BODILY PERFORMANCES OF SOCIALITY, IDENTITY, NATURE, AND CULTURE

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Abstract

This research presents two case studies of travels, comparing tourist performances, embodiment and perception of two divergent settings; natural and urban environment. This comparison specifically deals with four themes emerging from the observation of performances; sociality, body and embodiment, constraints of performances and identity. The discussion on sociality as one of the paramount objectives of two travels presents the importance and consequences of presence of relevant others. Discussion about the body and embodiment deals with the role of body in tourist experience, with the concern for the body in natural environment, with body as a display and as a tool for sensuous perception of nature or urban environment. Looking at the constraints of performances reveals how tourists negotiate places and what or which powers shape their perceptions and consequently their performances. The discussion on identity presents specific perception and performances of nature and culture that derive from the cultural background of participants and deals with emergence of temporary identities that enable tourists to consume places and enjoy their experiences.

This research seeks to contribute to a relatively new debate on performances of which observation can enable us to understand more about places and people that encounter them and can result in better tourism planning strategies, environmental policies or heritage presentations. Such approach supersedes old theories dealing with push and pulls motives, problems of authenticity or the issues of front and backstage in tourist representations.

1. Introduction

The research in peoples' performances, embodiment, and perceptions of 'tourist' places are relatively new in the field of tourism studies. Lately it has been acknowledged that understanding tourist's complex perception and consumption of places may result in better tourism planning strategies, environmental policies or even the ways in which history can be 'authentically' presented (Crouch et al. 2001). Places become 'tourist' places with people, because of people and even by people. Nevertheless, understanding people on vacation in a different place from their everyday milieu is as difficult as understanding them in any other situation. Furthermore, in modern world, the notion of 'place' has exceeded the narrow meaning related to home (Bærenholdt et. al, 2004). The meaning of 'home' in the contemporary society has become ambiguous and ill-defined. Blurred borders and our fluid identities in this interconnected and mobile 'world on the move', make a simple question 'what is home and away' almost impossible to answer (see Iyer, 2000; Lash and Urry, 1994). A place can have different meanings to different people. For some it may be a place of dwelling, for others a place of rest and relaxation but even these distinctions are not always clear since place can have various overlapping meanings to one person (Bærenholdt et al., 2004).

Tourism is growing ever more complex. Moreover, it is often an irrational process that can hardly be explained by variables like the amount of time or money people have, or through the image of a certain destination. Consequently, I am not suggesting that these features do not influence the process of tourism. They are simply not enough to understand it. The growing mobility is changing our daily practices and perceptions. It enables us to go faster, further and cheaper. It also includes more people in the global flows. Travelling may not be a domain of rich and wealthy anymore. However, mobility does not only signify the corporeal

movement of people. Mobile are also images and objects that bring the foreign cultures and exotic images closer to us and can create desires to 'see' them for real. Nevertheless, to see is not enough; by seeing, I mean being present, smelling, feeling, touching, using all senses to experience places. These perceptions are intertwined with memories, images, expectations, and presence of other people. For now, there is no grand theory that would explain all reasons, experiences, and consequences of tourism process. However, the approaches presented below, and hopefully my research, are a step closer to understanding this process, since they acknowledge peoples' ability to 'read' the world and make their own sense of it. If tourism is, at least partially, made by tourists and consumed by tourists, we need to understand their way of making sense.

So, how can we come to understand such complicated and irrational process as tourism? How can we research something that is ephemeral, in transit? To grasp the meaning or importance of tourism I have decided to employ 'mobile' methods of research – to be on the move with people on the move. I started my research in participants' hometown, travelled with them to the destination, participated in all activities and events, and finally returned with them back to their hometown. I was one of the tourists. To participate in peoples' travel, vacation or holidays has three important advantages. First, to be in crux of happening enables to grasp the feelings, looks, movement and practices of people observed. Secondly, being a researcher and tourist at the same time, with similar needs and feelings as others, can serve as a starting point in asking questions for focus group discussion and for understanding narratives of participants. Thirdly, it enables a researcher to retrospectively, reflexively evaluate the experience.

My two case studies were conducted with Slovenian 'tourists' in Slovenia (Bohinj) and Serbia (Belgrade). I decided to use Slovenians in this research for several different reasons. First, being a Slovene and knowing the language and cultural background enabled me to do a

scrupulous observation, data collection and analysis. Secondly, from organisational point of view, it was less difficult to find two groups of people that were willing to participate in such research. The first group was a group of my high school friends that agreed to 'be observed' on their holidays, the second was a group of teachers from one high school to which I was invited by my best friend, teacher and organiser of a trip. Thirdly, coming from Slovenia and knowing about the lack of interest in tourism it seemed sensible to contribute to this undersized knowledge. I feel Slovenia has a great opportunity to develop tourism and, officially, it is one of priority tasks in future development. However, focusing mostly on marketing researches, Slovenia may not be producing appropriate information for further development.

Both groups consisted of young professionals coming from similar background, therefore, I decided to compare similar people in two different settings, namely natural (Slovenia, Bohinj) and urban (Serbia, Belgrade), and in two different modes of travel, namely self organised travel and a package tour. The comparison of natural and urban settings enables to distinguish some specifics in performances, bodily feelings, perceptions and identity. The two divergent modes of travel revealed some specific constraints in tourist performances and perceptions. In both case studies I wish to explore four topics; sociality, embodiment, constraints of performances and identity. Sociality is one of the paramount objectives of both travels; therefore, it is presented as the first section in both case studies. In those sections, I shall discuss the importance, the meaning and consequences of presence of relevant others. Sections on the body and embodiment deals with sensuous perception of nature or urban environment, employing mostly sight, smell, and taste, and with body as a display of health. There, I shall discuss which senses are significant in perception of the environment, and what is the role of the body in tourist experience. Sections on performances and constraints reveal how tourists negotiate places and what shapes their perceptions and consequently their

performances. I shall discuss various powers that influence tourists' reading of the world. Lastly, sections on identity present specific perception and performances of nature and culture that derive from the cultural background of participants and deal with emergence of temporary identities that enable tourists to consume places and enjoy their experiences.

By doing this research, I wish to contribute to a relatively new debate on performances of which observation can enable us to understand more about the places and people that encounter them. As such, this approach supersedes old theories dealing with push and pulls motives, problems of authenticity, the issues of front and backstage in tourist representations. It also supersedes seeing places as constructed by tourism planners that remain static, and tourists that consume such places and signs without consideration.

The first chapter discusses theoretical approaches to tourism research. In the first section, I will shortly present changes that are occurring in the post-modern world and consequently shaping out way of travelling. I will also present three approaches to researching tourism in this 'post-modern' time. In the second section, I wish to focus on embodiment, performances, sociality, and identity as common features to all three approaches. In the third section, I will describe and evaluate some differences of these common features that may occur in natural and urban environment. Second chapter presents empirical work where I examine and compare two case studies conducted in June 2005 with Slovene tourists in Bohinj (Slovenia) and Belgrade (Serbia).

2. Understanding tourist experiences through performances

2.1 Tourist places: introduction and approaches

In this section, I wish to shortly present and evaluate three frameworks or (suggestive) approaches to research in tourism. First 'non-representational' geography by Crouch et al. (2001), secondly 'new mobility paradigm' by Bærenholdt et al. (2004) and lastly Wang's 'authenticity of Being'. What is common to all three approaches, even though they stem from different backgrounds, is the focus on tourists and their behaviour through embodiment, performances, importance of sociality and identity. But first, it seems sensible to start with a brief account of the changes in post-modern world that shape and transform the nature of tourism.

Lash and Urry's (1994) 'Economies of Signs & Space' deals with a broader concept of 'reflexive modernity'. Nevertheless, all changes that shape today's world also influence our seeing, reading and experiencing travel, and tourism. Lash and Urry explain that objects and subjects in today's world are circulating faster and at greater distances. People are 'bombarded' with objects and cultural artefacts and, consequently, these objects and artefacts become 'disposable and depleted of meaning' (Lash and Urry, 1994: 3). Individual becomes unable to attach meanings to signs. He is now similar to Simmel's flâneur, who becomes blasé because of the vast amount of signs that metropolis imposes on him/her. However, Lash and Urry (1994) believe that alongside these processes that destruct the subject, there are other opposing processes, which enable individual to alter and deepen his/her meaning of work, leisure, community, self, space and everyday life. New technology and its outcomes (television, film, travel etc.) are not only imposing 'meaningless' signs to us but also enable 'the reflexive regulation of everyday life' (Lash and Urry, 1994: 54). As Wenders put it, 'an

audience today can apprehend and understand a lot more things at the same time than they could in the past' (cited in Lash and Urry, 1994: 55).

Let us look closer to Lash and Urry's (1994) description of changes that characterise the space in the pre-modern era, in modernity and in what they call 'reflexive modernity':

> Pre-modern space was filled with the markers of place. It was filled with and only recognizable by social practices. These social practices were in effect place markers…. space not to move through but to live in…. Modernity witnesses the emptying out of place markers and the greater development of abstract space…. Modern space is objective space, as subjectively significant symbols are emptied out. Reflexive modernity though is accompanied by a re-subjectivization of space, only in reflexive form. The subjectivization of space proceeds especially trough the transformation of communications, information and transport networks. (1994: 55)

The way we judge space today is a consequence of increasing 'real and simulated mobility' (Lash and Urry, 1994: 256). This mobility also opens doors to the knowledge because people are willing to take risk, they become opened to the new and the different and are able 'to reflect upon and judge aesthetically between different natures, places and societies, both now and in the past.' (Lash and Urry, 1994: 256, also Urry, 1995, ch. 11).

However, Adams criticised the mental reflexivity by saying that it ignores the cultural context; 'If reflexivity is a product of a particular culture, then clearly our knowledgeability is shaped and compromised by the 'limits' of that culture.' (2003: 224-5). Surely, Adams is right to a certain extent. Even though the signs circulating the globe may be the same everywhere, we cannot say that people understand them in the same way. People may compare, but there is something deeper from which they cannot escape; the whole variety of judgements and the way we learn to read the world through our own culture. Maybe tomorrow's generation is going to be more 'global' or 'unified' and less attached to

judgements stemming from its own culture. Nevertheless, for now these claims may be true only for today's Western generation.

Following this argument, it needs to be acknowledged that mobility may still be the privilege of the Western developed countries and upper class. As Edensor notes, the signs that circulate globally through media present images to prospective tourists and to 'a vast majority who can only fantasise about travel' (1998: 14). This raises another question; Can people with less experience or no experience compare, reflect? As one of the participants in the following research stated, 'I do not know what I liked the most about the place […] I cannot really say, since I have never visited a bigger city or metropolis before so I have no experience.' Thus, reading the signs of media is not always enough to be able to compare.

To complement the mental reflexivity by Lash and Urry (1994), Crouch et al. (2001) present a theoretical framework founded in 'non-representational' geography and time-geography that seeks to understand the tourist through his/her performances, praxis, behaviour and the sense he/she attaches to his/her doings. For them tourism is a process and central to this process is encounter: encounter between people 'as socialised or embodied subjects', spaces, contexts, expectations, experiences, desires (Crouch, 1999: 1). All these encounters require, are embedded, or happen in space/place. As tourists are 'doing tourism', the place can also be seen 'as something that is, at least in part, constructed and signified by the tourist' (Crouch et al., 2001: 254). Place is considered as something given but constantly negotiated and changed through practices. It is a fluid representation/image or constantly changing physical reality that becomes meaningful 'in the process of being a tourist' (Crouch et al., 2001: 254). As tourists make the place meaningful, they draw upon available contexts in relation to the sense they make of themselves.

This concept acknowledges a whole variety of features that were often ignored in studies of tourism, such as sociality, identity, embodiment, and poetics. Nevertheless, the presented approach is just theoretical, so there is not much discussion on particular practices or contexts that may alter and shape the notion of place. The emphasis is on explaining why and how body, sociality, identity, and poetics are important in the process of making sense of place (this will be discussed in the next section). Crouch et al. believe that this notion may result in better understanding of policy concerns such as heritage, sustainability and constitution of the 'authentic'. They suggest a more practical and interactive approach for understanding the practice of creating identities and understanding tourists' reasoning of place. Such approach would involve 'following' people from their everyday life to holidays and back, acknowledging identities shaped by social and cultural differences, observing and interviewing tourists and, nonetheless, researchers awareness and acknowledgements whilst and after participating in such research.

As noted above, the approach is merely theoretical and may be difficult to apply it in practice. What this approach would enable is to understand (subjectively) a small specific group of people in a specific environment and time. Such data can certainly shed some light or contribute to our notion of people in the process of making tourism or being tourists, and sense of places in question.

