrate on dance within their own culture while American researches concentrate on studying dances that present different cultures (Giurchescu and Torp, 1991). However, researchers agree that dance is an important part of culture, and an important form of art.

Dance also has a political connotation since the WWII (Jordan and Grau, 2000), and since the turn of a new Millennium authors are also asking whether we can even talk about national dances anymore due to globalization, consumerism, but also due to European regionalism and integration that occurred simultaneously (Braidotti, 1996). However, dance is mostly attached to notions of identity and this also resembles connections with politics. Furthermore, after the WWII it became common to understand dance through social reality, and an ideal dance study incorporates social dimension of dance as well as its artistic component even though scholars mostly concentrated on collecting data on dance by taking it out from its social context (Giurchescu and Torp 1991).

Dance is sometimes considered to have ethnic roots, and as the only artistic expression that is interchangeably related to the ethnic roots of people (Blažeković, 1994). In other words, ethnic dance conveys “the idea that all forms of dance reflect the cultural traditions within which they developed” (Kealiinohomoku, 1980 [1970]: 33). During the 19th century, dance was also included in the process of creating national identities among members of small nations in Central Europe. This is because traditional dances were accepted to European ballrooms during the course of 19th century, which is often discussed as the century of nationalism because 19th century was a century when many countries sought national emancipation. Because of that, traditional dances such as Hungarian ‘csardas’, Polish ‘mazurka’, and Austrian ‘waltz’ entered ballrooms (Blažeković, 1994). Importance of dance is very well described in words of Franjo Kuhač, a famous Croatian musician and collector of music heritage of Croatia, who said:

“no other element of people’s creativity is more significant in the judging of its manners, importance, and level of civilization, than its dance. Not even the language of its poetry mirrors the characteristics of that people so sharply and undoubtedly, as its dance and dance music” (Kuhač 1893 in Blažeković 1994: 114).

In recent period, i.e., since the turn of a new Millennium, dance became a subject of academic inquiry in a sense that certain scholars asked to what extent national dances are truly national. For example, when British dancers went to participate in a dance festival in New York the American media reported on Brits coming to take over the US dancing scene even though British dancing group was made of international choreographers (Jordan and Grau, 2000). Even though dance scene became international and multi-cultural, this does not diminish importance of discussing national dances, or national policies towards dance as a general cultural phenomenon that can contribute towards identity creation process and/or nation branding when presented towards international spectatorship.

Dance(s) in Croatia

Region of former Yugoslavia is often discussed inside framework where dance is seen as being part of nationalism and ethno-nationalism, and especially when it comes to folk dances (Maners, 2006). This policy dates back to the 19th century when countries of the Yugoslav

region firstly engaged in nation integration movements that occurred elsewhere in Europe, and particularly in Central Europe (Stančić, 2002). Croatia also has historical connections with dance, and this particularly applies to nation formation process. Some of the Croatian dances are deeply embedded into national identity creation process, and dance culture varies according to the region where particular dance is being danced (Vitez and Muraj 1998; Mikulić et al 2007).

Croatian society of the 19th century was divided to urban and rural, and there was hardly any connection between two populations, i.e., rural population cherished its local culture that later became the foundation for national culture while urban population was exposed to influences from German and Italian culture depending on the region in stake, i.e., Dalmatia was exposed to Italian culture while Zagreb area was exposed to German and Hungarian culture (Stančić, 2008). As I will discuss below, this division can be seen in the dance field as well because Hungarian and Austrian dances were popular in Zagreb area while Italian dances were popular in Dalmatia.

It is not possible to discuss all dances and their distinctive tradition in one paper, but in the next part of this article I will outline the situation with national dances in Croatia so that I can discuss its non-existent nature in Croatian national tourist offer in subsequent part of this article.

When it comes to artistic dances, Croatian dance 'kolo' or 'salonsko kolo' entered ballrooms in 19th century (Blažeković, 1994). Dance 'salonsko kolo' was important for Croatian national movement because Croatian nationalists of 19th century, were generally preoccupied with culture, i.e., they were trying to establish an education system in Croatian language, they were publishing newspapers and books in Croatian language, they worked on standardization of the language, and they were founding cultural institutions (see e.g., Stančić, 2008). They also demanded theatre plays in Croatian rather than German, and this policy then reflected upon dance because it became popular to dance Croatian dance 'salonsko kolo' rather than 'waltz', 'gallop' or 'quadrille' (Blažeković, 1994). Blažeković (1994) warned that 'Salonsko kolo' became an official ballroom dance in Croatia of 1842, but already in 1820s Count Jurica Oršić ordered that 'waltz' should be performed with Croatian tunes in triple time to introduce domestic steps. In 1835, Ferdo Livadić already wrote *Ilirique Kolo: National Tanz der Ilirier*, and programmes of dance events were framed in national tricolor, Illyrian emblems and shields of Croatian lands² (Blažeković, 1994). 'Salonsko kolo' was not a traditional dance but its adapted version made for ballrooms, and with figures. However, this dance is founded and adapted from traditional dance 'kolo' (Kuhac.net, 2014)³.

