

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATIONAL (CREATIVE) TOURISM: THE CASE OF WWII MONUMENTS IN RASINA COUNTY

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Abstract

Limitations of physical movement and interaction, imposed by COVID-19 prevention regulations, strongly altered the perception of leisure activities and commodities, affecting tourism, culture and education sector. The demand of procuring ways for cultural/education institutions to establish a more dynamic approach to their users and consumers has overgrown the development of digital presence and rethinking of the physical encounters occurring in the “new normal” was instigated. The paper addresses a new format in which the educational and cultural sector use tourism tools to enhance their core functions, through a case study of an international summer seminar “Towards a performative turn in heritage studies”, as a local-specific merge of cultural and educational tourism using the infrastructure connected to the WWII monuments in Rasina County; as an example of development potentials based on reusing the often overlooked past and present touristic and cultural assets of this region by including educational and cultural/art programs in defining new heritage tourism routes.

Key Words: *creative tourism, education, WWII monuments, Rasina Country, socialist heritage*

JEL classification: *Z30, I21, P36*

Introduction

The Summer Seminar: Towards a Performative Turn in Heritage Studies: Case of WWII Monuments and Memorials in Western Balkans held during

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September 2021 in Serbia, particularly in Belgrade and in Rasina Region, was organized in cooperation between University of Hildesheim (Germany), UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management, University of Arts in Belgrade (Serbia), Europa Nostra Serbia and SEE Heritage Network (Montenegro) and it was funded by DAAD. The main goal was to bring together MA and PhD students in the field of heritage studies, cultural management and theory of performing arts from Serbia and Germany together with regional professionals working in heritage institutions. Consisting of four-day lecture sessions, two-day preparatory workshops, three-day field-work project and final-deliverable presentations, the Seminar was meant to investigate monuments and memorials dedicated to WWII at several locations in Serbia – Belgrade, Trstenik, Čačak, Kragujevac and Kruševac. The organizers wanted to offer a new theoretical perspective of heritage interpretation and re-actualization, by opening issues of organic fusion of intangible and tangible heritage by positioning heritage as a spatial category, i.e., as a direct product of body(s) in action.

However, this seminar offered a wider perspective than initially planned. It opened questions of possibilities of future tourist expansion of the visited (and similar) sites, as well as of their potentials as spaces for creative industry development. In its duration it became clear that this kind of on-site workshop is potentially a new model for creating special educational tours of local- and region-specific socialist monuments; but that it can, at the same time, serve as potent platform for rethinking these heritage sites – by offering new ideas of their usability and promotion that can bring more diverse visitors, therefore bringing profit and possibility for sustainable development for to the whole region.

Therefore, based on the analyses of the mentioned Seminar results, this paper will provide an analysis of creative tourism's applicability in approaching ambiguous heritage sites, as a niche focused on stimulating visitors to creatively engage with destinations, i.e., as a niche fostering knowledge and skills exchange. In order to do so, in the first segment, the theoretical perspective of the creative and educational tourism in the context of cultural heritage tourism development today will be given. The second part of the paper will however highlight the specificities of Yugoslav WWII monuments as particular tourist destinations. The main contribution of this paper will finally be shown in the last segment where we will offer a new perspective on these monuments' interpretation, use and revitalization through the on-site seminars and special creative tourism methodology development.

Tourism and education in the times of “new normal”

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the rules and perception of mobility endured significant alterations; from imposed lockdowns to the carefully planned and controlled movement of people across and within borders of countries around the world. Necessarily, all sectors of human activity were impacted and a thorough rethinking and restructuring of the daily operations became a demand. Almost all activities except essential work have been transferred to the digital domain, and the IT sector once again took primacy in developing and continually improving tools and spaces for accommodating the “new normal” (Trifunović & Đorđević, 2021). The “new normal” became the word of the moment, demanding attention from many, if not all, segments of our societies. In this regard, the redefinition of what is considered education (it being basic or life-long) is not an exception.