I wish to note that even though they consider places as constantly negotiated by tourists, their approach does not oppose representations but seeks critically to complement them by understanding how they are negotiated in everyday life. Crouch et al. (2001) do not discuss representations, however, I feel it is important to briefly present this issue. A very useful insight on the image or representation of place has been put forward by Edensor (1998). What the circulating images deriving from souvenirs, travel guides, postcards, photographs, cinema, TV and other mediators do is creating 'textual and visual forms [that] reproduce

discourses of 'otherness', luxury and escape' (Edensor, 1998: 13). This does not only influence the way people look or read the signs of place but also the way place is reproduced by tourists through photographs and narratives. Consequently, this would suggest that performances are shaped by images that are globally or locally produced. Nevertheless, Edensor believes that:

> Representations of place, although often persistent, are constantly in the process of transformation and may articulate with other representational modes, remain monologic, or be appropriated to signify new meanings. Discourses may be synthesised, but they can just as well exclude each other, even be unaware of each other. This means that sites are compendia of intersubjective meanings despite attempts to fix their meaning. (1998: 18)

Another, more viable approach to tourism research is presented in a book 'Performing Tourist Places' by Bærenholdt, Haldrup, Larsen, and Urry (2004). Similarly, as Crouch et al. (2001), Bærenholdt et al. (2004) acknowledge that places become meaningful only when people engage themselves with them, but they are not produced by tourist industry, planners, nor tourists. When people try to understand places and consume them, or try to 'make sense' of them, they do it through performances in accordance with the meaning they attached to these places (Bærenholdt et al., 2004: 32; Lash and Urry, 1994). Places consist of 'material and metaphorical content' (Crouch et al., 2001: 235) or in other words, '[t]ourist places are simultaneously places of *physical environment, embodiment, sociality, memory* and *image'* (Bærenholdt et al., 2004: 32, italics in original). Images and memories may be constructed in other places or temporalities. Memory can denote past encounters with the same or different place (and it is, in the moment of encountering, also produced for the future). The image is constructed through 'free-floating signifiers' deriving from stereotyping that are associated with the real places but are not always a true depiction of reality (Shields, 1991 in

Bærenholdt et al., 2004: 34; Bærenholdt et al., 2004: 34). However, the image is something that can be negotiated and may have less influence on the perception of place than for example memories and experiences with other places (Bærenholdt et al., 2004). Thus, both categories represent a preconceived or preceding knowledge, a representation about the place of visit. Within this preconceived knowledge, there are numerous categories, among those the one of the authenticity, which relies 'upon a particular idea of place and its relationship to culture' (Coleman and Crang, 2002: 5). There are cliché notions about a foreign cultures and their habits, mores and their way of life. Images can trigger imagination, create dreams, and initiate anticipation about activities, events, or social encounters yet to come. Certainly, these factors could influence the destination choice or expectations about the destination, nevertheless this line of thinking would be a step back to the classical debate on push and pull factors, on clear distinction between places and tourists, and the notion of the place as being a fixed entity (Bærenholdt et al., 2004).

Bærenholdt et al. (2004) supersede this classical distinction of places and tourists by replacing it with a 'new mobility paradigm', which represents 'a complex relationality of places and peoples that are connected through diverse performances' (2004: 150). Therefore, places are not circumscribed in time and space, nor seen as the source of 'human identity and experience' (Cresswell in Bærenholdt et al., 2004: 139). Tourists/travellers are not only passive consumers of places but they also configure these places with their own presence; they negotiate their meaning.

Physical environment, which used to be seen as 'place', now refers to only the material structure that has been historically produced by humans (Bærenholdt et al., 2004). Humans are, in one way or another, the crucial element of place. 'Tourist places are produced by the cooperative efforts of territorially defined relations *and* by the mobile interactions among tourist businesses, tourist organisations and tourists across place boundaries.' (Bærenholdt et

al., 2004: 25, italics in original). Tourist places are also 'tangible yet fragile constructions, hybrids of mind and matter, imagination and presence', and what makes them 'spectacular and exotic' are the 'mindsets and performances' of those who encounter the place (Bærenholdt et al., 2004: 2). Since Bærenholdt et al. (2004) see a place as 'constructed' in three temporalities; anticipation, as the past, performance, as the present, and remembrance, as the future, and they envelop proximity, temporality, mind, matter, imagination, presence, body, senses and sociality, they present a holistic way of looking at tourist places, experiences and phenomenon of tourism. Since most of their interviewees were repeated visitors or members of the same culture as the one they visited, the importance of cultural differences did not appear, nevertheless, it may be important in other cases and places.

Another similar idea, though focused more on trying to 'save' the issue of authenticity in the post-modern world, is Wang's (1999) 'Existential Authenticity'. Wang does not deal with places and how they may be negotiated, he examines peoples' feelings in the process of tourism. Wang's concept derives from the fact that today's world has caused a loss of the peoples' authentic self with its 'dominant rational order of the mainstream institutions in modernity' (Wang, 1999: 361). Similarly as 'accelerated mobility' with its emptying of meaning in social relations on the other hand encourages the 'deepening of the self' (Lash and Urry, 1994:31), so does Wang (1999) argue that people start to search for their 'authentic self' to escape the rational order imposed on them.

The 'authentic self' is represented through 'a balance between two parts of one's Being: reason and emotion' (Wang, 1999: 360). The balance is broken down because 'rational factors' take the control over 'non-rational factors' such as emotions, bodily feelings and spontaneity (Wang, 1999: 361). To resist such inauthenticity, the individual has to remove

himself from his/her everyday cultural space with its boundaries (Graburn in Wang, 1999), responsibilities, work and the public role into, for example, nature (Wang, 1999).

As Crouch et al. (2001) and Bærenholdt et al. (2004), also Wang (1999) acknowledges the importance of embodiment, identity, and sociability. He divides them into 'intra-personal authenticity', which comprises of bodily feelings and self-making or self-identity, and 'inter-personal authenticity', which denotes sociality/social authenticity deriving from deepening family ties and experiencing sociability in 'Touristic Communitas' (Wang, 1999: 361-5). All these components act as a means to existential authenticity.

What may represent a difficulty in Wang's approach is 'the state of being true to oneself': whether tourists or participants in a research can really express that state. It also seems that the situations that may cause such state of Being have to be extraordinary. Additionally, as even Wang concluded, such peak states may be only temporary, thus difficult to be detected. As some of the participants in my research commented, this state also depends on the length of a trip or vacation since they were not able to feel 'true to themselves' in two days of their vacation. Furthermore, 'being true to oneself' may be extremely difficult to observe especially within tourism, where people tend to 'put on' different roles or temporary identities that enable relaxation and fun.

2.2 Embodiment, performances, sociality and identity

2.2.1 The body

Even though the body is a paramount 'tool' for the experience and it is, with all its senses and abilities, also the only tool with which we read the world and make sense of it, it has been a relatively neglected topic in sociology and tourism literature until recently. There has been a

substantial work done on the gaze (see Urry 1990), as one of the senses, and recently smell and acoustics (see Macnaghten and Urry, 1998, ch. 4). However, distinct senses are not enough. Senses can follow or complete each other, compete against each other (for detailed distinction see Rodaway, 1994: 36-7), and create an unmitigated embodied experience. As Game explains:

> The desire to put one's feet or body in the sand, to be in the water, can be understood as meaning embodied – feel, touch, fluid – and possibly not speakable. If visual images invoke such a desire they are not enough. Perhaps they work precisely by demanding more: a desire related to senses other than sight. (cited in Veijola and Jokinen, 1994: 139)

Body and embodiment are essential parts of all three concepts. For Bærenholdt et al., '[t]he corporeal approach to place makes it possible to understand places as practices, produced and performed' (2004: 32). The meaning of places and experiences thus depends on what is bodily performed within them by different individuals or groups (Urry, 2004). In non-representational geography approach the encounter, as the central feature of tourism, is practiced with body and sensed through body (Crouch et al., 2001). Crouch (2000) distinguishes three ways in which space becomes embodied: the world is grasped 'multi-sensually'; body, surrounded by space, encounters it 'multi-dimensionally'; and the body becomes a medium for expressing (Crouch, 2000: 68). By expressing itself, body writes its own meaning upon place (Crouch, 2000; Edensor, 1998). The way people move, negotiate their feelings, space and others with their bodies may facilitate the recognition of a means that enable individuals in different circumstances to make sense of place (Crouch et al., 2001). According to Wang, the body can be seen from two different aspects 'sensual' and 'symbolic' (1999: 361). The body in sensual sense is 'the inner source of feelings and sensual pleasure' (Wang, 1999: 362). It is the medium for the personal authenticity, since all

activities, pleasures and feelings are produced by and consumed with body. However, Wang sees these 'bodily sources of authentic self' merely as temporary or as 'peak experiences' in tourism (1999: 363).

Rodaway explains that the human perception of the world through two activities, namely *'the mental insight'*, denoting the sense we make of sensory information intertwined with memories and expectations, and *'reception of information'* (1994: 10). The latter represents perception of smell, taste, sight, hearing, and touch through the sense organs. What we also need to say about perception is that it envelops various stimuli from different sources, which reach different sense organs and the process of making sense of these information requires 'translation' of the brain.

Nevertheless, as Rodaway (1994) explains, perception is also a learned behaviour and it can be culturally specific. We become aware of those cultural differences only when we are exposed to a different line of perception in other cultures. A simple example would be the difference in taste; surely every individual has more and less favourite kinds of food. However, when encountering different cultures, we are often exposed to various kinds of spices, smells or taste in general, not familiar to us. This cultural component of taste was acknowledged even by one of the most standardised chains, McDonald's, which adapted some of its hamburgers to a specific taste of different cultures. Even smaller restaurants offering traditional food of other cultures are well aware or this phenomena, thus they may alter 'traditional' taste and contribute to a false expectations of tourists when visiting that other cultures.

Focusing on smell, Rodaway (1994) presents some generalised features of contemporary Western culture's attitude. Smell may be associated with hygiene. I would suggest that smell, or better lack of it, such as 'fresh air' can be also associated with health, and care for the body. For what concerns the sight, it is common to believe that the way we see the world

today is something inherent. On the contrary, as Adler (1989) shows in 'The Origins of Sightseeing', our vision has changed especially after the Scientific revolution and under the influence of Romantic movement. Seeing the world is also a learned activity. As Urry explains, 'There is no single tourist gaze as such. It varies by society, by social group and by historical period' (2002: 1). I shall focus more on smell and sight in the next section on sensing places in natural and urban environment.

2.2.2 Performances and constraints

Body, as the sensing 'tool', and performance are inseparable elements in tourist experience. Materiality, memory, vision are mere potentials without being performed (Bærenholdt et al, 2004). And what does it mean, to perform? It means, basically, everything that people do (not only tourists), how they behave, how they move. Performances are not always self-conscious or intentional, and they may be done for others, as a display of identity, or they may be done for the self (Crouch et al., 2001). On the one hand, the very mundane performances may become extraordinary and exciting in a different place (see Bærenholdt et al, 2004 on the case of shopping practices). On the other hand, different places may allow and encourage certain performances, or constrain them with their physical features, country's policies, culture, the supply on the market. Performances can be choreographed, photography can be encouraged or prohibited (Edensor, 1998), even the weather can be constraining, or itineraries, when travelling with a group.

As Giddens wrote, '[i]n post-traditional context, we have no choice but to choose how to be and how to act.' (1994: 75). Certain reactions and practices seem to be embedded in us, determined, as we would do them without choosing. Some Giddens (1994) explains as habits or routines, others he ascribes to expert knowledge. This may be true, nevertheless even if the

post-modern world is offering higher freedom of choice, our decisions, perceptions, and behaviour may still be constrained by many factors. Drawing upon Bourdieu (1984), Edensor (2001a) explains tourists' behaviour as culturally coded patterns evolve around class, gender, ethnicity and similar, or in Bourdieu's words, they are grounded in habitus. However, tourist contexts may generate shared rules or set of conventions about what is appropriate, desirable, forbidden (Edensor, 2001a). 'Thus forms of tourist habitus are also determined by unreflexive, embodied, shared assumptions about appropriate behaviour in particular contexts.' (Edensor, 2001a: 60).