On the other hand, Croatia also has traditional dances coming from rural culture. For example, 'drmeš' is an important dance that is noted in Croatia during the 20th century while its precursor was dance called 'tanac' that exists since 19th century even though it is not clear since when 'drmeš'/'tanac' exists⁴. 'Drmeš' is a dance from northwest Croatia (Sremac, 1983), however, Croatian writer Franjo S. Kuhač (1880) wrote about dances in his book 'Južnoslovenske narodne popievke' (Southslav people's songs), and it seems that description

² Illyrian movement was a cultural movement that is considered as precursor to official Croatian national movement in 19th century that shaped modern Croatian nation (Gross 1981; Stančić 1988; 2008).

³ In Istria, some authors write about 'kolo' dance (circle dance), but it was actually called 'balon' or 'balun' (Nikočević, 2006). However, some form of 'kolo' existed in all Croatian lands.

⁴ Name 'drmeš' can be found in historical sources only in 1933 and 1942, but if exact dates are taken into consideration then it can be seen that 'drmeš' appeared when the term 'tanac' disappeared, and in some places 'drmeš' is also called 'hrvatcki' (Sremac, 1983).

of 'drmeš' is in its choreography similar to the dance called Croatian 'tanac' or 'tanec' that was danced not only in northwest Croatia, but also in Slavonia and coastal regions.

Dancing was considered as a part of preservation of ethnicity where some Croatian writers complained that in Međimurje region people are dancing Croatian 'tanac' almost like Hungarian 'csardas' with which they are erasing their own ethnicity (Kuhač 1880; Sremac 1983). It is interesting that the dance 'tanac' is similar to Hungarian dance 'csardas', but that Germans – who should have been familiar with Hungarian dances – called it 'Kroatisch', which means Croatian. This name comes because this is how it was sometimes called in Croatia – simply 'Croatian' ('hrvatski' or 'hrvacki') (Sremac, 1983). In some other places, however, this dance was called 'čardaš', 'hrvacki', 'drmeš', 'kolo', 'primorsko kolo', 'veres', etc. (Sremac, 1983). Some authors reported that 'tanac' or 'hrvatski' was danced even in Istria (Ivančan, 1963) and Lika (Ivančan, 1981), and this dance has been noted in the book of Sir Arthur Evans (1973 [1877]) who participated in one social gathering in Croatian town of Sisak where he saw this dance, and described it as a Croatian traditional dance.

In Dalmatia, at island of Hvar, there are written records on more than 70 dances (Ivančan, 1981) even though some authors argue there are approximately 40 dances since the same dance has been called differently (Kolumbić, 2010). The island of Hvar has a tradition of dancing a dance called 'furlona' or 'furlana', however, this dance originates from northern Italy (Galla, 1993), and it became an aristocratic dance even though it is originally a traditional dance (Kolumbić, 2010).

On the other hand, 'moreška' is a play and sword and a battle dance that originates from Spain (written for the first time in 1150) (Lopašić, 1995/1996), and this dance is a Mediterranean dance belonging to the Romance culture that is also danced in the Dalmatian island of Korčula (Gavazzi 1978; 1988). The popularity of this dance never ceased to exist, and it is danced since 18th century until the present time. This dance has also been danced in other Dalmatian towns such as Split and Zadar, and it has been found amongst Dalmatian Diaspora in the United States (Foretić, 1964). The dance also shows a clear Mediterranean character of Dalmatia, and its close ties with Italy (Lopašić, 1995/1996).

The island of Korčula is a home to another important dance tradition called 'kumpanija' (or 'kumpanjija'). This dance had ruptures in performances because it was not performed during Tito's Yugoslavia probably because before the event starts, locals usually go to the Church for blessings, and there was a tradition of giving gifts to priests (Vitez, 2000). Because of breaks in performing 'kumpanija', it was only possible to reconstruct how 'kumpanija' developed through oral stories of locals who remembered it (Ivančan 1967), and through stories that were present in Korčulan Diaspora (Vitez, 2000). 'Kumpanija' is a knight dance with swords that in some parts of Korčula also had a ritual of publicly slaughtering bullock (this part was called 'mostra'). 'Kumpanija' dance tells a story of heroic acts of ancestors who fought with pirates and other enemies (Ivančan 1967; Cetinić 1930). Slaughter symbolized cutting bullock's head as ancestors did to their enemies (Ivančan, 1967). Bullock slaughter has been banned in many places in the island in different times and because of various reasons (Vitez, 2000) while today 'kumpanija' is performed during summer as attraction to locals and tourists. Additional dance manifestations of 'kumpanija' are still performed on original days as in the past, which is connected with the Church and days of patrons of 'kumpanija' (Vitez, 2000), however, there is no slaughter of bullock in public places.

