



## ***The Intersection of Commercial Fishing and Tourism: An Exploratory Research Project***



**A Master`s Thesis by A. Michael Vlahovich  
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## Prologue

If this paper were to be adapted into a movie script, a walk behind the scenes would be a very long walk indeed. In fact, walking would not allow an audience to access even one-half of all the characters, locations, props, and wardrobes required to develop this story in totality. To do this narrative justice and capture a true sense of all the elements required to accurately relate it to an onlooker, those with real interest would also need to travel on the sea, in fact, on numerous seas. Working the water and the related waterfront occupational arts that keep traditional wooden boats afloat and fishing families sustained have been my life's labor. These vocations have immersed me in numerous marine environments and diverse coastal cultures. Developing this movie's complete storyline would, consequently, be an arduous, albeit an exciting, undertaking. Now, however, this paper will only provide a *sneak preview* of that narrative. Hopefully this will suffice until Hollywood calls.

As I write this in the autumn of 2016, I am celebrating my 50th year of going to sea and practicing the skills necessary to maintain a treasured family tradition of commercial fishing and wooden boatbuilding—a body of naturally transferred local maritime knowledge that first came to United States in the hands, minds, and hearts of my Croatian ancestors over 100 years ago. These traditions were handed down from parents to children to grandchildren at a time when fishing communities were stable tight-knit units sustained through the harvesting of natural resources and the culture that developed around it. This is what I knew during my early years. It was what my life once revolved around. Sustaining what remains of it is what now occupies my time.

Over the years I have witnessed the decline and near disappearance of the wild salmon and the old growth Douglas fir forests along the North Pacific Coast—things that provided my culture the raw materials we depended upon to practice our maritime trades. Prior to the decline, those bountiful resources of forest and sea created ideal conditions for what was believed to be environmentally, economically, and culturally sustainable. Lumber and fish fueled a robust economy that enticed many of my Croatian relatives to relocate to North America in the early 1900's. The resources were what formed a community of immigrants with a distinct lifestyle of skilled blue-collar artisans that passed on their maritime heritage to each new generation. As a first generation Croatian-American, I became a beneficiary, a direct inheritor of Croatian maritime skills, knowledge, and values—a cultural treasure whose protection and sustainability I take seriously. Now, I have dedicated myself to retuning that treasure back to Croatia.

As a student of cultural sustainability, it made perfect sense for me to select fishing family culture and traditional maritime heritage as a primary focus of my graduate studies and thesis. I had lost something dear to me—something that for years defined my life, supported my family, delivered a needed and appreciated service to my community. Sustaining culture is all

about honoring and maintaining a person`s—and a people`s—identity during times of change. Understanding and responding to the changes I have witnessed throughout the last 50 years within coastal communities has been my mission, a mission that continues. The need for that mission, in my mind, is undeniable; however, what may not seem as logical is my interest and selection of tourism as a companion emphasis of this paper. Yet, these two cultures—fishing families and tourism—have been prominent throughout my years in the MACS program at Goucher College as well as in my work in the maritime non-profit sector which I began in 1990. Claiming them both as the major direction of this thesis made sense to me. The two cultures do often intersect since fisherman and tourists gravitate to the shore.

What makes this topic especially relevant is that the world`s ocean resources are dwindling. According to statistical data collected by the consulting firm MED MARITIME in its study titled “*Socio-Economic Analysis on Fisheries Related Tourism in EUSAIR*,” the total commercial fish harvest of Italy, Greece, and Croatia has steadily been on the decline since 2002, with a slight increase in Croatian waters upon the end of the Balkan War. Furthermore, the total number of registered fishing vessels throughout the European Union decreased over 60% from 1995 to 2014. The report goes on to say that “a decline in income and employment in the fishing sector has underlined the urgent need for new, sustainable and inclusive solutions” (MED report 2014, p. 5). Commercial fishing and wooden boatbuilding are no longer the driving economic forces they once were along the Adriatic coastline. Alternate *modes of production* are being considered, and tourism appears to be a primary option for Croatia.

This decline in the fisheries, as documented in the MED MARITIME report, negatively impacts the sustainability of cultures dependent upon natural resources, such as the culture of fishing families of Croatia who have lived a traditional maritime lifestyle for generations. Consequently, a new means of generating both tangible and intangible wealth is being sought by many coastal communities. In some cases, heritage tourism, based upon sustainability of maritime places, persons, and events is being embraced. The European Commission states that “tourism is economically significant as one of the main and fast-growing maritime activities; [and it] strongly benefits the regional economy by creating jobs and promoting the conservation of coastal and maritime cultural heritage” (MED report 2014, p. 4).