Edensor (1998) distinguishes between heterogeneous and enclavic space that enable, provoke or prohibit different performances. Enclavic space is similar to Boorstin's bubble, Goffman's total institution, or even Auge's non-place, where surveillance controls and organises practices and performances. These places are mostly designed for gazing and consuming the exotic otherness. The heterogeneous space is a mixture of public and private, tourists and indigenous people, work and leisure. In such space the visual, verbal and other activities are performed. As Edensor explains, 'enclavic spaces are carefully staged and designed so that performance is somewhat prescriptive, whereas in heterogeneous spaces, stage boundaries are less clear and a wider range of improvisation is encouraged' (1998: 62).

The way we read the world may still be much intertwined with our everyday cultural context. Perception of nature is learned but there is not only surveillance that shapes our performances. Presence of other people or even lacks of opportunities for certain activities are constraining. As Edensor explains, '[i]n modern space one's behaviour, movement and presence may be regulated by a combination of advanced policing methods, the gaze of others and the reflexive self-awareness' (1998: 41-2). As the following research indicates, there are existing clichés about other cultures, and these can be especially deep when the two cultures in question share a common past. Such clichés also steam from experiences of others

or our own experiences with certain culture and its members and are reinforced by travel guides. As Crouch et al. (2001) argue that meaning of place can be negotiated, however, sometimes certain images are so embedded that disable us to change the perception and reveal the 'reality' of certain place. Furthermore, these expectations about other culture alter our behaviour, our performances, perceptions and consequently the experience. Therefore, it may not be our meaning of a place that narrates our practices but the expected practices of the Other, we want to (or we are suppose to) be similar to.

2.2.3 Sociality

As body and embodiment, also sociality in tourism seems to have been a neglected field for tourism studies. Larsen (forthcoming) has recently focused on sociality and co-presence of people in tourism experience. He argues that travelling should be seen as enhancing and re-establishing friendship or family ties rather than escaping from social relations. Also Bærenholdt et al. argue that 'bodily co-presence' of other people, or 'physical proximity between people […] seems to be desirable or even obligatory' (2004: 146). We cannot imagine place, especially tourist place, without this co-presence. As Crouch et al. explain:

> While it is familiar to consider tourism as an individualistic practice, sometimes solitary, even self-centred, it is frequently not so. Along the pier, in a campsite, across the beach, at Centre Parks and backpacking, tourism usually happens with, or at least among, people. (2001: 259-260)

Performances among and between people involve conversation, body language, touch, meeting, feeling (Bærenholdt et al, 2004). The leisure time or vacations are especially important for family members of friends, people that mean something to us, since the daily practice of our lives often prevents us to spend 'quality time' with them. 'Co-present

conversations can be crucial for developing relations of trust that can persist during lengthy periods of distance and even solitude' (Bærenholdt et al, 2004: 147). Sociality can take place also among strangers, social interaction is necessary between tourists and those who work in tourism industry. Also Crouch notes that a 'wide range of leisure/tourism may be concerned with making friends, developing and expressing love and care, 'non-commodity values' in people through places and things' (Crouch, 2000: 70). Sociality and emotions are seen as inflecting the body, which through the activity makes the influence on the material world (Crouch, 2000). In this approach, the place is still the centre of attention since it is the place that can make people ''feel' differently and […] can stand for the embodied practice and friendship' (Crouch, 2000: 71). It may be useful to think also that through sociality place can lose its significance because people create their own 'worlds' which evolve around people.

Larsen (forthcoming) criticises theories in tourist studies as mostly focusing on the place as 'intrinsic for any kind of tourism' (Bærenholdt et al, 2004: 1). What Larsen elucidates is that the "social" factor of tourism studies is people travelling for people, with people and because of people and, thus, he is trying to bring this component into analysis of travel and tourism. Sometimes it seems that this component is so deeply set in people that they are not even able to realise it. Therefore, the presence of others is not just desirable, but even unquestionable, essential.

Wang's (1999) inter-personal authenticity, as noted above, is divided into two categories; family ties and 'Touristic Communitas'. Drawing upon Berger, Wang explains family ties as 'a major private sphere for modern individuals to experience their "true selves"'. Family represents a paramount 'ritual experience' and tourism is 'a chance to achieve or reinforce a sense of authentic togetherness' (1999: 364). The idea of communitas derives from pilgrimage and represents groups of people outside their everyday lives meeting around one focus. In that, the individual is not concerned with any 'obligatory tasks' and can cast away

his/her everyday roles, titles, or functions. Communitas are '"pure" inter-personal relationships' where 'participants approach one another in a natural, friendly and authentic way' (Wang, 1999: 364). However, organised package tours may not be part of any of these categories, when they consist of people that know each other.

2.2.4 Identity

As noted above, tourists draw upon contexts available to them, but they do it in relation to the sense they make of themselves, when they try to make sense of place, experience or relations (Crouch et al., 2001). Identity can be regarded as a baseline for reading the world. However, if identity is fluid, since the Post-modern world is creating more fluid identities that are less bound in culture, tradition or place (Urry, 1995), it may be constructed or changed also through travel.

> When you hear, see smell, sense and taste, you are in a context, connected. Thoughts may wander around and emotions vary, but a person has become a part of the unity, become a participant. You can even be critical about the actual events taking place, but if you don't question the configuration itself you are a part of it. You are not a tourist. (Veijola and Jokinen, 1994: 140)

Since the tourist experience and distinction between 'home and away' (Lash and Urry, 1994) are becoming more complex it is also becoming relatively difficult to draw the line between tourists and 'non-tourists' (Clifford, 1997). The most general distinction for 'being a tourist' has been, leaving everyday milieu for reasons, such as pleasure, relaxation and similar. Usually seasonal workers, business travellers, students, and immigrants are excluded from this tourist group, even though some of these forms of travel may include tourist experiences. Even when the world was less mobile and fluid, this distinction did not really answer the

question of 'touristness'. It merely serves as a means to gather statistical data of inbound and outbound tourism. Another simple distinction has been the one between the practice and the context of tourists and non-tourists (Crouch et al. 2001), yet the distinction is not simplistic because of shared states of flux in different cultures (Clifford, 1997). How a 'homogenous culture' (if there is still such thing) draws the line between its insiders and outsiders (Clifford, 1997) can be observed in some cases (see Edensor, 1998). What tourist makes of him or herself is another question, because being a tourist has a negative connotation and it is mostly regarded as being a fun seeking shallow person. Drawing the line between tourists and hosts becomes even more difficult when we are dealing with repeated visitors or tourists that may know and understand the other culture better that an 'average tourist'. As Crouch et al. explain, 'to consider a place and its represented culture through encounter as 'routes' suggests a much less stable and fixed experienced geography, where cultural identities and meaning become fluid.' (2001: 264). The discussion on whether someone is a tourist or not seems rather in vain since not only home and away lines are blurred but also 'tourist' practices may not differ significantly from those in everyday life (Edensor, 1998). We all are more or less tourists all the time exactly because of the omnipresent and circulating signs (Urry, 2002).

There is though another aspect of identity that is not concerned with the distinction between tourists and non-tourists. It is the authentic, genuine, true identity of an individual as Wang (1999) calls it. Tourism can be seen as a practice in which 'people seek to re-centre themselves' through embodiment (Crouch 1999: 9). Wang calls this 'nostalgia and romanticism' (1999: 360), for Crouch it is 'a nostalgic and imaginative process' (1999: 10). However, for Wang (1999) the self-making or self-identity is more related to embodied practices, excitement, competition against others or self, challenges and adventures. These

practices represent a counterpoise to the rational, constraining and monotonous routine of everyday life, and are, as discussed later, mostly practices in nature (Wang, 1999).

As I have mentioned in the previous section, the issues of being true to oneself and the true or authentic identity may appear more theoretical than viable to explore them in practice. What people may do in the process of tourism is re-thinking their identity in a reflexive process. Reflexive self-awareness, as Giddens sees it, may enable the individual to construct self-identity without being constrained by tradition or culture (Adams, 2001). This may seem quite optimistic, but I argue that our self-identity is still relatively grounded in our culture. When encountering the culture of other, we tend to compare the image we perceive with the image or notion we have of ourselves as individuals and members of a certain culture. How we perform may serve as a display of ourselves and as a display of our culture. As Edensor (1998) explains, the interaction between people and places are expressed through specific performances and this interaction can reveal individual and group identities. In addition, interaction between hosts and tourists can renegotiate tourists' own culture and identity.

What I wish to add to this debate is that encountering nature or encountering culture may appeal to different identities within individual. I explore self-identity and creation of self through reflexive process in nature since nature constitutes a source for 'self-development' through 'freeing of the body, a rediscovery of childish sensation, and aesthetic and moral regeneration' (Edensor, 2001b: 84). What may be explored in tourists' encounters of other culture/urban tourism are a reflexive negotiation, judgement, and comparison of their cultural or national identity.

2.3 Places in natural and urban environment

2.3.1 Natural environment

We certainly have to acknowledge that place does represent a significant baseline for tourists' experiences, behaviour, performances, and embodied practices or in Urry's words, 'tourist activities or performances cannot be separated from the places that are visited' (2004: 205). We can understand this through comparing performances, embodied practices and the perception of self in natural environment and places situated in the urban environment. As Macnaghten and Urry wrote in the Introduction to the 'Bodies of Nature', various practices and activities that occur in nature are:

> constructed through discourses of 'leisure' and 'relaxation', and involve different spatialities and temporalities from everyday work and household relationships.... They happen in the 'outdoors', in the fresh air, where there is something about hot or cold or wet or dry 'air' that is thought particularly bracing or refreshing or rejuvenating.... Most of these practices also occur beyond or in opposition to the 'urban' or the 'urban way of life'... [and] rely upon conceptions, discourses and spaces of 'nature' deemed to oppose or contradict the modernity of industry, science, the city and so on. (2001: 2)

'The reading and production of nature' are learned activities that vary across and within societies and periods, since we learn those practices through 'cultural process' (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998: 19). Macnaghten and Urry's (2001) research on perception of woods and trees, elucidated some practices, performances, and the value of woods and nature in the British society. The countryside is perceived as a means to escape from work, study, or parenting. It represents a place where people can relax, refresh, or even re-enforce their intimate relationships. However, the countryside can also be consumed in solitude. What

seems significant is that nature can trigger the participants' 'latent sense of themselves as embodied beings' which brings into play all senses, in particularly smell, which can trigger childhood memories. 'Being a tourist may enable playfulness, an opportunity in which the world can be experienced as a child does' (Crouch et al., 2001: 261). Also Wang (1999) believes that nature represents the most appropriate environment in which an individual can find the equilibrium between reason and emotion. The ideal of authenticity is characterised through nostalgia and romanticism where nostalgia denotes the quest for the innocent, spontaneous and purer self and a past way of life: 'such ways of life are usually supposed to exist in the past or in childhood' (Wang, 1999: 360). This quest is possible through the embodiment of the experience or as Turner observes, 'The very embodiment of Man makes him nostalgic' (1991: 3).

In addition, participants in Macnaghten and Urry's (2001) research mentioned the significance of surprise within woods. Again, we can find similar idea in Wang's concept; to oppose the 'routinization and over-predictability' a tourist/traveller may seek adventure and surprise in his/her experience (1999: 363). Despite the fact that activities in nature mostly oppose or contradict the modernity, a trend of technology entering the natural environment, changing it into a playful, and commoditised landscape narrates a different consumption – consuming landscape as spectacle (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998). The activities and performances that emerge are still bound to happen in nature, which has been transformed to cater the new line of tourists that wish to consume nature through sport activities, adrenalin experiences and the like. Nature becomes another spectacle or a mediator to the ultimate spectacular experience such as white water rafting, canoeing, hydro-speed, sky diving, sport climbing, and similar. As Vester (1987) explains, the individual that is dissatisfied with the mundane life may seek extra-mundane experiences in adventures. Adventure thus becomes 'a form of leisure [and] plays a significant part in providing an opportunity to compensate for

the boredom and lack of authenticity felt in ordinary life.' (Vester, 1987: 238). Nevertheless, even nature itself can provide a proper environment where people can concentrate on one another without too many distractions that metropolis can represent. As Oscar Wilde said, 'When one is in town one amuses oneself. When one is in the country one amuses other people.'

2.3.2 Urban environment

The city can be described as a mixture of Edensor's (1998) 'heterogeneous tourist space' and 'enclavic tourist space'. In heterogeneous space, tourism represents only one of many other economic activities. Cities that do not emphasise tourism as their main economic activity may appear more heterogeneous then others. Borders between private and public in such space are blurred, there is no need 'to remove rubbish and repair unkempt roads and buildings, let alone maintain verges, gardens and roundabouts' (Edensor, 1998: 54). The Western interpretation of such space may be that urban facades are neglected, the stiles and structures are opposing or that the Western forms are imposed (Weightman in Edensor, 1998: 54). Nevertheless, even within or between heterogeneous spaces, there are also enclavic tourist spaces, where performances may be highly regulated by surveillance and rules. Such spaces are for example museums, historical or sacred attractions, concerts and similar.