After the creation of Tito's Yugoslavia, folk dance served as a state project meant to create a picture of socialist utopia, and some authors argue that folk dances keep serving as a national unifier after Yugoslavia's dissolution (Maners, 2006). I am not sure this is entirely true, i.e., it does not seem that present Croatian state pays attention to its dancing culture as the tourist offer – that I will discuss below – demonstrates. I would argue that present Croatian state is failing to understand importance of dance for presenting the country towards outside of its borders. It is true that during the Cold war, folk dance served as a “symbolic political strategy” in reconstructing “institutes and state ensemble dances of Cold War Eastern Europe” (Buckland, 2006: 14), and dance was seen as an important aspect of Yugoslav cultural policy (Maners, 2006)⁵. This came because during the first period after creation of Tito's Yugoslavia, there was a process of creating Yugoslav identity and doctrine of brotherhood and unity was enforced. Because of that, the only aspect of national cultures that was allowed was certain part of national folk cultures (Wachtel, 1998). In other words, dances were allowed to be nationalistic in form so long as they were socialist in its content (Maners, 2006). This cultural policy was typical of socialist regimes, and presents the so-called ‘directed culture’ (Haraszti, 1987). In line with socialist doctrine, workers were included in development of dances such as cultural and arts societies that were amateur ensembles advocating brotherhood and unity. These art societies received funding from various workers associations, and some dances were named ‘Partisan kolo’ and ‘Tito's kolo’ (kolo being traditional circle dance) (Maners, 2006).

One of the most famous state projects in former Yugoslavia when it comes to dance is an ensemble ‘Lado’ that was a state project (Maners, 2006). Lado is a folk ensemble founded in 1949, or after creation of Tito's Yugoslavia. Current website of Lado ensemble states that Lado “is a professional folklore ensemble founded in 1949 with goal to research, collect, and artistically shape and show on scene of the most beautiful examples of Croatian rich music and dance tradition” (Lado, 2014). This description is not entirely accurate because while Lado was presenting Croatia during the time of Yugoslavia, it also presented Yugoslav diversity that is visible in their repertoire. An important part of Lado ensemble is female vocal group ‘Ladarice’, which was even more popular than its male colleagues. Ladarice sang Yugoslav patriotic song (in Serbian) ‘Jugoslavijo’ or ‘Od Vardara pa do Triglava’ (Yugoslavia - From Vardar all the way to Triglav)⁶ with which they were expressing loyalty to the Yugoslav unity. However, it is true that major part of Lado's programme was centred on Croatia and its dances (such as ‘kolo’, ‘drmeš’, ‘tanec’, etc.), which indeed brings to the conclusion that it did not matter whether they were too much centred on their own national culture if they were officially socialist. This furthermore shows how dances were exploited

⁵ Some authors report that during the breakup of former Yugoslavia Croatian folk dance ‘ganga’, that has been previously used as a symbol of cultural identities of all rural people in Bosnia and some parts of Croatia, got used as a symbol of hatred towards Serbs (Petrović, 1995). I am not familiar with events surrounding the ‘ganga’ dance, but perhaps this view gives (in my view) misleading impression that Croatian state pays attention to its dance culture.

⁶ See, for example, here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEUBKBuHZ4c> (9 July 2014). This song was an unofficial anthem of former Yugoslavia, and up to today it is an anthem of people who regret for Yugoslav dissolution. Author of the song is a Serbian author Milutin Popović Zahar. The song sings about Yugoslav unity and history, and it describes from which points Yugoslavia spreads, i.e. Vardar is the longest river in Yugoslav Macedonia and one of the biggest rivers in Balkans, and Triglav is a mountain in Slovenia. Saying from Vardar to Triglav describes how big Yugoslavia was and from where it spreads while, at the same time, singing about unity of its peoples and the fact it was created by its workers to live in freedom (from fascism, that is).

for state purposes, but it also shows importance of dance that socialist regime apparently recognized. Socialist regime did not recognize artistic value of dance, but they did recognize this form of art as influential enough to spread the official doctrine.

Method

For this research, I analysed latest Croatian tourist brochures ‘Croatia – Mediterranean as it once was’ (2014), Croatian Ethno-gastronomy (2014), ‘The wondrous Natural Heritage of Croatia’ (2011), ‘Croatian Cultural Heritage’ (2011), and ‘Calendar of Cultural and Touristic events’ (2014).

When it comes to tourist brochures, I was looking into ways Croatia presents its culture, and analysis was performed based on R. Wodak’s (1999) discourse analysis where a researcher looks for a so-called ‘discursive topoi’, or a core argument that appears in the talk of actors.