In the beginning stages of dealing with the uncertainties and pressure of what the new, in-pandemic world will be like and of what the final outcome of the occurrences will be, educational institutions developed numerous support systems for their students – from providing information, offering counseling and financial aid, to temporarily adjusting student work-load and demands. Gradually, classrooms were transferred to the online platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom. Educational institutions had to approach the once slow process of adapting to the new online communication and structural knowledge dispersal with swift diligence. Over the course of one full year, the new ways of online teaching have been mastered and many activities have been successfully adapted to the online model of learning that is yet to result in thorough restructuring of the higher education curricula. However, the increased levels of isolation and lack of physical interaction, accompanied by the blurring of the borders between private and professional life, both for the teaching staff and for the students, resulted in the appearance of *Zoom-fatigue* (Ramachandran, 2021).

On the other hand, according to the Viana-Lora (2021) analyzing trends in tourism during the year 2020, the approach to touristic mobility has been deeply altered, as well, and not only due to the imposed lockdowns and cross-border traveling limitations. In their overview they point to diverse aspects of change in the tourism sector, from considering a more eco-sustainable approach to mobility to the impossibility of practicing mass tourism. Limitations of mass cultural tourism even had noticeable benefits

for the safe-keeping cultural and natural heritage sites that are a part of cultural routes and networks, such would be the renewed fauna of Venice BBC (2022) or the noticeable slowing-down of material deterioration of the cultural heritage sites caused by the high numbers of visitors, as in the case of the UNESCO heritage site of Kotor that is in danger of losing its status due to the rapid deterioration of its natural, urban and architectural characteristics brought by the large number of visitors (Čubrović, et al., 2020).

State-imposed limitations of mobility were additionally followed by the reconsideration of the ethics of touristic mobility in terms of virus transmission. The understanding and underlined fear of infection caused a change of the direction of leisure mobility from cross-border to local. The rise of interest in exploring the local cultural and natural heritage sites did have a significant impact on the increase of visitor numbers to sites within the state borders of Serbia. Offer of tourist agencies showed a redirection from traveling abroad to completely new recommendations fostering ecotourism (Božović, et al., 2021), local spa complexes and households on destinations which were never before a subject of tourist offer. Even the audience-researches in bigger Belgrade museums - such as Museum of Yugoslavia - reveal a great turn in visitors' structure. The surveys show that the fore-pandemic number of more than 70% of international visitors (Jokanović, 2018) decreased followed by a significant rise of local visitors impacting new program development now dedicated to local community and neighbors (Jokanović, 2021).

As already mentioned, the pandemic altered the ways in which universities' curricula was structured and some of the changes seem to be taking more permanent roots as efficiency of the online studies are strongly advocated for. Still in 2022, while the most of the offered programs are conducted online, the lack of a more immediate interaction between the students, the teaching staff and actual object of studying is being perceived as a significant downside of the offered curricula, especially in the case of heritage management, museum studies and other disciplines that demand conducting of actual field research. With the COVID-19 restrictions being lifted around the globe, and with the astonishing fact that still many will opt for staying in the comfort and security of their personal space, contemporary curriculum needs to procure new ways for animating its users. It can be argued that one possible solution for disciplines and study programs focused on heritage is to appropriate aspects of cultural and educational tourism into their structure.

Intersecting tourism and university curricula is by no means a new principle, as the two have a long-lasting relationship, with conference tourism (Høyer & Naess, 2010) being only one of many modalities within which the two meet. Even though cultural, educational and even sensorial tourism use the results of research and other activities conducted by institutions of higher education (especially in the heritage-related field), the intentional application of the provided and rounded touristic products in the curricula of humanities has not been a common case. Besides consuming the designed and provided services such as planned routes, accommodation and other touristic infrastructure, use of the historical development of touristic networks in building knowledge and designing of higher education modules is still significantly missing.

When deliberated in the context of heritage and its uses, the term cultural tourism is the most dominant and it seems that it is very loosely defined, commonly according to the needs and intent of the individual interpreting it. According to the definition adopted by the UNWTO General Assembly (2017), cultural tourism is “a type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions” (UNWTO, 2022) Broadly understood cultural tourism fits perfectly to the pre-pandemic higher-education practices, where students are just one more user of defined destinations within their own leisure time and holidays.

In the context of this paper it is more terminologically viable to use the term creative tourism. It refers to the specific tourist trips with activities that are closely related to cultural tourism, but also nature tourism. Tourists are therefore introduced to the specifics of life and skills of the local area, not only as passive observers, but also as active participants who thus express their creativity. Finally, educational tourism is also connected with creative tourism by unbreakable ties. These are activities in which specific topics related to the destination are actively studied, regardless of whether it is about expanding the knowledge acquired in the classroom, practical application of mastered skills, or a regular study trip within basic educational programs or in terms of lifelong learning (Isaković, 2016). In the coming chapters, potentials and possibilities of creative tourism will be

addressed with the WWII Monuments in Rasina region as the main case study.