As tourists travel from one enclavic space to the other, especially when taking a package tour vacation, they are also enclosed within different purified spaces namely buses, airplanes, trains (Edensor, 1998). However, in a heterogeneous space, it is almost impossible to keep tourists away from the gaze of the "real" but this often happens 'at a safe distance' (Edensor, 1998: 51). If a routine is disrupted, or when tourists are given an afternoon off to explore the city on their own, such events, fear, taking risk and exploration can enable an experience in

which 'tourists may realise the contradictions of their existence and unmask the ideologies which constrain them' (Edensor, 1998: 53).

Tourist performances that occur in urban environment are usually walking as sightseeing, taking photographs, participating at festivals of other 'authentic' performances staged for the tourists, shopping, eating and drinking, socialising with friends or family and encountering other tourists and indigenous people. The consumption of the city is usually intertwined with the consumption of the culture. In making their own sense of place, tourists sometimes try to mimic the performances of indigenous people following the old saying 'When in Rome do as Romans do'.

Especially in the development of urban tourism in the West, the visual sense plays a major role (Urry, 1999). Even though the cities were not considered to be particularly 'photogenic' until recently (Urry, 1999), tourists make the certain views and experiences notable and memorable, by photographing them. Surely, photography includes as much as excludes, and it has helped to develop the sense of aesthetic in the twentieth century (Urry, 1999). Nevertheless, when in urban space, tourists tend to photograph the notable, the different, the surprising, even the dirty and horrible or, in Edensor's words, 'photography is a strategy to recode and enframe experience outside themed, enclavic environments' (1998: 129). Photography can also be directed and co-ordinated by tour guides, explaining what is notable to see and photograph or it can be prohibited. Photographs often reproduce the postcard and brochure views. However, as Bærenholdt et al. note, '[m]ost images of cultural sights are also populated with family faces' (2004: 107).

City is a source of not only visual but also numerous other sensuous information. Surprisingly, as the visual, the gaze of Westerns has become more interested in different or even anaesthetic, the smell or dirt is still regarded as repulsive, since the smell can often be associated with perceptions of hygiene (see Rodaway, 1994). Urry (1999) argues that the

sources of such smells are being hidden in the peripheral spaces around the city and the tourists are 'protected' from the gaze and the smell. However, in developing countries, we might still witness smells in centres, visited by tourists.

Central to the urban tourism is the performance of walking. Edensor (1998) explains that choreographed mode of walking may enable less sensuality. Strictly choreographed moving trough space can prohibit touching, may disable tourists to stop and gaze, to sit down and eat. However, all these performances and constraints depend on the form of travel, the group, people we are travelling with, the site and so on.

What the Western tourists often seek is to see the typical, the 'authentic' as a contrast to their everyday experience and as a display of the Other they encounter. However, in the following research, there is a specific connection between two quite different cultures coinciding. The common history and similar language make tourists less "touristic" and enable them to understand and perform relatively dangerous place with more confidence. This specific also shapes the perception of certain signs that are the signposts of a great and common socialist past, history. Furthermore, not only cliché notions about the culture being visited but also the cliché notions of hosts about tourists from certain countries can narrate performances and perceptions of the self.

3. Performing nature and culture: case studies Bohinj and Belgrade

3.1 Introduction

My first idea for this research stems from my interest in the concept of authenticity in tourism. It was first set up to explore and closely observe the meaning of authenticity in post-modern travel. The debate on front and backstage (MacCannell, 1976) and the 'tourist bubble' (Boorstin, 1964) seemed to be superseded by ideas on authenticity of Being (Wang, 1999) that shifts the debate from 'authentic' objects and presentations to the 'authentic' feeling when engaging in different kind of activities in tourism. Wang's idea was partially presented in the previous chapter, however to recap in his approach he tries to conceptualise the issue of authenticity by dividing it into different categories by its relation to objects. The first and main distinction is between 'object-related authenticity' and 'activity-related authenticity' (Wang, 1999: 351). 'Object related authenticity' represents MacCannell's and Boorstin's line of thinking and Wang's 'activity-related authenticity' 'refers to a potential state of Being [which] can have nothing to do with the authenticity of toured objects' (1999: 352). On this stance, every tourist experience can be a potential search for authenticity regardless of the environment, objects, people and presentations.

By conducting field research of two cases, one situated in natural, other in urban environment, my objective was to observe the perception and making of 'authentic self' through performances. However, after conducting the first research in Bohinj, it became apparent that participants cannot identify or clearly express such state because of the circumstances of their vacation (vacation was too short or too 'touristic') or because they have not experienced anything extraordinary. After going through a quite broad set of data (transcripts of focus group discussions, videotapes, commentary, photographs), the observed

performances revealed four major categories. First, sociality as a paramount objective of vacation. Second, the body as a sensuous tool and as display of identity. Third, constraints in performances imposed by place, tour guides or by tourists themselves. And fourth, 'basic' identity that shapes tourists' perceptions of places and temporary identity that can serve as a means to enjoy and consume places.

In the beginning of this chapter, I present the methodology in this research. Then, I discuss the four categories in each case study in relation to the theory and other researches. First, I will try to answer what is the importance of sociality in tourism and, why it is so significant in both cases. Then, I will present the utilisation of different senses that become important in natural or urban setting and the meaning of the body in tourism. Furthermore, I will compare constraints of performances within two modes of travel (self organised and organised travel) and within enclavic and heterogeneous space. Lastly, I will present the emergence of self-identity in natural setting and the question of national or cultural identity in urban setting.

3.2 Methodological approach, methods of research and analysis

3.2.1 Case studies

Case study is an approach that enables a researcher to explore an event, an activity, a process or one or more individuals in depth (Creswell, 2003). By using a variety of procedures over a sustained period, a researcher can collect detailed information on cases, limited in time and activity (Stake in Creswell, 2003). What a qualitative approach in general provides is 'open-ended, emerging data' from which a researcher can develop themes (Creswell, 203: 18).

My decision for case study approach has several reasons. First, I believed participating in travel would provide me with enough detailed data to contribute to the existing knowledge.

Participating in a travel itself suggested considering a group as a case. Secondly, conducting two case studies would enable a comparison of performances occurring in two divergent settings; natural and urban environment. Thirdly, because of the time pressure, I evaluated that case studies are more viable and enable more illustrative comparison than other approaches.

As every other approach, also this one has its advantages and limitations. The most common limitation of such approach is the generalisation of results. However, my intention was not to develop theories or general claims about people or places in question. These case studies mostly try to complement to the existing knowledge in this field.

3.2.2 Participant observation and audiovisual material

As I have already mentioned in the introduction, the participation in peoples' travel has three important advantages. First, a researcher is in crux of happening, which enables her to grasp the feelings, looks, movement and practices of people observed. Secondly, by participating a researcher is also a tourist with similar needs and feelings of those of tourists, thus, this knowledge can serve as a starting point in asking questions for focus group discussion and for understanding narratives of participants. Thirdly, a researcher can retrospectively, reflexively evaluate the experience and even when some data was not recorded it can be recalled from the memory.

Videotaping both travels turned out to be very useful. It did not only make possible to record more conversations or statements as writing notes would, but it also enabled to record the way people move, socialise, sing or perform in other ways, since this was the primary objective of my research. Furthermore, it provided material that could be observed in detail more than once.

I travelled and spent time with tourists as a tourist and as an observer. In the first research in Bohinj, participants were informed about my research, however, not about the topic or any other details of the research. This practice was necessary, since participants were my friends that may have misunderstand the constant presence of camera in my hands. Since my role as a researcher was known, it made it possible to record any information when it was revealed (see Creswell, 2003, ch. 10). However, a downturn in exposing my role could have been that behaviour of participants was altered because of that notion and the presence of camera. Nevertheless, it was a necessary decision for the reasons mentioned above. The observation in second research in Belgrade was conducted 'incognito' except for the person who invited me to join his group of co-workers on such trip. The participants did not know me so they could not have perceived any unusual behaviour in me. Also here, the decision seemed more appropriate, since the disclosure of my role may had altered their behaviour and could have greater negative consequences than in the first case.

Since I used a video camera, and recorded most conversations (especially in Bohinj case), the field notes were not necessary. However, I often tried to write down my impressions or ideas that occurred to me while observing certain activities. Moreover, in certain situations when narratives or discussions spontaneously occurred, especially in Belgrade case, I could not reach for the camera. That is, when taking notes became a data collection procedure.

In the aftermath, I received also about 1000 photographs from different participants of the trip to Belgrade. I use them to illustrate the experience and participants' narratives. However, photographs would need more scrupulous analysis and extensive interpretation.

What I wish to note in terms of methodology is that such approach, especially 'incognito', proved to be useful in researching peoples' performances and perceptions. After conducting both researches, I had a chance to see the Belgrade videotape with all participants of the

focus group discussion. Their comments during the film were most interesting and useful. Thus, in the future this practice may be another way of data collection.

3.2.3 Focus group discussion

The focus group discussion is a form of a face-to-face interview with six to eight people. 'These interviews involve unstructured and generally opened questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants' (Creswell, 2003: 188).

The first focus group discussion of the Bohinj group was conducted on the day of departure in a quiet restaurant after lunch. Even though the guidelines for carrying out such discussions usually entail a proper setting, peace, quiet and certain preparations, the circumstances did not allow such handling. Especially now, when people are constantly on the move, a researcher has to find his/her way around such limitations. Since participants went, after that lunch, to different cities where they work during the week it was necessary to carry out the discussion there. The discussion was recorded and it took about 40 minutes in which participants revealed their views and feelings about place, activities and nature. The fact that participants often drifted away from the topic in question seemed a problem in the beginning. Nevertheless, this 'drifting away' came out to be very useful and full of information.

The second focus group discussion of the Belgrade group was conducted one day after returning to Slovenia. One of the participants offered to prepare a small party in his summerhouse where we could see the videotape of our travel and carry out a discussion. The discussion was recorded and it took about 1 hour and 40 minutes. Also here, participants spoke freely about numerous issues and even asked questions among themselves which resulted in broad set of interesting data.

Potential limitation of focus group discussions is the presence of a researcher, that can lead participants and thus produce bias data, or the presence of other members in a group that can obscure answers and lead or prevent respondents to be completely honest (see Litosseliti, 2003). However, I tried to ask questions only when I perceived no one has anything else to add. In doing that, I wanted to avoid manipulation in asking questions. In addition, in focus group discussions, a researcher may appear also less intrusive, because participants often explain one another why they felt or experienced certain things.

3.2.4 Data analysis

First, the audio part of videotapes and audio recording of focus group discussions were transcribed in the original language (Slovenian), since this prevented a loss of any details with translation. Secondly, reading through data and writing down notes and ideas in margins gave a general idea on cases. Thirdly, after this procedure, the transcripts of focus group discussions were coded in Atlas.ti programme. This enabled me to see clearly emerging themes that were then interpreted with a use of other existing theories and similar researches. Lastly, for the purpose of interpretation of data, only the relevant quotations were translated into English.

3.3 Case study Bohinj

3.3.1 Participants and the setting

The first research was carried out in Slovenia at the Lake Bohinj, where participants spent two days (one night) during the first weekend of June 2005. Lake Bohinj is the biggest natural lake in Slovenia. It attracts international and domestic tourists seeking tranquillity, relaxation, and sport activities in a natural environment. It is also a starting point for hiking since it is located at the foot of the Julian Alps. Companies in the broader Bohinj region offer adrenalin sports such as canoeing, kayaking, bungee jumping, sky diving, hydro-speed, rafting, climbing and other sports such as cycling, horse riding, swimming in Aqua Park, rowing. There is also an adrenalin park and other events such as cycling competition etc.

The research in Bohinj consists of one focus group, five female (F1 to F5) and three male (M1 to M3) participants, age 24 to 26. Seven of them have started to work for various companies around Slovenia, one is temporarily finishing her BA degree in Tourism Studies. Others work mainly in the field of law and economy. All participants know each other for several years, either from high school or universities. All share memories of past events, of events form teenage period and years at the university. In all these years, a special bond developed between them but in the last year or so, most of them started to work in different cities, thus they do not have many possibilities to spend time together.