Cultural heritage—one`s own and that of others—is increasingly viewed as that *new capital*, that storehouse of potential wealth that can be harvested and marketed for a variety of purposes. Fishing tourism, for instance, can be defined as “an asset of tourism-related activities carried out by professional fisherman to differentiate their incomes, promote and valorize their profession and socio-cultural heritage, and enhance a sustainable use of marine ecosystems. Fishing tourism has received increasing attention in recent years, and several national and international projects have included this issue among their key actions” (MED 2014, p. 5).

I view tourism as an industry that attempts to harvest, package, and retail culture to the public. If, when, where, and how this mining and merchandising of heritage in traditional fishing family communities occurs, have become the centerpiece of my work in the world. This paper documents my research into this intersection of commercial fishing culture and tourism as I have reviewed it, observed it, taught it, analyzed it, lived it.

The goal of creating this thesis has been to synthesize the very personal experiences I have encountered, the academic research I have undertaken, and the knowledge I have acquired while traveling the shores of Croatia and beyond. I have always been in search of the current state and potential future of traditional maritime cultures. In combining experience and knowledge, this paper intends to serve as a guide for Croatian college students who are, or hope to become, actors on the stage where maritime heritage interfaces with tourism. It is my sincere hope that students of social science, humanities, naval architecture, and tourism will benefit from what I have to offer. These include the student groups from various fields at Zagreb University and the Rochester Institute of Technology, where I presented during the project piece of my Capstone. I believe they are some of the ones best positioned to carry insights and ideas into the future. Over the years, however, my audience has been geographically expansive and ethnically diverse, so the basic message will hopefully resonate on some meaningful level with all who read and consider what is contained in the following pages. I hope that in some way it will benefit others striving to sustain their threatened culture while acknowledging the threats and opportunities that tourism embodies.

## Researcher's Creed

Living one's culture through actions, language, and the physical markers that we humans create and scatter around the globe, represents who we are at the deepest level. What we humans do, say, and create is like a window through which we come to know, appreciate, and love one another; in so doing, we grow in self-knowledge, acceptance of diversity, and understanding of life's ultimate purpose.

I view performing cultural sustainability as a way of walking upon the earth with heightened awareness, sensitivity, reflectivity. It means realizing that what humanity cares most about is not hidden from view; rather, it shows itself in everyday life and often in the most common of ways. Acting as a crusader in support of a heterogeneous and bio-diverse planet, I continue seeking opportunities to stand as a bulwark against cultural homogenization and the taming of the earth's wild places. I believe that it is in those domains that deep spirituality resides and thrives.

This thesis will examine some of the personal *twists and turns* regarding my attempts to understand and sustain culture through a lifetime in the field of maritime occupational arts,

historic preservation, public policy, education, and alternative forms of heritage tourism. It will suggest how potential future efforts may add to the development of cultural sustainability as an emerging academic field in Croatia. Most importantly, perhaps, it will serve as a personal declaration regarding the convictions that have helped to shape my *theory of action* regarding social and economic justice in the world. In so doing, I hope to inspire other students to dream and to establish new innovative sustainability practices in Croatia and beyond. This, ultimately, is the goal of my research; it is the outcome I desire.

## Acknowledgments

My gratitude goes to my wife and children for their patience and support throughout my travels and absences during many years of work around this theme. I also want to thank the many fishing families of Alaska, Washington, Virginia, Maryland, and Croatia that have so graciously welcomed me onto their boats and into their homes. Although this paper falls short of totally understanding the complexities of the global cultural transformation taking place along the world's coastlines, I hope that it does *sound an alarm* that stimulates productive discussion and action within both academic and working waterfront circles. With that in mind, my appreciation is extended to the professionals and fellow students at Goucher College that have guided and inspired me in my pursuit of obtaining a graduate degree in the Master of Arts of Cultural Sustainability (MACS) program. Thank you all!