In terms of Croatian cultural calendar for 2014, I looked into events that are presented as important cultural events in the 2014. In that, I also analysed how dances are presented in the calendar.

A question that someone might ask is why authorities should put dance in the calendar when dance is not something that could be sold to tourists⁷. However, I believe that dance can be sold as a cultural product since cultural calendar is enlisting cultural events such as music street performances that are meant to attract tourists to visit Croatia. Additionally, it is of interest to analyse dance in Croatian tourist offer since Croatian tourist offer – as the analysis will demonstrate – largely centres on ethnic presentation of the country and its history. Since dance(s) can have ethnic connotation, particularly if they bear relevance for national history and self-identification, then this issue can become a topic of the analysis. Also, socialist regime was able to recognize importance of dances for creating a sense of identity and since Croatia is active in identity creation process⁸ and in presenting Croatia as a country of culture – as I will demonstrate below - it is interesting to analyse how Croatian authorities present Croatia, and what is the place of dance in Croatian cultural tourism.

⁷ I would like to thank Jurij Halajko from Polish Academy of Sciences for discussing this issue with me at the conference where first draft of this paper has been presented.

⁸ Present Croatia is constituted of several regions (divided into 20 counties): Zagreb and surrounding areas with Zagreb constituted as a separate entity equal to other counties, Međimurje, Zagorje, Slavonia, Baranja, Dalmatia, Istria and Kvarner, Lika and Primorje. In that, each region has its own specialty and regional culture. Consequentially, due to Croatia’s diversity and different historical legacies regions in Croatia have strong regional identities. These regional identities are largely embodied in local cultures that are distinctive not only from region to region, but sometimes also within different regions. Politics of Identity in Croatia is centred primarily on creation of the national identity inside the country, and creation of the European identity of the country that is directed towards the outside (Rodin et al, 2010). In other words, Croatia has identity politics developed for its own citizens in order to build a strong national identity, and a sense of historical continuity. This policy is in force since independence from 1991 until today, and this is because identities in Croatia are largely fragmented and there are strong regional attachments (Katunarić 1988; 2007; Rimac 2004; Boneta 2004; Banovac et al 2004), which is coming from historical legacy. Internal politics of identity is largely visible, for example, in history textbooks that particularly emphasize historical continuity of Croatian people and their struggle to create an independent state (Rodin et al 2010; Najbar-Agičić 2001; Najbar-Agičić & Agičić 2006; Turkalj 2007; Karge 2001; Höpken 2006; Grahek 2005; Najbar-Agičić 2001; Goldstein 2001).

Croatian Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism is often a subject of analysis since it contributes toward interaction and cultural clashes and, thus, to creation of new identities that are formed through traditional roots. With cultural tourism people of various origins gain new knowledge on different cultures (MacCannel, 1984). Tourist promotion of one country, thus, bears relevance for creation of image of the country and for formation of a global identity of the host. When it comes to cultural tourism, it presents a ‘powerful force’ because tourists express interest in historical and artistic offerings of the host, as well as of its lifestyle and heritage (Lord, 1999).

In Croatian case, tourism bears relevance for country’s GDP, however, it is not clear to what extent tourism contributes to Croatian GDP. Because of that, various analysts estimate that tourism has a share between five and twenty per cent in overall Croatian GDP (Banka, 2009). However, Ministry of Tourism reported – based on information from Croatian Statistics - that in 2012, tourism had a share in total Croatian GDP of 15,4 %, which presented an increase from 14,7 % in 2011 (Ministry of Tourism Report, 2012). Information from Ministry of Tourism for 2013 for first two semesters showed additional increase of share of tourism in overall GDP to 16,1 % in second semester (Ministry of Tourism Report, 2013). According to recent information, Croatia is relying too much on its tourism unlikely for Italy and Spain for example (Limun.hr, 2013).

Croatian tourism largely fits into cultural tourism, however, Croatian cultural tourism is particularly emphasizing historical continuity of Croatia and its rich culture. But, culture is understood through history and famous monuments and not through cultural activities and/or cultural history such as artistic expressions of Croats. This is visible in opening remark of (perhaps main) Croatian tourist brochure that reads:

“This is a story about a land of a thousand islands, her magical nature and rich heritage, her great Men whose great deeds have forever etched the name of Croatia in large letters on the map of the world. This is a story about a land whose beauties have been celebrated since ancient times. From Cassiodorus, who wrote of the divine life led by Patricians on her shores, to Dante, who wrote his immortal verses, enthralled by the epic scenes of the blue expanse, and all the way to George Bernard Shaw, who found his paradise on Earth right here. Croatia has always been a place of true inspiration. Through pictures of unforgettable scenes and incredible stories, we have endeavoured to bring all the special qualities of this wonderful land that is our beautiful country as close to you as possible. Indeed, in nine fairytale-like chapters we have managed to lay before you the pearls of her diversity. Do not hesitate; descend the thousand-year-old stairs of a rich, turbulent and glorious history and discover destinations in which experiences of the warm, blue Mediterranean are enhanced by the charm of the tranquil and picturesque green mountains in the north and the fertile golden plains in the easternmost part of the land. All that you have dreamt of is now within reach. Browsing through the pages of this catalogue you are surely bound to find a place for your perfect holiday. Welcome to Croatia!” (Croatia – The Mediterranean as it once was, 2014: 3).