Yugoslav WWII monuments were (and are) meant to be tourist destinations

Coming subchapter focuses on monuments dedicated to the Peoples' Liberation Struggle during the WWII, which were systematically erected within the territory of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia since 1945 until its dissolution (and as in case of the Memorial park "October of Kragujevac" in Šumarice until 2006). A special focus is placed on monuments situated in Rasina county - Memorial park "Slobodište" in Kruševac, Memorial park "Popina" in Trstenik and Memorial park "Šumarice" in Kragujevac - with a goal of approaching their contemporary relevance through revisiting their role of tourist destination in the past.

The memorial network dedicated to WWII is characterized by a highly abstract formal language, large dimensions and by usage of white concrete blocks and steel as the main building material. In the past decades, these monuments gained a significant amount of academic and tourist attention in Serbia, Western Balkan region and internationally, culminating in a large exhibition *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948–1980* in MoMA (New York) in 2018 (MoMA, 2021). Numerous academic volumes have analyzed their form and meaning and have addressed the ambivalent stand contemporary successor states have towards them - from complete devastation and neglect to keeping them as heritage sites and even as still vital points in the life of communities surrounding them (Kirn & Burghardt, 2011; Musabegović, 2012; Lajbenšperger, 2013; Horvatinčić, 2016; Denegri, 2017; Putnik-Prica, 2017). They have been a subject of numerous artistic projects, they are used as visually interesting stages for other types of creative and cultural production. Furthermore, they are a subject of interest for professional hobists documenting them such as the online platform Spomenik Database made by Donald Neibyl, resulting in a book in 2018 and a highly-demanded Atlas Obscura tour "Past Future Monuments of The Balkans" (Atlas Obscura, 2022) offered since 2019.

However, often a key piece of their creation puzzle is provided only as a brief sketch and their nature of a tourist destination is wrongly understood as of secondary relevance. In time, the process of interpretation of these memorials as heritage sites decided to eliminate the principle of leisure they tended to merge with remembrance (Đorđević, 2021). Nevertheless, they

can and should be understood from the position of a tourist destination defined as “(..) as unique entities (..) exhibit several core provisions (Kruczek, 2013). These provisions are accessibility, attractions, package activities, and auxiliary services. According to WTO, a destination is a unique place where a visitor spends at least one night and exhibits tourism products such as attractions, support services, and tourism resources complete with defined management, physical and administrative boundaries, and a well-known image” (Mutuku, 2013, p.3).

The three selected memorial parks that are the focus of this paper were planned and built with large numbers of people visiting outside of the official dates of commemoration in mind, as it was the case with many other monuments from the same period. They were to serve as sites for passing visitors and for those planning to stay for a longer period of time, usually to enjoy the natural surroundings or festivals that were a part of offered activities. Annual Literary Meeting at the Memorial park “Kozara” is a good example of a festival that is still taking place today; or as it was the annual theater festival in Kruševac that was until recently held at the Memorial park “Slobodište” in Kruševac. Additionally, these sites were planned to serve as a ground for (pre)experience tourism usually taking a form of organized Partizan marches (Đorđević, 2021), that were planned with an aim of evoking “authentic” feeling of remembering the past.

In a wider sense, active planning and construction of these sites were a part of the rise of tourism as a major economic sector in Yugoslavia. “The Yugoslav tourism was a specific socialist experiment manifested through a wide spectrum (for socialist and communist ethos and context) of progressive efforts and activities, contributing to the construction of the Yugoslav culture.” (Antešević, 2015, p. 187). Following these ideas and by looking at the available archival data and promotional materials made for presenting Yugoslavia as tourist destinations, it is clear that memorial sites were more than monuments. They were seen as an important part of the tourist network throughout the territory, and by erecting them as intentional heritage sites which is confirmed with their placement on the lists of cultural properties very early on, they were positioned as must-see sites within the tourist offer of the cities and regions hosting them.

Numerous maps with monuments dedicated to NOB were printed for both local and international tourists, and video promotional campaigns for the international visitors placed them as equally important sites as the Pula amphitheater or Diocletian’s Palace in Split (Wings to Yugoslavia, 1964).