*Curious? Please venture in.*

# Introduction

*...the continuous tension between tradition and situation, tradition defining situations, situations displacing traditions, both inevitable and mutually changing.*

Dell Hymes (1975, p.355)



*The village of Sumartin, Croatia on the Island of Brač where my father was born. Our fishing family permanently immigrated to the U.S. in 1927 to engage in fishing and wooden boatbuilding in the Pacific Northwest. Here are pictured both tourist and commercial fishing boats positioned back to back along the Riva—two different cultures and modes of production intersecting.*



## The Guiding Problem

As the title of this paper states, the problem researched revolves around the cultural changes taking place within commercial fishing family communities experiencing increased tourism. The emphasis is on the island towns and villages located along the Dalmatian Coast of the Republic of Croatia. However, this problem of cultural change exists to a greater or lesser extent within other fishing-dependent coastal communities, several of which I have visited and worked in. Additional remote island communities located in North America, such as Deal Island in the state of Maryland, Ketchikan in Alaska, and Klemtu in British Columbia are referenced as comparisons to what I observed in Croatia.

The *way of life* within most coastal communities is, or has been in the past, determined by the sea and the resources that it contains and nourishes. The commercial harvesting and processing of fish has been one primary historical reality of coastal society. Several additional maritime crafts and skills are offshoots of the fishing trade, like boatbuilding and traditional sailing. However, with seafood stocks now on the decline, and seaside tourism on the increase, the intersection of fishing culture and tourism produces a range of probing questions regarding the sustainability of long-established maritime heritage, and the challenges and benefits that tourism might bring to the small island communities of Croatia.

This field research was influenced by several curiosities about what was *not yet known*. Questions included: What is the relationship between active fishermen, visitors, and commercial tourism interests; are those various pursuits compatible and, if so, in what ways? Might there be opportunities for collaboration that would help to sustain elements of both tangible and intangible maritime culture; if not, where do current challenges and tensions reside? What are some of the socio-economic indicators of tourism's impact regarding the protection and maintenance of Croatia's rich maritime traditions? Is there evidence of cultural commoditization; if so, what are the attitudes of fishing families regarding the marketing of their heritage? Seeking new knowledge about this situation was the driving force that propelled this research. Knowledge has been gained, but definitive answers remain somewhat nebulous; further study and involvement in Croatia are needed and anticipated.

## The Context

There are characteristics of the research site that are worth noting, as they play a part in defining social, economic, and political life in Croatia. A few of these are distinctive geographical and ecological traits, and others are historical aspects of Croatia's recent rise to nationhood. These characteristics help to set the stage for those unfamiliar with this region and are provided to establish a *sense of place*. They are modest in depth and scope, but are still

important features that will be mentioned, or referenced, in various locations throughout this paper.

Croatia's Adriatic coastline is 1,104 miles in length and contains more than 1,200 islands; however, only 60 are inhabited. This assortment of islands forms an intended seaside which creates numerous small harbors and protected channels, most of which are scenic and navigable. Its natural beauty is considered by many to be some of the finest on the globe. These attributes have provided ideal conditions for the establishment of fishing family communities and, increasingly, the development of havens for tourists. To a large degree, this context of Croatia's beautiful, untarnished seashore has become the catalyst for the intersection of traditional maritime culture and tourism. The geography and ecology of Dalmatia are a magnet that draws visitors and fishing families, breeding the makings of a *tragedy of the commons*—a place where current and potential future tensions reside. The notion and terminology of a *tragedy of the commons* is a concept developed by the ecologist Garrett Hardin and was published in 1968 as an essay in *Science* magazine. Quoted by researcher Michael W. Fincham in the *Chesapeake Quarterly* regarding the Chesapeake Bay and its oyster-dredging watermen of Deal Island, areas such as the Adriatic Coast of Croatia may also be considered a "common resource—owned by no one, open to everyone," and, like all commons, "doomed to inevitable ruin" (Fincham 2003, p. 8).

Another major component of Croatia's geography is the mountain range of the Dinaric Alps (*Dinarsko Gorje*). Running parallel to the Adriatic Coast, it rises to the height of 8,000 feet and contains the largest single mountain in the country. This impressive range is clearly visible from the coastal islands and the sea. Its significance to this research is that for centuries it has geographically separated the residents of the Dalmatian coast from the population living inland. That separation is also cultural—regarding ethnicity, economics, religion, and politics. Although beyond the immediate scope of this study, the internal cultural diversity of Croatia may have been responsible for tensions that boiled over upon the collapse of the Yugoslav government in 1990. This precipitated the start of the Serbo-Croatian War, referred to by Croatians as the Homeland War.