Participants arrived to Bohinj together in three cars on Saturday morning after a two-hour drive. First, they went to couple of info centres to obtain the relevant information on prices and adrenalin or other sport activities possible in the area. Whilst having lunch in a local pizzeria they discussed different possibilities, looking at maps and deciding what to do next. After lunch, they settled in the tourist farm where they had reserved rooms. In the afternoon,

they went cycling, in the evening they dined at a local restaurant, because they wanted to enjoy some homemade typical food from that region. After returning to the farm, they sat outside drinking speaking and laughing until about 1 am. On Sunday morning, they watched a cycling competition. After that, they decided to visit Lake Bled and see the Castle of Bled. The results presented below are a sum of a focus group discussion, a 2 hour and 20 minutes videotape made by the researcher while participating in this two-day trip and researcher's notes.

3.3.2 Sociality

Larsen (forthcoming) explains that most of the people travel with significant people and they may travel to visit or meet significant people in their lives. Sometimes those two categories interconnect; however, this particular group of friends travelled together from one place to another to be with their friends (significant others) in a different environment that enables the deepening of relations. Choosing a place not too far from home provided them with a greater amount of quality time they wanted to spend together. Furthermore, the choice to go to a natural environment of the Lake Bohinj derived from two different but very much connected expectations. In order to spend time together and really focus on one another, the natural environment with less distraction then urban environment did represent a more appropriate setting. However, another expectation about the place was to experience some fun, adrenalin and sport activities in a company of significant people. They all agreed they could have chosen any other place even nearer to their hometown if it offered certain activities. Nevertheless, speaking about choosing a different place in plural, as if individuals were speaking for the group, showed that going any place alone was not even considered.

In the group discussion participants revealed, they saw this vacation mainly as a chance to get back together or spend fun and quality time with their friends. As some of the participants stated:

F1: I think it was great that we were all together again, because there is not much going on back home.

F2: … Anyway, despite the weather, I am very happy that we have been here all together after such a long time.

F3: Yes socializing was great.

M1 (*joking*): Yes, adrenalin depends on a company.

F3: We came here to recharge our batteries.

F1: I guess that the purpose of our trip was a combination of everything: some nature, some sports, socialising, food [1].

Since the contemporary lifestyle of participants is relatively focused on their new employments and new environments in which they live, there is not many opportunities to relax and, especially, to spend time together as they used to. Meeting for a cup of coffee or lunch once a week does not fulfil the needs for social interaction with friends.

In the discussion, they revealed that even participating in relatively normal sport activity, such as cycling, the company of others played a major role. Most of them stated that they would not go cycling alone:

M1: I wouldn't go alone. I would only go in company because I am not so enthusiastic about cycling therefore I do not see the point of doing it alone.

F4: I wouldn't go alone either. I agree with 'M1'!

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[1] I shall discuss food as a part of sensuous bodily experience of taste in the following section on the body and embodiment.

F5: Me neither, I agree!

One participant expressed, she felt even obligated to cycle: 'I was thinking; if everyone else is going I have to go too!' Thus, as much as the company of others can be desirable and pleasant, it can also be constraining – the group narrates activities and the individual has to follow to fulfil his/her need for social interaction. Performances may be regulated by the gaze of others (Edensor, 1998) or the presence of others. Several other participants elucidated the importance of company as a reference group with/in which you can compete. Whilst cycling, the competitive spirit was especially coming from women participants wanting to compete with men. Competition can also represent a self-making process (see the section on Identity in this case study):

F2: I enjoyed most the fact that I overtook 'M1' on the way up the waterfall because he was walking.

F3: Yes, yes, that was great!

F1: It [cycling] is a sort of competition!

However, the group was functioning relatively homogeneous. The decisions about activities were always supported by all members. Planning involved individual and small group gathering of information from other friends prior to departure, at the destination in info centres, and even speaking to the owner of the tourist farm. This information was presented to all members of the group that then negotiated, discussed, and eventually agreed on activities. Sitting around the table waiting for their lunch, they skimmed through brochures, looking at maps, evaluating the offers, taking into account prices of activities and the weather. One participant expressed her surprise about group dynamics:

F5: Now that you have mentioned, I find it quite amazing that a group of nine people works so simultaneously and without any quills about where to go and what to do. Well, it is true that on the one hand, we were slightly indecisive, but on the other hand, whatever we decided, we did it all together. Nobody tried to force anything.

F2: Yes, in the end we agreed on everything.

Even though in the aftermath participants complained about lack of opportunities that the destination offered, and also the weather that disabled them to do certain activities, one of the reasons for choosing almost mundane activities might be that individuals were valuing the company of others more than individualistic wish to experience some extreme adrenalin activity. Again, this shows the paramount objective of their vacation was to socialise and spend time with significant people.

3.3.3 The body and embodiment

In the post-modernity the self has become a reflexive project that extends to the body and its sensual experience, appearance, health and performative abilities (Giddens, 1991). Participants in the research expressed and performed a high awareness about their health, body and stamina. The body seemed to serve less as a display of beauty or visual identity, but as ability to deal with physical difficulties and as such, it served as a display of health. As sociality was one of the most significant components of this trip, or rather, it was a baseline for it, sport activities also played a major role. Bodily concern was apparent in the discussion about place, the natural environment and about objectives for choosing Lake Bohinj as their destination. One participant stated, 'I guess this [sport activities] was the only reason we have

chosen Bohinj, because here you have all these options for different adrenalin spot activities. If all this was somewhere near Celje[2], we would have gone there.'

The fifteen-minute ascent by bicycle was an easy task for three participants (two boys and one girl) who are semi-professional cyclists. They commented the ascent as 'just a beginning'. However, the hill represented a difficult physical challenge to others. When reaching the top of the hill, some participants complained about feeling dizzy, having pain in the legs and other parts of their body. These parts of conversation were recorded at the instant participants reached the top:

M1: I don't feel my legs!

F3: I was better than you!

F2: We should do this every day.

F3: Yes, every day would be good!

M2: I love to cycle up-hill and this was only a warm up! I cycle a lot.

F4: Oh, this is crazy! This was very difficult!

R (*referring to F4*): What are you thinking when you go up the hill?

F4: I think; why does this seat have to be so uncomfortable? What did I do so wrong in my life to suffer this (*laughing*). I have this pain on my behind because of the pressure to my bone.

F5 and F1: We have walked a part of the way.

F1: I am very angry with the person who proposed the cycling. I haven't cycle for 10 years!

M1: I was angry with myself, because it is my fault; I have decided to go up the hill. But it feels good to do something good for your body.

F4 (*holding the camera*): Mišela, please take the camera. I feel dizzy.

F1: I was also feeling dizzy before, when I got off the bike.

F5: I feel dizzy too.

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[2] Hometown of participants.

Even though most of them are smokers or occasional smokers, smoking was considered as inappropriate after cycling. Two participants who lit up a cigarette after reaching the top of the hill were criticised by other members of the group. As some of the girls were making fun of a male participant because they were able to overtake him whilst cycling, he was trying to find excuses for his lack of stamina. One girl's comment to his excuses was, 'If you didn't smoke a pack of cigarettes…'. Furthermore, he received some sarcastic comments about his lack of stamina. The fact that, as a man, he had to step down from the bicycle and walk up the hill seemed a weakness.

As mentioned above, most participants started to work in various companies or governmental institutions, thus their lifestyle has significantly changed in the past year or so from a 'student' to a 'young professional' lifestyle. Their jobs are relatively stressful and during the week, they can hardly find time or energy to exercise. However, they are aware of the significance of relaxation and exercise as a counterpoise to the stress in their everyday lives. The following quotations correspond to Macnaghten and Urry's (2001) research on the perception of woods and nature. The countryside represents a place where people can re-enforce their intimate relationships, as mentioned in the previous section. It is also perceived as a means to escape from work or study, and enables people to relax and refresh. However, countryside in this research is not merely a quiet place for relaxation but also a place for rejuvenating the body by engaging in sport activities, possible only in nature.

F3: … It is a nice relaxation after a week of hard work.

F3: At least we did some exercise in the *fresh air* because most of us work all week in some offices, we sit in front of the computer and we get very inflexible, and our buts are getting bigger.
M3: Yes, I agree, that was good. We needed some change and exercise.

In rejuvenation of the body, *fresh air* was one of the highly valued elements. Similarly as the smoking after exercising, the emissions of the cars passing by whilst cycling was considered as inappropriate, disturbing, nuisance.

F2: It was great that we rented bicycles and that we breath some *fresh air*.

F2: The cars passing by were horrible. They took away all the oxygen.

M2: Yes, I agree. They were bothering me a lot! It's a shame. Too many cars!

F1: They should have a separate cycling path.

In the theoretical approaches, I have discussed the taste as one of the sensory abilities of the body. Food represented one of the desirable experiences within this trip. Dishes offered by rare restaurants and farms in that area are mostly forgotten in everyday urban lives of Slovene people either because of the lack of time for preparation, forgotten notion of recipes or skills, or because of the lack of quality ingredients for preparation. The first response in focus group discussion to the question about their general impressions of the experience was 'The sour milk yesterday was great!' When planning their afternoon activities and discussing which cycling path would be most appropriate, the plans were also intertwined with the wish to reach as many farms as possible to try all the culinary specialities. As one of the participants in a focus group discussion put it, 'We were looking for places to eat all the time.' During the supper at a local restaurant, one could hear their voices of immense pleasure and comments such as:

There is nothing more to life than this!

The food is amazing!

There cannot be anything better than this! Mmmmm!

This is the best part of our trip!

These štruklji[3] are simply amazing!

There is no word for this in Slovene language!

Surprisingly the gaze or the nice views of mountains or lake did not seem very significant, or at least participants did not express it directly. They were not prepared to pay certain amount of money to see a waterfall or the view from the castle. One of the factors for lesser interest in the gazing may be that all participants knew the area, thus it was not the first time they encountered extraordinary views. No one brought a camera, to document the sights. Additionally, they knew that the researcher is going to document most of the social activities so, as one participant stated, 'there was no need to bother bringing a big camera'. However, their attitude toward nature seemed to be 'taking nature for granted'. I shall discuss this issue in the later section.

3.3.4 Performances and constraints

It has been said that performances occur as a consequence of people's perception of place so they are displays of tourists' notion of place. Thus, the meaning of place can be explored by looking closer at performances. However, similarly as it has been said for photographing performance, that it includes as much as excludes, also in general tourists include or exclude certain performances. I have presented Edensor's (1998) account on enclavic and heterogeneous space where it becomes obvious that tourists are not completely free in their decisions on how to act. There are numerous constraints that shape, encourage or prohibit tourist performances.

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[3] Traditional Slovene pastry with cottage cheese

Within performances of particular group researched, I have already discussed sociality and embodiment or bodily feelings. In this section, I wish to focus more on the perception of nature and place since both categories constitute a baseline for performances.

The way we read the nature and consume it derives from our cultural context (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998). Participants have described their perception of nature in Bohinj and their perception of nature in general. What they believe is that encountering the nature 'in every step of the way' you move through Slovenia has a significant influence of their values about nature.

M2: Yes, but we encounter nature almost everywhere in this country.

F1: … It is similar to strolling around Trnovo[4].

F3: I guess Slovenes have different criteria for nature, because we have it everywhere.

F2: I guess we are spoiled because we encounter the nature all the time. If you walk five minutes from the city you are already somewhere in nature.

M2: Yes, we are spoiled but this shouldn't be seen as a problem. What I mean is that if we have preserved and green country this should not be regarded as something bad.

F5: But it is true that we may value the nature less than, for example, people who live in New York and take two hours just to get to the suburb.

M2: Yes, and two hours for them still might not be enough to get to some woods. I think they can't even dream about the greenery we have.

F4: And because of that reason, because we take nature for granted, a person is not prepared to pay maybe 7000 sit (£ 20) to go on hydro-speed. And you think: I can take an old tire and blow it up and do it alone somewhere else.

The last comment clearly represents that their specific attitude toward nature represents a baseline for choosing their activities/performances. I have already mentioned in previous

section that participants were not prepared to pay to see nice views. Even this may be seen as a consequence of their relation to nature. However, this attitude may occur only for certain kind of nature - in familiar environment. They explained that they would be prepared to pay even higher prices for similar activities in 'exotic' environment.