Furthermore, the most detailed overviews of public sculpture and monuments erected during the existence of Yugoslavia period are without a doubt touristic guides such is a guide written by Gojko Jokić (1986) - *Jugoslavija Spomenici revolucije, Turistički vodič*. Additionally, almost all of the well-known monuments, both then and today leaned strongly on existing tourist infrastructure (if it was available), or the needed roads and accommodation were erected in the closest proximity, as a part of the first construction phase. In this sense Memorial park “Valley of Heroes” in Tjentište incorporated hotel “Mladost” and “Sutjeska”; in front of the entrance to the Memorial park “October of Kragujevac” hotel “Šumarice” is placed.

These sites had their role in the contemporary life of that time, during the vacations and leisure times, and in quantity this type of interaction with memory was more dominant than official commemorative ceremonies. For the topic of this paper the incorporation of the sites dedicated to the memory of WWII in Yugoslavia into the official school curricula was of great importance (Jauković, 2015). School trips to these sites were an often occurrence, that in a certain level is kept until today at the sites of mass suffering of civilians such are for example Memorial Park in Šumarice or Memorial center “Jasenovac”, that are annually visited by school groups.

However, the 1990s were marked by turbulent circumstances throughout the region due to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the change of ruling ideology. Cultural theorists cite problems during this period as: disintegration of the political system, economic crisis, inflation and lowering of standards, forced migration, interethnic and intercultural conflicts, disruption of transport and communication, political isolation, terrorist actions, corruption, and others. (Dragičević-Šešić & Dragojević, 2005). In such circumstances, there are also drastic changes in the culture of memory politics and identity building of states, until that moment, members of Yugoslavia. Therefore, public monuments from the Socialist period are being removed, re-contextualized or completely neglected, while official curricula when it comes to socialist history and political geography is completely changed by returning to national ideologies. During this era of neglect of socialism, Yugoslavia itself is housed in a museum created on the site of the former residential complex of the Socialist President, i.e., the site of the Josip Broz Tito Memorial Center (Jokanović, 2013).

The sudden suppression of the immediate, socialist past and insistence on national characteristics, as well as, “the lack of a dominant paradigm of history as an integral and essential content in building collective identities of modernity” (Manojlović-Pintar & Ignjatović, 2010) is reflected in the functioning of cultural institutions, monuments, memorial sites and consequently, tourist destinations. As the time following the dissolution of the SFRY brought more than one uncertainty and revision of the past, school children stopped coming to the sites in question and they slowly lost their educational and tourist function. The clearing of the primary purpose of the analyzed heritage sites - to serve as places of visiting and gathering, they were left only with their static faith of material cultural heritage. By transforming into an object, they endured several levels of tourist placement. Firstly, they became a part of dark tourism maps (by being narratively connected to the wars of the 1990s); then they were placed on the official European touristic route dedicated to the totalitarian regimes (European Council, 2020); and finally, during the past decade they were placed as a potential for (re)establishing cross-border cooperation within the region (RCC, 2020) through building sustainable tourism, primarily based on the possibilities of creative tourism.

On-site seminars for site revitalization

When it comes to cultural heritage studies, educational tourism is very popular and present in the Western Balkans region for the past decade. It is slowly becoming part of official curricula and in greater scale represented through seminars that combine classroom (or now more often online) lectures and fieldwork or on-site workshops. There are different methodologies applied to the on-site studies such as: observation and direct analyses of heritage preservation and reconstruction activities happening at the moment, active learning about the old arts and crafts practices, detailed analyses of monument’ uses, abuses, interviewing and engagement of the local community.

However, most of the initiatives which are repetitive and could be classified as educational tourism, gather participants of workshops in campuses where they are housed for a prescribed period of time and where they learn about old arts and crafts and volunteer in cultural heritage conservation and reconstruction projects. Regardless from the undeniable success of the programs and the benefits they gain from consulting education tourism tools, this format of provided activities is not aimed or accessible to the wider scope of visitors, i.e., the goal is set in the domain of gaining skills

and restoring material heritage, and not to the active interpretation and revitalization of the used sites, so they can contribute back to touristic offer.