The fall of communism caused considerable doubt about the future stability of Yugoslavia. Most of the provinces within the country experienced an escalation in nationalist feelings that had previously been dampened while under the strong-armed rule of Marshal Tito. The greatest tension within the country developed between the provinces of Croatia and Serbia in 1991, due in large part to Croatia's firm stance on seeking total independence from any Serbian-controlled government. Ages-old intolerance and bigotry between Croat and Serb ethnic groups eventually broke out into localized violence; within a year, full-scale fighting had erupted. The war, its atrocities, and the incidents of ethnic cleansing finally came to an end in 1994-95 with the assistance of UN Peacekeepers and U.S. defense contractors.

Croatia finally won its hard-fought independence just over 20 years ago. The fact that most Croatian nationals are experiencing and experimenting with democracy and capitalism for the first time is an influential factor that overshadows contemporary life in the country. These recent developments will come into play throughout various sections of this paper. It wasn't until the end of the conflict in Croatia, and the beginning of capitalist economics, that the igniting of large-scale tourism recommenced along the Dalmatian Coast. It is now considered to be the largest industry in the country, providing badly needed jobs and tax revenues. However, many of the informants I spoke with did not think that the benefits of tourism revenues were being equitably distributed.

## The Problem: Digging Deeper

Like many isolated localities around the globe that face an uncertain future, the problem regarding escalating tourism growth within traditional fishing family communities is full of complexities. When one begins to scratch the surface of life inside the island towns and villages of Croatia, it takes almost no time at all to realize just how complicated and intricate the woven fabric of the situation is. A keen sense of perception and a generous amount of compassion are prerequisites to the actual field practice of what may now be referred to as cultural sustainability work. Immersion, empathy, and, perhaps most important, a willingness to become affected by the Croatian people and the diverse environment that they inhabit, allowed me, for a time, to *step into their shoes*. With each step along the stone paths, and with every baptism in the salty Adriatic Sea, the connection deepened. Their rituals, daily practices, and performances contained an assortment of contradictions—struggle and harmony, dispute and accord, belief and doubt, competition and collaboration—all present and in continual motion.

The original questions I developed prior to entering the field, in many ways, did not match the realities that confronted me once on the ground in my father's village of Sumartin. They might all be best summed up into one single dilemma as presented by Dell Hymes (1975, p.345) when confronting rapid culture shifts: namely, how does one "remain true to the spirit of that tradition in circumstances that have changed when one's traditions have been set apart from their functional relevance within structure"? As a former Croatian-American commercial fisherman and wooden boatbuilder, who witnessed the vanishing of his own tight-knit fishing heritage community, I know precisely what Hymes is describing, and the question he puts forth. The challenge of remaining "true to the spirit" of one's culture is what I believe the island villagers of Croatia will be grappling with into the future. My current question is: Can good heritage tourism help to sustain the traditional maritime vessels, skills, and stories that are valued by those that live in the island villages and towns of Croatia?

## A Personal Reflection:

*Some twenty-five years later I strolled along the promenade in front of the condominiums, museums, and hotels that was once home to the boatyards and fishermen's net sheds that constituted the tangible fabric of my culture's built environment. The shores and seawater are cleaner now, yet so is the current culture occupying the space, having been sanitized and made ready to welcome a new wave of urbanites and tourists which have become the new economic driver in coastal communities world-wide. This personal experience of cultural loss was not my first encounter with urban development and mass tourism, since I had witnessed something similar in the towns of Southeast Alaska as they became inundated with thousands of travelers aboard cruise ships. However, it was even more shocking to me at home where development threatened to wipe clean a personal history, a heritage, a wealth of traditional ecological knowledge that was cherished by many; but the voices of the working waterfront were unfortunately not heard or considered. Questions of representation, fairness, values, and justice needed to be reconciled. I was faced with a dilemma—confronting rapid cultural shifts and the ongoing disappearance of my fishing family traditions. I wondered—how might I sustain a culture that had become displaced from its natural context, from the tangible sights, sounds, and structures of a once vibrant working waterfront?*



*The author's former commercial fishing boat built by Croatian immigrants in the U.S. in 1926. The Commencement is the flagship of the Coastal Heritage Alliance. It is pictured here in Ketchikan, Alaska, USA, during its 2016 natural heritage voyage.*



## Chapter 1: Early Research & Reflections



*The children of Sumartin fishing families will grow up knowing both fishing and tourism.*

Prior to entering the field site in Croatia, I reviewed several selections of secondary sources to better prepare me for what was to come. The more books, articles, and websites I reviewed, the more I understood the importance and justification of conducting this formative study. The insight and experience of those who have traveled this road of *cultural change* provided additional depth regarding the assorted issues involved when traditional cultures intersect with commercial tourism. A selection of academic perspectives, coupled with my personal reflections, will be offered in support of the goals of this thesis. Hopefully, it will further illuminate the scope and complexity of the topic. Although the information available on this subject is extensive, only a sampling is provided here to highlight the range and diversity of ideas within the discipline. The ones featured are some that especially resonated with me—considering my own experience in attempting to sustain culture—for I have also traveled a few miles on this road.