Croatia also frames itself as country of diversity, i.e., main slogans of the brochure ‘Croatia – The Mediterranean as it once was’ are ‘Land of Diversity’ and ‘Choose your destination in Croatia and explore true diversity’. However, authorities fail to emphasize and explain which diversity. Croatian authorities apparently understand diversity through

geographical positions and rich selection of monuments that tourists can visit, and different architecture present in various parts of the country. For example, presentation of Croatian diversity reads:

“Although Croatia is not a large country, it is a land that is Mediterranean, Central European, mountainous and flat, coastal and continental. It can therefore be safely said that Croatia is characterised by a diversity and wealth of nature seen in much larger European countries; that is to say, within a relatively small area are landscapes that otherwise one would have to seek in larger areas of Europe, and indeed the world. This is why Croatia ranks as one of the top five European countries with regard to biodiversity, with some parts being amongst the world’s richest such areas” (The Wondrous Natural Heritage of Croatia, 2011: 3).

“One reason for this wealth of tangible and intangible cultural heritage is the outstanding position of Croatia on important traffic routes and at the crossroads of great civilizations, each wanting to leave their mark. Therefore, Croatia is characterised by exceptional diversity of cultural heritage on a small surface and the presence of monuments from all periods of civilization, from Ancient History to recent times. Thus, in Croatia, we can find monuments from ancient Greece, ancient Rome, early medieval monuments, Mediterranean Renaissance, Middle European Baroque and Modern secessionist heritage. There are also unique testimonies from the earliest prehistoric times, such as the Neanderthal man of Krapina, one of the world's most important sites, the Vučedol Neolithic culture near Vukovar, pre-Roman Illyrian ruins and many more” (Croatian Cultural Heritage, 2011: 2-3).

“If you really want to get to know the towns of this country in the full glory of their diversity, start with those on the coast, passionately dedicated to the joys of living, and then turn your attention toward the more sedate and peaceful centres in the hinterland. Whether you start with Dubrovnik, or Diocletian’s Split, or Krešimir’s Šibenik, Zadar, Rijeka or Pula - the mythical sanctuary of the Argonauts - or indeed the capital Zagreb, the Baroque beauty of Varaždin, Osijek and proud Vukovar in the easternmost part of the country, an ordinary walk through their streets will turn into a magical journey through fascinating periods of history” (Croatia – The Mediterranean as it once was, 2014: 11).

The tourist offer largely centres on Dalmatia that is discussed through several historical events such as origin of Marco Polo who came from the island of Korčula (part of Illyria at the time), and UNESCO’s protection of monuments and places⁹ and this is best expressed in slogan ‘Treasury of impressive history’ (Topić 2012; Rodin et al 2010). For example, brochures read:

“Croatian cultural heritage is not as well-known as the cultural heritage of some large and powerful countries. It has no magnificent monuments, such as for example the Egyptian pyramids, the Pompeii in Italy or the castle Neuschwanstein in the German Alps. Croatia was not the centre of the great empires of the past and will surprise many visitors in that, in proportion to its surface, there are more sites of cultural heritage under

⁹ UNESCO protection heavily relies on Dalmatia. As stated in one brochure, of six protected places, five are situated in Dalmatia and one in Istria (northern coastal peninsula): “The six most important parts of Croatian cultural heritage are - the Old City of Dubrovnik, a historic complex in Split with Diocletian's Palace, the historic town of Trogir, Euphrasius' basilica in Poreč, the Cathedral of St. James in Šibenik and Starogradsko polje on the island of Hvar, all protected as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO” (Croatian Cultural Heritage, 2011: 3).

UNESCO protection in Croatia than for example in France or Germany” (Croatian Cultural Heritage, 2011: 2).