Constraints did not only derive from participants' cultural context or background. Why certain activities did not occur stems from several reasons. Participants emphasised lack of opportunities because of the bad weather, high prices and badly organised tourism in the place. As mentioned before, this destination was chosen because of its popularity and its reputation as being a centre for sport and above all adrenalin experiences. Even though they have listed numerous activities the place offers, they perceived the place as rather 'sleepy'. Whilst walking toward a cycling competition event, one of the participants offered his view of the place:

> M2: In this Bohinj there is nothing going on. The only thing you have is the lake. We have become very demanding, thus many things are needed to provide satisfaction. There should be more things going on here. For example, this cycling competition we are going to now, this is great! There should be a greater variety of events. And people who work in the tourist industry here are not expressing any enthusiasm, any energy. The whole place looks 'sleepy'. Look how stupid it looks (pointing at the lake). There should be a lot of boats and ships. A dancing ship... I like events, I like when many things are going on. If I wanted a rest and solitude, I would go to mountains. However, this place, Bohinj, should be a centre of happening and gathering.

Others also criticised the organisation of tourism in Bohinj. 'You cannot close a rental office on Sunday. It is a tourist season now!' said one participant and 'There should be more things going on here!' said another. Constraints for performances thus derive from internal and external factors or as Edensor put it, performances are regulated by policing methods,

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[4] The green part of Slovenian capital, Ljubljana.

presence of others and reflexive self-awareness (1998). As we see, they can be also hindered by a lack of opportunities or perception of such situation. What I mean by perception of such situation has been neatly expressed by one participant, 'Yes, there are many things you can do here, but because of the prices they are not exploited so you perceive the place as boring, as like nothing is going on.' Whereas lack of opportunities is one of the Bohinj's policing methods, I cannot conclude.

Bohinj can be seen as relatively enclavic space. There are almost no other possibilities beyond performances of gazing, photographing, strolling, paddling, performances that occur in themed environments such as adrenalin park, spa resort, and performances in relation to adrenalin sport (rafting, kayaking, paragliding etc.). Even though the group was self-organising group of friends, they could not fulfil their expectations for sport activities. Thus in enclavic space performances can be shaped by the place itself, as oppose to heterogeneous space, where performances are often shaped by various authorities (see the case study of Belgrade).

3.3.5 Identity

In this section, I wish to discuss two possible performances of identity that occurred in this research. Both resemble Wang's authenticity of Being. First category of identity formed through self-making derives from discussion and narratives of potential, imaginative experiences of participants. It would be only possible to conclude some creation or development of identity if participants really experienced what they imagined. However, their narratives point toward 'authenticity of Being' or imply that such authenticity may be possible through self-making in natural environment. Second category represents a regression process into childhood. Edensor (2001b) discussed this 'child within' in performances of

walking, what I represent are tactile performances and performances of skills (games) learned in childhood. However, discussion on identity is more suggestive than factual.

I have already mentioned competition that can be seen as self-making component of identity in the section on Sociality. The development of identity in a self-reflexive process is also intertwined with health and performative abilities (Giddens, 1991) that has been explored in the section on Body and embodiment. However, performative abilities may have played a more important role in different circumstances; in wild nature or extreme sports.

Participants agreed that their experience was somewhat half-way between encountering the nature and staying within a 'tourist bubble'. They spoke about what they believed true encounter of nature should look like and what consequences such encounter might have. Logically, when nature is perceived as omnipresent, the image of 'true nature' has to supersede the everyday and mundane nature. What participants named 'a pristine encounter of nature' was a very rigorous image of asceticism and survival in woods. One of the participants offered his view of environment whilst strolling toward the house:

> M1: [There should not be] anything, not even houses. People should be allowed to enter this kind of environment only completely pure – naked, hunting their food. That would be pristine. I would love to experience that. It is the most pristine - the survival. To see if you are capable to survive on your own in the wilderness. Yes it is also self-evaluation, self-exploration. I would go somewhere for two weeks without anything and try to survive. To see if I am capable of surviving, if I am worth living!

The survival, self-evaluation and self-exploration in his narrative suggest the search for identity that can be possible only through extreme experience and pristine environment. However, even less rigorous experience in following discussion expresses some change in peoples' identities or at least in their perceptions. For others, pristine nature could enable them to appreciate commodities of everyday life more, since the modern self tends to take

objects for granted. It would also create a memorable experience that can enable future self-evaluation and reflexive thought that further enables the creation of self.

F5: Yes, but you appreciate your bed so much more coming home after a week of sleeping on the floor.

M2: Yes, that is the purpose of a trip. To come home and appreciate the things you take for granted otherwise.

M1: The change is good.

M2: We should have stayed in tents.

F2: So that mosquitoes could suck our blood all night (*laughing*).

F4: And then it is raining in the morning and you can't go to the toilet.

F3: Yes, but the experience is more pristine, the memories of such holidays remain vivid.

M2: We were washing ourselves in a stream last year.

F3: These kinds of memories stay with you forever. On the other hand, you will probably forget how a hotel room looked like.

What has been argued by Edensor (2001b) and Wang (1999), the body represents an essential tool and nature the most appropriate environment for 'a restoration of 'authentic' being' (Edensor, 2001b:88). To indicate how certain performances can retreat the present identity toward more ''primitive', more 'natural' childish sensibilities buried under the over-socialised urban individual' (Edensor 2001b: 87), I have chosen the following two observations:

F3 was picking the flowers at the side of the road. She was trying to show us (only M1 and I were present) how to make a cracking sound, a small explosion by hitting with the bloom on the back of her hand. After some tries, she finally managed to get the sound. We cheered like small children so she became even more enthusiastic about her little 'game'. She started to look for the right flowers; they had to be mature enough to make the sound. After some time, she got bored and we continued walking.

Just before we reached our house, she spotted those same flowers. She ran to the meadow and started to crack the flowers again. Realising that we were watching her, she offered this explanation, 'This is my weakness from the childhood'.

After seeing the cycling competition, F4 and F2 crossed the street to see some bikers washing their bikes in the lake. Then, they have seen a statue of a mountain goat standing on a big rock in front of them. They slowly drifted toward it and tried to climb on it. F2 managed to put both of her feet on the rock, F4 managed only one and then she slipped. F2 jumped of the stone too. The stone was too wet. Standing on the shore of the lake, F2 started bending down and turning around the stones, as if she has lost something. She kneeled down and threw a stone into water. The stone bounced of the surface once, twice, three times. With a sweet voice of a small girl, she said, 'I am throwing ducks and drakes'. Later she explained that she was taught this skill by her father. When she was younger, her father would send her to find the right stones and then she watched this unexplainable phenomenon of her father throwing stones that do not sink.

Both cases indicate body as a tool and nature as a mediator for evoking memories of childhood. Constraints such as norms and rules in an urban environment are much heavier than those that appear in nature. Nature may allow a person to be him/herself. However, the research material gathered is not satisfactory to conclude whether such performances represent a search for the 'authentic' self.

3.4.6 Conclusion

In this case study, participants perceived their vacation mainly as an opportunity to 'get together' and spend quality time with their friends. The presence of others was desirable and at some points also constraining. Participants have shown a great concern about their health and body. Body served as a display of stamina and as a sensuous tool especially in tasting the food. Their performances did not evolve much gazing since participants already knew the

area and additionally, they are used to encountering nature everywhere. The greatest constraints in their performances represented the bad weather, high prices and lack of opportunities. They also elucidated some identity issues that nature may initiate, such as survival in nature that might result in higher self-value or enduring memories. However, some their performances pointed toward the search for the childhood or innocent identity.

3.4 Case study Belgrade

3.4.1 Participants and the setting

The second research was carried out the last weekend of June in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia and Montenegro that used to be also the capital of former Yugoslavia. In recent years, Belgrade has become one of the most popular New Year's destinations for young Slovenes since it has a reputation of fun, cheap and exciting destination for 'authentically good time'. The three-day trip was organised by a travel agency, and it was mainly guided. The trip is generally the annual trip for the employees of the school to provide them with some relaxation after a year work in school and to tighten the friendship bonds before the two-month period of vacations.

Participants started their trip at 4 am from Celje. On the way to Belgrade, they stopped near Novi Sad at the Petrovaradin fortress where they had lunch and saw some coincidental dancing and singing performances of indigenous people. After lunch, they stopped in Sremski Karlovci for wine tasting and, again, coincidentally witnessed a traditional wedding of a famous football player. They arrived to Belgrade in the late afternoon and after they have freshened up in the hotel they walked through the city toward Skadarlija (old centre), where they ate, drank, enjoyed a singing and dancing performance of an actress, and listen to

'typical' Serbian music performed by svirači (four or five musicians playing tamburitsa, double bass, violin, guitar, and accordion). The second day, they had a guided tour of Tito's former residence and the museum '25. maja', Belgrade's Royal and White Palace, Sv. Save cathedral and Kalamegdan (fortress and a park). The afternoon was optional, some participants went on Avala (a hill), however, most of them visited Ada Ciganija (watering place by the Danube River). They dined in Teatroteka, a popular restaurant of artists. The third day was free for shopping or other individual activities. They left Belgrade in the afternoon and arrived home late evening the same day.

The group consisted of approximately 30 high school teachers form different areas and their friends or partners. For the purpose of research, a focus group discussion was carried out with nine (the tenth joined at the end of discussion and offered some of her views) participants one day after returning to Slovenia. All participants were Slovenes, three male (M4 to M6), seven female (F6 to F12), ages 25 to 33. Two male participants in the focus group discussion have already been to Belgrade, for seven it was the first time. Seven of them were teachers from the area of music, art, pedagogic, sociology, linguistics, one was a young professional from the field of economy, and one was a secretary in the high school.

The research in Belgrade consists of the video material recorded by the researcher (all 33 people), one focus group discussion, researcher's field notes and about 1000 participants' photographs.

3.4.2 Sociality

The trip to Belgrade was organised by a travel agency for a group of teachers and stuff of a high school. The participation was not obligatory, ████████████████████████████

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Sociality and presence of other people played a significant role on five levels. First, it appeared as a reason to go on such trip. The importance of sociality was, in words of participants, a primary goal of such trip. As one participant said, 'a trade union[5] trip's main objective is socialising among co-workers'. Other participants mentioned exploring the city and seeing as much as they can was certainly not their primary intention. Spending time with co-workers and friends in a different and more relaxed environment was more important than the destination itself. Moreover, as they explained, 'it could be even any other destination, not necessarily Belgrade'. The following quotation depicts the importance of socialising, which even overshadowed individual initiatives or wishes and most participants agreed to this statement (see Figure 1 to 4).

> F6: We did not observe the environment and surrounding whilst driving on the bus. We were speaking to each other, there, we were spending most of the time with our friends and co-workers, and we were speaking about our personal problems. Our primary objective was to relax after a year of hard work in the school. I was not thinking about what to photograph, or what to buy… If our primary goal was to see things, we would have gathered relevant information before departure… Look, even though I am an art teacher, I did not go to see any galleries or exhibitions.

Participants stayed in the 'social bubble'. They did not feel the need to encounter indigenous people, neither did they have many opportunities. However, one of such encounters did occur and was perceived extremely positive. Whilst strolling around the city centre, a stranger invited a small group of girls for a coup of coffee. However, this encounter did not, as

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[5] 'Sindikalni izlet' is a word used in Slovenian language for an institutionally organized trip of co-workers. Sindikat means a trade union.

claimed by Edensor, 'unmask the ideologies which constrain' (1998: 53). It reinforced the cliché image of Serbian openness and friendliness.

F7: I believe that the sense of metropolis derives from indigenous people. They, their kindness, and openness make the city spectacular.

F9: That is right! We have experienced that yesterday, when we were strolling around the centre and one guy stopped us and invited us for a coffee, we spoke and he wanted our telephone numbers. Really, you would not experience this here [in Slovenia].

Figure 1. Returning from the optional afternoon at Ada Ciganija watering place. Photo by a participant.

Figure 2: First evening on our way to dine at Skadarlija. Photo by a participant.

Figure 3. Sociality and atmosphere on the bus. Photo by a participant.

Figure 4. Lunching at Petrovaradin fortress. Photo by a participant.

Secondly, the presence of other people provided some participants with security. Despite numerous buildings that reminded of the 1999 bomb attacks, and the Serbia's fame of being corrupted, violent and full of petty criminals and skilful cheaters, participants said they felt mostly safe. The feeling of safety may have depended on the presence of other familiar faces and the fact the trip was organised. Especially younger female participants 'admitted' they would never go there alone. Their feeling of safety depended on the group, on the people they knew.

F8: For example, I would never go down there [to Belgrade] alone. It has still that eerie feeling. With a group, I would certainly go, but not alone!

F6: Yes, I agree, I would not go there alone. There is still some fear present.

F8: Yes, the fear is present, but if you are with a group, it is completely different, you feel safe.