The named lack of broader intent of creating a continual feed-back relationship between education and tourist offer imposed itself as the main issue recognized within the seminar “Towards a performative turn in heritage studies”. It was observed that alongside the educational character of the organized field work a significant potential lies in the revitalization of heritage sites, i.e., in the works and programs that can be organized for this purpose and which belong to the domain of creative industries.

The structure of the conducted program was sketched already in the Introduction, as was the basic demographics of the participants group. However, what needs to be discussed in more detail is the actual professional profile of the invited participants. Partially by chance, during the two-weeks both the creative sector, i.e., filmmakers and performance artists, joined forces with the cultural sector, i.e., curators and researchers working within the state institutions focusing on interpreting and safe-keeping of cultural heritage in Serbia. Due to the highly mixed group of participants and a practical task that needed to be fulfilled, the achieved results served as both - an interpretative means that could enrich the information and knowledge of the employed heritage sites, and as a creative product that can have an application in the domain of tourism, at least on the level of promotional videography.

In order to achieve the level of being able to produce creative content in the specific case of WWII monuments in Rasina County, it was necessary to grasp and understand the actual nature of the urban and sculptural solution of these heritage sites. As it was presented a bit earlier in this paper, it was needed to (re)instigate revitalization of the actual purpose of these sites in the time of their creation, i.e., they were to be venerated and they were meant to be interacted with directly. During the process of active deconstruction of physical sites and multilayered narratives of the three memorial sites - Memorial Park “October of Kragujevac” (Kragujevac), Memorial Park “Popina” (Trstenik) and Memorial Park “Slobodište” (Kruševac) - participants noted that these operate as something more than heritage sites.

What the main impression was primarily of German colleagues - being acquainted with theories of bodily movement and creation of space based on bodily dynamics, as well as with the principles of provoking and

observing encounters and interaction of body (visitor) at heritage sites - is that all three visited sites are meant to be used as spaces for physical training, leisure activities and social encounters, alongside the programmed rituals of memory. Although the natural environment around monuments is planned to serve these types of activities, it was very indicative that the community surrounding them is actually not used to spending time there outside the commemorative rituals. When walking through sites rarely we met a runner or a person walking with a dog. Neither any facility which would encourage visitors to spend more time here and come back exists/functions on these sites. The lack of day-to-day interaction with memorial parks, even with those situated rather centrally within the urban area (as it is the case in Kragujevac) is a direct consequence of these sites losing their tourism and leisure function during the 1990s, when they were transformed into detached and hermetic heritage sites.

However, in the past decade, and especially after the breakout of Covid-19 pandemic, global trends in heritage and museum practice have found their way to the local context. During the past two years marked by the social isolation recommendations, increasing fear and loneliness, many studies tackling issues of impact the cultural sector can have in the drastic circumstances proved that a visit to a heritage site affects wellbeing and induces positive emotions. For instance, the Historic England public body conducted numerous research detecting a positive relationship and direct correlation between interacting with heritage and improved wellbeing. After recognizing *routes to wellbeing using the historic environment* in England, they have created a framework and methodology for wider application of these routes.

The research concludes: “The benefits of working with the wellbeing agenda include focusing on diversity and inclusion by breaking down barriers to access; working with local authorities to raise aspiration in areas of high indices of multiple deprivation; promoting wellbeing and engagement with the historic environment through social prescribing; achieving local sustainability in new ways; building the relationship between people and place, while demonstrating the public value of the historic environment” (Reilly, et al., 2018). The routes to wellbeing using the historic environment are defined as: Heritage as - Process: volunteering as an active and committed relationship over time; Participation: it supports understanding that cultural engagement is linked to wellbeing; Mechanism: using cultural assets to bring people together for therapeutic or social purpose providing a common point of interest or experience; Healing:

heritage-triggered thinking, meaning-making and cultural inclusion as relevant to health and wellbeing; Place: potential solution to social isolation, sustainability and environmental degradation; Environment: the beneficial link between nature and wellbeing. (Reilly, et. al., 2018). Consequently, all the routes in this framework encourage frequent presence at the heritage sites as an activity beneficial for health and positive emotions, and as having a wider benefit for the local community and economy of the region.