“If you are interested in the days of antiquity, you should start from the Roman amphitheatre in Pula, through Zadar and its Forum - the largest excavated forum on the eastern shores of the Adriatic - and then head to the magnificent palace of Emperor Diocletian in Split. Walk through time, from the pre-Romanesque Church of St. Domnius in Zadar, dating from the 9th century, to the world of the Romanesque that is the magical monument city of Trogir, or the islands of Krk and Rab. Follow the Gothic period in Zagreb, Pazin, or, for instance, the town of Ston on the Pelješac peninsula. Discover the Renaissance in Osor on the island of Cres, the Šibenik cathedral, the islands of Hvar and Korčula, and finally, the one and only Dubrovnik. The towns of Varaždin, Bjelovar and Vukovar glow with the splendour of the Baroque, while the heritage of the 19th century is at its best in Rijeka, Osijek and, of course, in downtown Zagreb. However, if you are more keen on monuments with lesser exposure, one of those who loves to wander and discover the beauty of places that simply live their quiet life, and through it tell the stories of their long histories in an un-obtrusive way, then come into the world of hundreds of tiny medieval churches with striking frescoes and fascinating intertwined ornamental three-strand patterned reliefs. From the renowned medieval philosopher, Istrian-born Hermann Dalmatin, the world traveller and explorer, Marco Polo, who was born on Korčula, to Julije Klović, the miniaturist known as the Croatian Michelangelo, Ruđer Bošković, the Dubrovnik-born and greatest physicist, mathematician and astronomer of his time, and all the way to Nikola Tesla, one of the most brilliant inventors the world has ever seen and who was born in Lika, this is a land which rightly enjoys the reputation of being not only a place of great history but also of a great people” (Croatia – The Mediterranean as it once was, 2014: 9).

The town of Zadar is framed as three thousand years old town with impressive history, culture and architecture, as well as a place where first University in Croatia was founded (1396) and where first Croatian newspapers and novel were published:

“As the centuries-long centre of the Illyrian tribe of Liburni, and the capital of Dalmatia for millennia, Zadar is a place whose rich spiritual and material culture is best testified to by its walls and numerous sacral monuments, crowned by the symbol of the city: the 9th century Church of St. Donatus, the most monumental Croatian building of the early Middle Ages. Enjoying the protection of as many as four patron saints - Zoilus, Simon, Chrisogonus and Anastasia - Zadar takes pride not only in its abundant archaeological and monumental treasures, jealously guarded down the centuries, but also in the fact that the foundations of the oldest university in the Land were laid here in 1396. Replete with rich archives, libraries and outstanding treasuries of sacral music, Zadar is also the city in which the first Croatian novel was written, and where the first newspapers in the Croatian language were printed” (Croatia – The Mediterranean as it once was, 2014: 30).

Town of Šibenik is explained through its first mentioning in 1066 while the town of Split is mentioned through Roman emperor Diocletian who built his palace in Split in 305, and this palace is also enlisted at UNESCO’s list of protected European heritage. UNESCO’s protection is generally heavily emphasized in the tourist offer, and this serves as a proof that Croatia has a long cultural history, and that it presents a jewel of Europe. Šibenik and its history is explained in a way to legitimize long historical presence of Croatia by calling for a famous foreign writer who celebrated Šibenik:

“The gods wanted to set a crown upon their work, so on the last day, out of tears, stars and the breath of the sea, they created the Kornati.” So wrote George Bernard Shaw when reminiscing about this breathtakingly beautiful archipelago. Talking about this incomparable creation of nature, the largest group of islands in the Mediterranean, it suffices to say that the number of these stellar tears petrified in the sea equals the number of days in a year. Here, the saying “an island for each day of the year” really does apply, and of the 365 strikingly beautiful isles, 150 form a quite special entity: the Kornati National Park. The sight of the lace-like pattern of island cliffs, bleached by the noble salt of the Adriatic and lashed by the fragrance saturated bora, plummeting into the sea, is one that has no equal anywhere else in the world. At the same time, the mellow, tiny ports and hidden beaches are a true paradise for modern day Robinsons seeking unspoiled nature” (Croatia – The Mediterranean as it once was, 2014: 33).

Dubrovnik is presented as unquestionably historical Croatian city:

“Those who seek paradise on Earth must come to Dubrovnik”, So wrote George Bernard Shaw, smitten by the beauty of the city whose untouched, 1940 m long defensive walls - today under the protection of UNESCO - girdle in a city which carries the appellation of the Pearl of the Adriatic. Sitting at the southernmost part of Croatia, harbouring centuries of heritage created by the noble skills of the finest builders and artists, Dubrovnik basks in a warm Mediterranean climate with groves of lemon, orange and tangerine trees, sumptuous palms and agaves, adorned by Renaissance parks and the flowering gardens of medieval stone palaces and unobtrusive monasteries” (Croatia – The Mediterranean as it Once was, 2014: 41).