Thirdly, sociality did not begin, neither end with this trip. Within a group, smaller groups of people that tended to socialise more, formulated, for instance, a group of younger teachers, a group of math teachers, a group of men, and similar. However, it seemed that certain ties within such group existed even before the trip. For a group of younger teachers and friends this trip became a starting point of new practices and ties. For most, it was their first travelling experience together and after this trip, they went on another trip to Sarajevo, where some closer intimate connections developed. Even I, as a researcher that knew only the person who organised this trip, became a 'member of a group' that invited me to participate in some other events after returning home (such as garden pancake party at one participant's home). As one participant put it just before I returned to Britain, 'now you are ours'.

Fourthly, a presence of other people can often control, shape or disable individual in certain performances. Certain constellations, especially hierarchical, within a group can even create pressure. The presence of superiors or co-workers from a stiff, professional environment such

as high school does not allow certain behaviour even on vacation. Some participants avoided to smoke in front of superiors. There may be also other pressures, such as, not saying certain things in front of certain people or not drinking, since you meet and work daily with these people and you wish to present a consistent role, image. If other behaviour appeared or was suppressed, I was not able to observe, since I became to know participants in a specific social context.

Lastly, the presence of people, external to the group, indigenous people living their lives in such heterogeneous space significantly influenced the way participants perceived Belgrade. As discussed also in the next section, participants sensed Belgrade as metropolis. However, this feeling did not derive only from the gaze of big buildings. Sense of metropolis was intertwined with the mass of people moving around (see Figure 5 and 6).

> F7: I was really surprised by the amount o people you can see outside on a Sunday evening at 11 pm. It was like coming from a greatest and biggest party in Slovenia!
>
> M4: Yes, this is the rhythm of life in a big city, in metropolis.

Figure 5. Sunday in the centre of Belgrade: mass of people moving around. Photo by a participant.

Figure 6. Mass of people at Ada Ciganija. Photo by a participant.

3.4.3 The body and embodiment

When visiting and exploring the city, the most common performance is sightseeing. Even though sightseeing employs the whole body (especially when walking), the objective of such performances seems to be mostly seeing, photographing and observing with our eyes. However, it is often intertwined with smell, sound and other stimulus. Sound, in particular Serbian music, seemed to be present on many occasions mainly to create or manifest the image of 'Serbianess' (the wedding, the performance of actress and musicians in Skadarlija and on the bus). I shall partially discuss music as means to construct Serbian image by tour organisers in the next section on performances and constraints. However, in his section I wish to discuss the gaze, intertwined with other senses and taste (of food) as most obvious senses when negotiating a meaning of Belgrade. Sensed through the body and negotiated in the process of aesthetic reflexivity, the meaning of place was constructed.

Participants in my research mostly took notice of buildings and greenery. They spoke about their surprise when seeing great, high, big buildings with beautiful facades (see Figure 7 and 8), and a surprising amount of greenery in the centre of the city. Since all participants come for a smaller city (town) in Slovenia, they perceived Belgrade as a real metropolis that filled them with amazement.

> F8: It is a beautiful city. I was not expecting such great buildings.
>
> F6: Yes, the houses are huge. If you go to Ljubljana, you don't see such big buildings.
>
> F9: And such amount of green area, parks.
>
> F6: You can really see that it was once a metropolis of Yugoslavia.
>
> M5: It was a pearl of the Balkan.
>
> M4: Yes, the old metropolis!

Figure 7. Renovated library that amazed
participants. Photo by a participant.

Figure 8. A 'perfect' building standing
opposite to a torn down TV building
(Figure 9). Photo by a participant.

One participant explained how her fascination with buildings and the visual impression of the city lured her to an unusual performance:

> F7: Everything was fascinating, not only the centre. This is why I decided to walk from the restaurant to the hotel late at night. The houses were just amazing. I do not know if someone walked in the area where I got lost, anyway, I got lost and I ended up in a small alley with huge buildings. And then, there was a small wooden cottage, small wooden house lined up with other great buildings. I stopped and I thought, wait a minute, where am I, a wooden house in the centre of Belgrade?

What this participant expresses is the contrast she perceived between big buildings and small wooden house. Contrasting were also shiny houses and the buildings that remained of the bomb attack in 1999 (see Figure 9), neatly cut parks and neglected buildings next to them or even the contradiction of window-shops. On the one hand, the city presents the (fading) fame and bliss of Serbian greatness (especially from the era of SHS kingdom) through pompous houses and on the other hand, one could perceive the misery of socialism, recent war, poverty of Balkan region and dirt (see Figure 11).

F7: There is though one interesting thing. You have these green areas in the centre and they are neatly cut and organized. But next to this lovely park, you have a half torn down building, beautiful building, but neglected. But the park is so orderly taken care of!

F10: One could perceive a great contradiction in window-shops. There were those with a sense of the Western world, the ones you could find anywhere in the Europe. Next to such windows, one could see the old socialist style window-shops with numerous objects just thrown in without any concept.

In the above quotes and the following one, it is apparent that participants negotiated the meaning of place through reflexive process. The aesthetic judgement often derived from comparison to participants' own culture. A participant who stated, 'The houses are great. If they only repaired the facades, it would have been simply amazing!', offered an extensive explanation: she believed this wish for orderly and pleasant external appearance of houses derives from our (Slovenian) cultural and environmental context. Slovenia is mostly, at least visually, tidy and neat. We seem not only to be used to such gaze, but also we believe such appearance is appropriate. Therefore, we would like see it in other cultures.

Figure 9. TV building bombed in 1999 attacks. Photo by a participant.

Figure 10. Dirt and poverty. Photo by a participant.

However, Belgrade and its dirt in particular, was often compared also to Athens. Dirt was mainly perceived at restaurants and toilets. One of the focus group discussion participants kindly responded to my email after the discussion and tried to explain how she perceived the dirt. She revealed that dirt was also regarded as smell, neglected and forgotten buildings, trash, and litter in small alleys. She wrote:

It is very difficult to describe what dirt means, French would say 'je ne se qua', it is more a feeling, like a feeling that it is going to be a horrible day when you wake up in the morning… It seems like people in Belgrade don't care about the small things, which can make a big difference. We have seen so many good looking and well-dressed girls there. Imagine them wearing some scrappy, dirty and falling-apart shoes. This is how I see their neglecting of houses and greenery. Moreover, that afternoon when we were at the Kalamegdan, we became very hungry. There stood a woman selling ice cream. We went there and whilst waiting in the cue I sensed a horrible smell of human waste. As it is the human nature to search for the reason, I looked around to see where the smell is coming from. Not even two meters away from the woman, selling ice cream there was a horrible sight of a stuffed sewage…'

Thus, the perception of dirt as a part of the perception of place is explained as a feeling rather than the mere gaze. She was able to point out just some occasions that could describe her perception of dirt. As she explains the horrible smell, she sensed next to the ice cream shop, the smell becomes intertwined with the gaze, the sight of human waste, and consequently the taste, the wish to eat that ice cream disappears.

The taste and the Serbian food represented also a great desire in this trip. Belgrade and Serbia in general is associated with good food, mainly greasy barbecued meat (pleskavica, čevapćići, voz), special salads such as roasted peppers, ajvar (minced and preserved roasted peppers), srpska salata (vegetable preserved in vinegar), bread lepinja (flat round roll or loaf fried in fat), kajmak (special kind of cheese or rather heavy cream) etc. Participants'

expectations were high but, especially in the case of vegetarians, often not met. A vegetarian participants said, 'Mushrooms, mushrooms. All they gave me was champignons and rice! I wanted some nice salads. Roasted peppers for example.' As one traveller wrote on his web page, 'Vegetarians face a major diet in Serbia. "Ah, vegetarians!", some cooks say, "no problem, we offer chicken."' (http://sodazitron.blogger.de/stories/170439/).

Another participant said, 'I thought, oh I am going to eat myself fill. But then, all kajmak tasted a bit sour. I had better Serbian food in the Serbian restaurant in Slovenia than there.' This phenomenon may have derived from two different rationales. The first, I have already mentioned in the theoretical section on body and embodiment. What happens is that restaurants offering indigenous food of some other culture may mould the proper taste to achieve a greater satisfaction of their guests. However, the process can be also the opposite; the restaurant that caters tourists may feel less need to prepare 'proper' food since 'tourists do not know the difference anyway!' Since we were visiting all restaurants as a group of tourists, the latter explanation is more likely. Furthermore, as a group we often got the same food, where an individual could not really choose according to his/her own wishes. This can be seen as a part of constraints created by travel agencies and package tours discussed in the next section.

3.4.4 Performances and constraints

In sections on sociality and embodiment, some performances were already discussed. Most performances revealed the perception of foreign culture and nation that was constantly compared and mimicked, thus, the performances appeared as a display of individual, cultural or national identity, discussed in the next section. In this section, I wish to examine the construction of performances influenced by tour guides, travel agencies and the place itself. I

shall present performances of others and restrictions of enclavic and heterogeneous space in this travel.

The preparation to dive into the rhythm of Serbian life started already before entering the bus at 4 am in Slovenia. The guide was walking around with slivovitz, pouring it in small plastic glasses and after crossing the Croatian-Serbian border, the sound of Gipsy song Ederlezi filled the bus and tried to create an atmosphere. That particular song was also remade by a group called Bijelo Dugme and was very popular in all Yugoslavia in the late 1980s and 1990s. For many participants the song created a nostalgic trip to the past, to their youth to the history of Socialism. Two participants and guides at the same time launched 'Radio Balkan'. One of them spoke in Serbian language, giving us advice on the language, behaviour, outfit; as we were supposed to transform ourselves into proper Serbians. After another round of slivovitz for the whole bus, we were entertained with a 'typical' Serbian comedy showing the rural areas of Serbia just before the Second World War with filled with Serbian sarcasm and cynic humour.

The introduction to the Belgrade experience with an objective to create a cheerful atmosphere was founded on images Slovenes generally perceive as typical Serbian. Means to construct the image or re-establish the 'notion' of Serbia were aiming to engulf the whole body; slivovitz and bread with salt to arouse the taste and smell, music, not only to create images but also recall the memories, films to see the 'typical' and all the guidelines to imagine oneself there, fitting in.

This is one way to prepare tourists for certain behaviour and experience they are suppose to undergo in the heterogeneous space where presentation or reality can also differ from the 'typical' that tourists know. Filling the itinerary with other 'typical' performances such as typical Serbian men (two local guides), music and sites visited can be seen as a soft

constraint, since the notion of the 'typical' already exists in tourists' minds. For instance, the two local guides were described after the trip as genuine, true Serbians:

M4: It was very interesting to listen and watch both of them. They both represented a typical Serbian character that I know. The first Branko was full of 'protocol'; his speech was slow and gesticulated. My cousin's husband was same; a 'director' type of a man, speaking very poetically, his tone of voice went up and down. The other Branko was joking all the time. Serbians know how to joke, especially about themselves. They do not have a problem in admitting that they have done things wrong, they take the piss out of themselves, their own mistakes. I believe that both guides depicted a Serbian character in a very good way.

Participants did not perceive the staged 'authentic' presentations and performances shaped for them as a problem. One of such cases was performance of a singer and actress and the 'svirači' (musicians) accompanying her singing at a restaurant in Skadarlija (see Figure 11 and 12). Even though the performance was ordered and shaped for us, it was considered authentic. Again, the singer was perceived as a typical representative of Serbian women, full of pride and beauty. She was described as a woman that knows how to behave and does it with elegance, style, charm, and grace.

Edensor (1998) noted that tour guides and tourists themselves constantly speak in clichés and about the ways place should be looked. In package tours, most of performances are prescribed and such constraints may provoke frustrations among tourists. As mentioned in the introduction to this case study, participants for this tour were unofficially chosen exactly to avoid frustrations of individuals or even the whole group.

Figure 11. Actress at Skadarlija.   Figure 12. Svirači at Skadarlija. Photo by a participant.

Photo by a participant.

The above presented clichés are a way to guide tourists through heterogeneous space. There are, however, other ways especially in a package tour. A package tour itinerary itself is a constraint that tourists agree to when they decide to go on a tour. In such heterogeneous space, there are also more hermetic sites, especially sites of great cultural or religious importance, where practices and performances are constrained in more rigid and apparent way. Bodies are directed and disciplined regarding to what is seen as appropriate behaviour at a certain site (Edensor, 1998). They are organised by norms or even by orders and rules of the guide. Some sites require stiff regulations and rigorous means to obtain the safety of tourists or objects of the gaze.