With regards to Heritage as Place, the relationship between sense of place, power of place, belonging and identity is complex, multi-faceted and not static. When it comes to the chosen sites, the dissonance of heritage and changing politics of memory have definitely influenced the complex, sometimes even undefined relationship towards the socialist history and (universal) ideas built in each of these places. Therefore, we could recognize socialist memorial parks as heritage environments in which the atmosphere is already immersing visitors into a special state due to the form of monuments and their communication with the surrounding (as well planned and organized) natural environment (Horvatinčić, 2017). They are sites that function based on provoking emotions within the direct interaction with the site and beyond fixed commemorative festivities such as “Veliki školski čas” (Kragujevac) and “Celebration of Freedom” (Kruševac). Events of this sort were once introduced with a purpose of building a tourist destination, by providing content most similar to the heritage-based creative industry. The principle of sustainable and economic wellbeing can be nicely fitted within creative industries (especially those working directly with heritage objects) and products that can further support the revenue of the established tourist destination (such as Vrnjačka Banja).

The possibility of bringing creative or even more precise cultural industries to the arena of heritage and tourism business is the most interesting result of the two-week seminar. The moment of producing a final deliverable instigated a synergy between the disciplines and between theory and practice, and final participants’ results should be understood as a benefit the new intersection of university curricula and diverse types of tourism can have in the heritage-focused disciplines.

Conclusion

Summer Seminar - educational tour - tourist destination

The concluding chapter of this paper will briefly sketch the results of the summer seminar, pointing especially to the observed intersection of curricula design, practical heritage revitalization and the principles of creative tourism.

Following the conducted field work sessions that were based on active interaction with selected sites and on observation of behavior of visitors, participants delivered their performance-based interpretations of these sites. Through discussion it became clear that the immersiveness of these sites is not based only on the astonishing formal language, interesting dimensions and above all teasing urban construction. Rather, it is based on the longevity of interaction with the sites outside of their heritage-framed existence, as a part of the well-conceived tourism network, they were once situated in.

Interestingly, most of the produced material used the spoken-word method as a main formal language of interpretation and therefore production of creative content connected to these heritage sites. The noticeable lack of spoken-word within these sites was understood as the lack of understanding how and why these sites need to establish their position within the society that inherits them. When asked about a more long-term intervention they would imagine in the context of creative production, that needs to serve both as a revitalization of heritage sites and as a support means of establishing a tourist destination, participants argued for establishing a language/theater/literature/poetry festival (caravan) that could travel from open-air amphitheater to open-air amphitheater. The return of the spoken-word could be seen as a plea towards interaction and socialization.

Furthermore, it became clear that the interdisciplinarity, which is without a doubt much easier to achieve in short-term curricula format, needs to be translated to an actual module in which it is possible to educate through disciplinary knowledge, creative practice and hands-on practical experience. The importance of employing an existing route, when the learning process is connected to the immovable cultural heritage, needs to be emphasized. If employed as a segment of the curricula that is analyzed as well, i.e., as a segment that needs to be accounted for within the conceptualization of creative products, creative tourism can and will have a significant impact on the final deliverables, that in the long run can be

one possible product that will turn these sites back from passive stone to tourist destinations. Additionally, the need for overcoming the online domination of education, while our private time still is restrained and affected by the two-year long isolation and distancing, can be achieved by renaming tourism, in colloquial terms, into education-based travel, into the curricula demand travel.

Finally, the main question of establishing a popular tourist destination remains to be sifted through. Principle of destination this paper tends to disclose and analyze is at least twofold. From one side the heritage sites - monuments dedicated to WWII - can be further developed as popular destinations for educational tourism providing diverse skill sets to be acquired - from historical knowledge and disciplinary methodology, revitalization planning, to the qualities of the used materials and the specificity of the potential appropriate restoration processes. However, the potential of making a creative tourism destination should be understood as even more connected to the development of interdisciplinary curricula regarding heritage studies in the broadest sense. In order to produce creative content that would attract other types of visitors including the members of the local community, a synergy of the three groups of actors is equally necessary. Monuments dedicated to WWII in Rasina County are highly specific and well known to the architecture lovers, but the visitor scopes can be much broader. For the local population they can serve as an income opportunity, but as an opportunity for structural development of the community, as well. Especially, as there are no specific limits on the topics and issues that can be covered within these sites from history to climate change. Lastly, the visual presence of the sites in question as well as their physical configurations can serve as a scene for diverse creative content - from theater, video, festivals to social-media based content. The creative production that can be systematically developed connected to these sites most certainly can provide a greater level of income for Vrnjačka Banja as an already established destination.

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