In sum, Croatia presents itself through ethnic culture and its rich history confirmed with historical monuments and supposedly long statehood of Croatia. However, main brochures presenting Croatian culture do not offer presentation of Croatian dances, or artistic expressions of Croats as people that could – if used – prove a high civilisation level of people and their European character. Of four main brochures, only two brochures briefly mention Dalmatian dances:

“Croatia is a land of urban culture which numbers more cities than any other part of the Mediterranean. With as many as eleven cultural phenomena - The Festivity of Saint Blaise, lace-making in Lepoglava, Hvar and Pag, the bell ringers from the Kastav region, the Hvar Procession “Za Križen”, (‘following the Cross’), two-part singing of narrow intervals in Istria and Hrvatsko Primorje, the spring procession of ‘Ljelje’, the traditional manufacturing of wooden toys in the Hrvatsko Zagorje region, the Sinjska alka, the gingerbread craft from northern Croatia, ‘Bečarac’ (traditional folk song) from Slavonija, Baranja and Srijem and ‘Nijemo Kolo’ from Dalmatinska Zagora (a traditional silent wheel dance), Croatia is among the countries with the most protected intangible assets in the world, inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity” (Croatia – Mediterranean as it Once Was, 2014: 9).

“If you want to experience the atmosphere of Korčula, may the good winds bring you here in July, when the city plays host to the International Festival of Song and Wine, celebrating the famous traveller, the Festival of Chivalry and the traditional sword dances performed in original costumes dating from the 16th century. The dances depict the struggle between the white king and the black king” (ibid: 45).

“Of all the art in churches, perhaps the most famous are the frescoes by Vincent of Kastav, depicting a death dance from the 15th century, located in the church of Santa Maria in Škrilin, in Beram near Pazin” (Croatian Cultural Heritage, 2011: 15).

The mentioning of dances presented above is literally everything that Croatian tourist brochures presenting Croatian culture say about dances in Croatia.

Ethnic dances have to become ‘autonomous’ and detached from their origin before they can be exposed to spectators who are not familiar with these dances (Picard, 1997). In other words, ethnic dances have to create an artistic spectacle for viewers (Latrell, 2008). This, furthermore, means that dance is a combination of artistic transformation and its stage representation that has to be put together as a cultural display (Li, 2012) before it can be exposed to tourist and/or viewers unfamiliar with its importance and origin.

When studying dance and nationalism, it is important to stress that institutionalization of ethnic dances usually means focusing on dances of lower classes because this presents a so-called pervasive strategy of the state (Reed, 1998). This is because nationalists always concentrate on tradition they trace long back to history, and in some cases they invent traditions that did not exist, or existed only among certain groups (Smith 2009; 2003; Hobsbawm 1983; 1990). Because of this, dances presented to tourists are often part of nation-building project (Li, 2012), and states are exposing their national specialness and history with successful presentation of their ethnic dances. For example, some researches revealed that a good way to present ethnic dances is to ‘estheticize’ traditional ethnic dances and decontextualize them from their tribal or traditional origin while, at the same time, exposing them to foreign spectatorship through urban theatres or similar venues (see e.g., Bruner 2001).

Dance as a form of culture, and as an artistic expression of the Croatian people does not exist in the national tourist offer in any form, i.e., authentic ethnic dances or their modern versions are hardly present in the national tourist offer, as explained above. This is the situation despite the fact that Croatia does not have to invent tradition that does not exist, but rather use what exists in the national history to emphasize its artistic history.

When we look into official Croatian cultural and tourist calendar for 2014, we see that even though dance manifestations are existent in coastal places in Croatia¹⁰ in Calendar of cultural and tourist events for 2014 there are only two recommendations, or ‘The Festival of Dance and Non-verbal Theatre’ from Istria and ‘Wheel Dance of Brod’ from Slavonia while Dalmatian dance manifestations (that are numerous) are named as games that include dance as well. Other than two dances named as games, there are two cases of theatre and dance performances, which are included in the cultural calendar.

Both above-mentioned dances that are actually called dances (and not games) are recommended as traditional dances, and in the first instance emphasis is not on the dance alone but also on circus, i.e., Istrian dance manifestation includes

“contemporary dance, theatre, mime, circus performances, street theatre and educational seminars and workshops. The main programme includes dance and non-

¹⁰ Local communities advertise their dance manifestations on their websites. See, for example: http://www.korcula.bz/Moreska_Korcula.htm (21 July 2014); <http://www.ikorculainfo.com/hr/otok-korcula/narodni-obicaji-i-tradicija.htm> (21 July 2014). Local communities correctly emphasize their dance manifestations as part of their tradition.

verbal shows, site-specific works, performances and installations, while accompanying events bring various forms of educational and other exhibitions. The programmes take place on a big stage in the Grimani castle, on the scene of the Cultural Centre, in the square and at various other locations of this romantic central Istrian Renaissance town” (Calendar of Cultural and Touristic events, 2014: 10).