The experience in Belgrade's Royal and White Palace was regulated by the dress code and by the advice on behaviour, days before we actually entered the site. We arrived at the exact time and they let us in at the exact hour of our appointed visit. Once in the Palace, the guide who was also the guardian of the Palaces explained the rules of behaviour: not to touch anything, not to stand behind his back, not to take pictures if he does not allow it. The restrictions were not only moral or social norms, we could constantly feel the supervision of

four bodyguards surrounding the rooms and guarding all entrances (see Figure 13). At one point, someone stepped too close to the table and he was kindly reminded to step back. The guide was not only leading the way but he also performed for us. He had chosen one of the participants to help him in his performance. They were then acting different characters and showing the proper or improper behaviour of politicians that once visited the palace (see Figure 14). How to shake hands, how to stand when you are being photographed, how to sit in a presence of important people, all these performances came to life by him giving us names of famous people and intertwining the performance with stories from the royal and political life. In various rooms, he allowed us to sit down and intrigued us with facts about who sat there before us. His stories of secret passages, walls that have ears, and Milošević wife's incomprehensible treatments and 'repairs' of the priceless furniture were full of protocol, greatness, importance, sarcasm and wit. Even he was a part of the great history and the royal life.

Figure 13. Surveillance of the bodyguard

in the back. Photo by a participant.

Figure 14. The protocol of shaking hands.

Photo by a participant

Tour guides, travel agencies and those who work for the travel industry at the site produce images. These represented images are based in 'typical', 'authentic' stories aim to evoke imagination and produce 'commodified memories' (Edensor 1998: 141). Tourists do not seem to perceive such doing as negative since they expect to be entertained, and they often have their own similar clichés about cultures they visit. Nevertheless, in this, the tourism is not stimulating intercultural tolerance and education but rather reproducing stereotypes.

3.4.5 Identity

Even though for Slovenes, Serbian culture is distant, not only in terms of space but also in terms of values and customs, Slovenes may still be able to 'read' it and perform it 'better' than other 'proper tourists' might, because of the common history and understanding of their language.

> M6: If a we go to other places we are much more 'Slovenes'.
> M4: I believe we are craving for their way of living subconsciously.
> F11: Yes their way of living, their pace of life, the pristine!

The above statements reveal the search for a different life-style and consequently a transformation, a different mind-set and a way of behaving when entering the Balkan region. Furthermore, statements reveal also a temporal transformation or modification of identity. The knowledge about the culture of Other enables a tourist to perform it and consequently to identify him/herself with, or become similar to the Other. Even though this knowledge can be grounded on clichés and typical representations, tourists may not be aware or see this as a problem.

The drinking, singing and 'letting yourself go' on the bus were preparations for the three-day easy living in Belgrade. As one of the guides, Branko neatly put it, 'You, Slovenes come to Belgrade to let yourself go because you work all the time and everything in your country is orderly and set. You come here to let yourselves go and to taste the Balkan for three days and then you go back to your orderly Switzerland.'

With the help of tour guides, the trip was perceived and performed as if the participants almost belonged to that environment. They were eating, drinking, and having fun, relaxing and enjoying the atmosphere as it was their image of what Serbians do. 'You just sit in a café, you relax, and you watch people passing by, like Serbians would do it', said one girl.

Participants did not only behave as Serbians were supposed to, but also accepted what would be unacceptable in other environments. One participant explained the perception of self and her behaviour:

> F12: I perceived a big difference in my behaviour there. For example, when we entered the taxi, there was dirt and cobweb everywhere. I would have never sit in a taxi like this back here. No way! But there, I just didn't mind, I was relaxed, and his way of driving was tossing me from one side of the car to the other. I felt great!

Even though participants tried to become more similar to Serbians whilst there, they also took pride in their own nationality. In general, Slovenes in Serbia are not mere tourists. Moreover, because most of Slovenes can speak Serbian language they are perceived as either neighbours or even 'brothers'. Slovenes believe that there is a special friendship bond between these two nations. Therefore, they could feel comfortable and accepted for being different and, at the same time, for being the same.

R: Did you feel comfortable in Belgrade?

M6: More than anywhere before… They respect us, Slovenes… And the amazing thing is that a country, which is capable of such extreme nationalism can be also so welcoming and relaxed.

F6: Milan[6] was really proud that he had a chance to go for a coffee with Slovenes.

F8: Yes, and when we were at The House of Flowers[7], the women passing us were saying, 'Slovenes, Slovenes?'. And when we went to buy ice cream, again. I had a feeling that they…

F6: They respect us.

F8: Yes, respect us and love us.

This shows that encountering the culture of Other can reinforce the pride one takes in one's own culture. Especially noticing and identifying advertisements of Slovene companies that are entering the Serbian market was always pointed out with great pride, or even photographed.

The performance and temporal transformation of identity seemed to serve for relaxation and 'letting yourself go' since it is appropriate for Serbians to do it, but may not be a very desirable performance in Slovenian 'conservative' culture. However, taking pride in Slovene nationality, which is a quite rare behaviour for Slovenes, may have other reasons. First, if Slovenes felt accepted for who they are they could take pride in that. And secondly, exactly because the signs that spoke about Slovenia's economical success in the Balkan region, they could feel that Slovenia is 'a step further' in its development.

The third identity in a way combines both previous; Slovene and Serbian, however it is only a memory of identity that existed in the past and can be awoken for some moments when encountering the heritage sites; the Yugoslavian identity. Many Slovenes have a romanticised nostalgic attitude toward Balkan, Serbia and Belgrade. Those who are old enough to

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[6] Milan was a stranger and indigenous person that invited a group of girls for a cup of coffee.
[7] Tito's former residence and today's tomb.

remember the life in Socialism and Yugoslavia mostly look back on that period in a positive manner. However, those who participated in the focus group discussion were mainly young adults with less memory of the socialist period or a childhood memory of it. Therefore, the expression of nostalgia was not connected to a deeper experience. Moreover, they wanted to see their past as their roots, but they still felt respect to what the objects represented. Two participants that knew the area from previous experiences were truly surprised by the changes they could perceive in Belgrade's heritage sites (see Figure 15 and 16):

> M4: I was shocked by the way The House of Flowers looks today. It used to be so orderly, people were walking in complete silence…
>
> M5: Yes, and there were long cues of people waiting to see Tito's gave.
>
> M4: It was really a house of flowers.
>
> M5: I never thought one would be able to sit on Tito's grave.
>
> M6: People used to go there to show respect, today they go there to see what the fuss was about.

There was a presence of remorse in their words, even disappointment. Another participants said, 'When the group realised we were going to The House of Flowers, everyone was expecting something wow!'

In one late night discussion, two participants spoke for hours about their memories of the Socialist era. They were describing the way of life, the way school was organised and, above all, the feeling of belonging Socialism and Communism initiated and the betray the felt when the system collapsed. In their narrative, one could feel the nostalgia for belonging, nostalgia for identity that existed in the past.

Figure 15. Leaning on Tito's grave.

Photo by a participant.

Figure 16. Today's representation of Tito's

tomb, which used to be surrounded with

flowers. Photo by a participant.

3.4.6 Conclusion

Participants perceived their vacation mainly as an opportunity for fun and relaxation in a different environment with their co-workers. The presence of others was desirable and in some cases even necessary since it provided participants with a sense of security. The senses that appeared vital in consuming the was mostly the gaze and taste. They did not perceive constraints in their performances even in enclavic space, however, the cliché images that already existed in their minds were reinforced partially by tour guides. Encountering a different culture renegotiated their cultural or national identity and the identity of Other was performed to enable relaxation and fun.

4. Conclusion

Seeing tourism as a process and tourists as those who perform it and give meaning to it is a useful approach to understand not only tourists but also the places they visit. In this research, I presented three key issues (the body, sociality and identity) and constraints of performances that emerged from the data of two focus groups collected in summer 2005.

Clearly, the approach presented in this study is not only a theoretical debate on performances and meanings of tourist places but can generate valuable knowledge about tourists and places they visit. However, this research did not enable to compare performances of a broader sample of tourists such as approach of Edensor (1998) or Bærenholdt et al. (2004). The presented approach is more similar to theoretical concept put forward by Crouch et al. (2001) and can be equally criticised. Difficulty of such approach is generalisation of data and viability in practice. However, it can be a useful tool for researching either smaller destinations or specific groups of people.

In both cases, enhancing and deepening social relations seemed a paramount objective of the trip. Furthermore, places itself did not play a significant role, since participants in both cases expressed that their experience could happen in almost any other destination. Performances in natural environment indicating social relations spoke mostly of comfort, remembrance and fun that a group of relevant others enabled. When engaging in sport activities such group served also as a reference group to which one can compare him/herself to or with which one can compete. Similarly, participants in urban environment valued the comfort and fun they experienced with their relevant others and the deepening of social relations, that can enable better working conditions in professional sphere. For some participants in Belgrade the group signified a feeling of safety and security. Both case studies indicate a lack of need to meet the Other, indigenous people, which again speaks of fulfilment of the need for social interaction

within a group. The presence of the Other or a crowd in natural environment is not desirable, however, such crowd was necessary in the city to make it spectacular, alive and a proper metropolis.

Observing the attitude toward the body, body as display and body as a tool for sensual experience or pleasure, the distinction between nature and urban environment offers some significant differences. In natural environment, performances indicated the concern for the body, relaxation, and health. In both cases, body represented also a means to experience pleasure, especially pleasure in food, taste. Smell was mentioned in both cases and it was mostly indicating a concern with hygiene. However, this should be explored further to enable a meaningful conclusion. Surprisingly the gaze and environment as a visual stimulus played far more significant role in the urban setting than in natural. This fact derived from specific attitude toward the nature participants have and also form the fact that an already seen and known environment may be less visually stimulating that a new urban environment, quite different to the one participants in Belgrade study come from. Aesthetic judgements of nature and city were mostly a product of comparison to their own cultural environment; they have seen nature as nothing special and the only outstanding experience would be complete wilderness because they encounter it every day; or they wished to see buildings and greenery in the city orderly and neatly cut as it would have been at home.

Natural setting did not reveal many identity issues, however, it seems that nature can provoke childhood memories and 'childish' performances. A display of identity emerged in sport activities and participants believed that a wilder setting could trigger other identities and create unforgettable memories. This coincides with Wang's (1999) idea on authenticity of being where an individual searches for lost worlds of childhood. On the other hand, encountering a different culture generated an interesting duality of identity. Performing the identity of the Other served as relaxation and fun since this was a cliché image of the

performance of the Other. In a reflexive process, participants negotiated their own national or cultural identity, seeing themselves as the Other imagined or labelled them and searching for their own cultural signs in the environment that positioned them in the culture of the Other. Another identity emerging or rather remembered in cultural environment was connected to the common past with the culture encountered. This identity was stimulated through heritage, narratives, and signs in that environment. This shows how place can have different overlapping meanings to an individual (Bærenholdt et al., 2004).

Constraints of performances in both cases stem from various reasons. They can be a consequence of participants themselves, their way of reading the cultural text or their self-reflexive control (Edensor, 1998). However, the reading of cultural text and the preconceived knowledge the might have of other cultures is reaffirmed by other authorities such as travel guides. There are existing constraints over which tourists have little or no influence such as the group, itinerary, the weather, or place itself.

However, these constraints are some issues that planners and travel agencies should take more interest in. In the case of Bohinj both performances and perceived constraints revealed many issues that could or should be considered when planning a destination. For example, they could offer alternative activities in the case of bad weather, they could provide such small place as Bohinj with a cycling path, the development of 'cheese road' could be promoted widely and equipped with relevant information (how difficult is the cycling path, how far is it, what they offer at the farm…). They could even develop their own difficulty scale of a cycling road such as are used for ski slopes. In general, what different companies provide in Bohinj should be connected and integrated. Their supply seems fragmented and vague, and presents a difficult task even for a Slovenian tourist when trying to 'consume' it.

In the case of Belgrade, some findings could be relevant for travel agencies. One of such considerations is the food they offer in a package tour. Food seems significant when

travelling to a place that enjoys a fame of being a gourmand destination. Another question arising in this case is whether tour guides and travel agencies should play a role of education or not. Concluding from results of my study, tourists like to see the typical and cliché presentations of other cultures. However, I cannot say whether the satisfaction would be the same or even higher, if tourists understood that the typical they gaze at is only one part of the big picture. Nevertheless, this trip's objective was to have fun and relax in the company of friends, thus the reality may not be of much interest to anyone. It would be also interesting to see if such institutional vacation is really deepening the relations and creating a friendlier working atmosphere. The last consideration is the preservation of cultural heritage. Hopefully, Belgrade will find a way to preserve and reconstruct these sites that could bring more revenue from also (now) international tourism.

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