On the other hand, a ‘Wheel Dance of Brod’ is presented as a traditional event where

“the townsfolk used to gather in the main town square to celebrate St. Stephen’s Day and dance the great wheel dance of Brod, a wheel dance often involving hundreds of joined hands of resplendently dressed girls and boys. The whole town lives for the wheel dance, but the programme for the event has become somewhat different. The visitors are now able to visit various ethno-graphic and art exhibitions, attend children’s shows, see - and indeed taste - the cake fair, enjoy the horse team shows, equestrian hurdle and two-horse team competitions. In addition, the whole town resounds with music performed at the festival of indigenous folk songs and folklore groups. One of the most attractive events is the Miss Croatia in a Folk Costume pageant. Relax, stretch out your arms, hold tight and don’t let the wheel dance break” (Calendar of Cultural and Touristic events, 2014: 101).

In other words, dance is presented as a circus (in the first case), and as something for fun (in the second case), but not as a cultural or artistic event that could have potential to attract tourists and present Croatia as a country of rich culture. Presenting Croatia as a country of rich culture is something the brochures attempt to accomplish, but by understanding culture as a long state history, tradition and architectural richness. Tradition in this case does not include dancing tradition even though local communities, as already mentioned, correctly emphasize their dances as part of their distinctive traditions.

As shown in Table 1, when it comes to other events offered in “Calendar of Cultural and Touristic events”, there are different events but absolute primary is given to history and tradition with 87 events, then drama, music and art (41), and then Catholic manifestations (20). Other manifestations include entertainment, theatre, film, sport, drama/music/art, literary culture, ecology and four various events that could not be classified (e.g., festival of children’s creativity, etc.).

Table 1. Distribution of activities in Croatian cultural and tourist calendar for 2014

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES
Entertainment	26
History and Tradition	87
Theatre	5
Film	12
Sport	11
Dance	2
Dance and Games	2
Theatre and Dance	2
Catholic	20
Drama, Music, Art	41
Literary Culture	4
Ecology	1
The Rest	4

The fact dances are not seriously considered in cultural calendar is even more puzzling when we consider the fact there are links to events, i.e., calendar only offers summaries of activities and gives link to local tourist boards for more information. Therefore, no significant effort or knowledge of Croatian dances would be required to include dances in the cultural calendar. Since Croatian cultural calendar includes numerous minor celebrations in small places all over Croatia (some of which are not even recognized as proper tourist destinations visited by foreign guests or Croatians from other parts of the country) that are showing history and tradition of Croatia, then dances could have easily enriched Croatian cultural offer particularly because local communities advertise their dancing manifestations at their websites.¹¹

Instead of Conclusion

One of commonly used definitions of culture is an anthropological definition that understands culture “as a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tyler, 1985 [1871]). This definition is similar to sociological understanding of culture that sees it as a set of customs and a way of living for a whole society, and as something that members of society learn through the socialization process (Haralambos and Holborn 2002; Global Sociology 2014).

However, when we look into Croatian cultural tourism then we see that authorities apparently do not understand culture in either sociological or anthropological way, but enforce their own understanding of culture as a bio-diversity, and historical and traditional events. But, history and tradition does not include dances or other forms of art that also do not have a significant place in tourist brochures.

When we look into Croatian tourist offer and tourist offer of some other countries, we can easily notice that Croatia has a very developed tourist offer (e.g., larger number of brochures, richer offer, leaflets, calendars, and all sort of materials that are sent out to interested people). But, even though Croatia makes significant efforts to show it has a rich history and tradition, and that it belongs to Europe because of its history, culture and civilisation, it fails to understand that a full picture of country as truly cultural and European as Croatia wants to present itself cannot be accomplished without emphasizing its art. Dance in this case bears particular relevance because unlikely for other forms of art, dance can attract larger attention and potential visitors due to its performing potential, i.e., dance is not like a theatre which foreign visitor usually cannot visit due to language barrier while foreign visitors could be interested in looking dance manifestations where they would also be able to join and learn something new. As emphasized earlier in this paper, it is hardly any other form of art that can show creativity, manners, importance, and level of civilization such as dance (Kuhač 1893 in Blažeković, 1994). Additionally, one of the main understandings of cultural tourism is that its importance lies in the fact foreign guests not only seek to see landscape but also to learn something about the host, and its art.

As Croatian authorities emphasize themselves, Croatia does not have places like pyramids in Egypt or similar tourist attraction, and following that we may argue that Croatia

¹¹ See e.g. <http://www.korcula.net/naselja/korcula/moreskahrv.htm> (14 July 2014).

might not have major art history or major dancing scene and history like larger countries, but it is a fact that Croatia has a developed dance scene – historical but also modern – and that what it does have (and that many other countries do not have) is diversity of cultures and dances in its regions. This diversity could be a potential to both present Croats as artistic people, but also to sell the country as a desirable tourist destination not only because of natural beauty, history and (unclear understanding) tradition but also because of its dances and art in general.

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