The thoughts and reflections contained in this chapter are meant to provide the reader a glimpse into the joy and heartache, challenges and opportunities, that I have gladly accepted throughout the last 50 years of attempting to live my Croatian-American maritime heritage. They represent some of the thoughts and feelings that accompanied me into the field. They helped me to identify my biases, strengths, doubts and future dreams. They confirmed for me the path I have walked, and the one I will continue to travel—passing on knowledge, and confronting the forces that impede a sustainable future, continually believing in the hopes and dreams of the children of Sumartin.

**Selection #1: “*Forget inheriting...invest in culture.*”** In this paper author Regina Bendix, whose “argument arises out of several years of interdisciplinary work on the constitution of cultural property,” puts forth a premise regarding the potential economic and sustainability benefits that could be derived by “putting culture to work” (2012, p.14). She challenges the mindset of some cultural researchers’ aversion toward the *sale* of culture when she says, “Despite all reflexive turns scholarship [folklore, anthropology, ethnology] has taken, a remnant of this nostalgia, a wish for some realm devoid of capitalism remains.” Is it taboo within the field of cultural sustainability to speak about revenue generation based upon the packaging and marketing of culture, even though it is the lack of financial resources that make it nearly impossible for many fishing communities to restore and protect their valued heritage and ecosystems? Or might it be that the cultural commoditization that is marketed is often inauthentic or deceptive? Is this the arena of continual tension full of issues of fairness, justice, and the ownership of heritage and the environment? Can there ever be a positive result from cultural and environmental commoditization? It appears that Bendix believes that positive benefits can be achieved if the approach is honest, equitable, and owned by the community where the culture originated and resides. She calls attention to “shifting cultural hierarchies” that increasingly view “culture as a resource,” and, as such, have “economic considerations” (2012, p. 15). Current grassroots efforts in the field of heritage and environmental interpretation and presentation, that use marketing concepts like *cultural production* and *value added*, are signs of those “shifting cultural hierarchies” that Bendix refers to. Culture and the environment have value, but is it acceptable to place a *price tag* on them? These are ethical concerns for many—concerns that call for action, not only study and research.

One example of this was apparent in the village of Komiza, Croatia, during the town’s annual Festival of the Sea where residents embraced the ownership of their maritime heritage/history (e.g. historic boats, local maritime knowledge, music, performance, food, and traditional sailing) by taking it public, and thereby enhancing the visitor’s experience while generating revenues to continue their work of protecting their cultural assets. In contrast to Komiza, in the village of Sumartin, which has an authentic contemporary commercial fishing fleet and an active

shipyard, no visible efforts were being made to capitalize on their *living heritage* by engaging tourists. A reluctance to go public with one's private heritage was also recognized in several other remote island villages, making the small village of Komiza unique to my field studies. "Putting culture to work" is not necessarily what the majority of fishing families in Croatia are willing to engage in.

For Bendix, cultural ownership begs the question "who will take responsibility" for its long-term care and protection, and who will assume the costs of that protection? She refers to UNESCO and its role in determining the validity of heritage sites and practices nominated for protection, and how selection is generally determined based on significant cultural and historic criteria, with little regard to the financial burden placed upon the *owners* of the heritage. The author believes that "cultural resources can be placed next to the natural resources that human survival and well-being also rest on. The term opens one's view towards the labor that flows into making a resource useful and the cost entailed in the process. Economic cost and benefit models are not devoid of social, emotional and political components—just as social, emotional and political heritage consideration should not be devoid of economic aspects" (Bendix 2012, p. 12).

Her paper goes on to cite John and Jean Comaroff who have "theorized marketing by tribal groups themselves with labels such as *ethno-corporations* and *cultural futures*" (2009, p. 14), using the lingo of Wall Street to drive home a point. Their work is particularly important as it demonstrates how some indigenous groups themselves opt for transforming aspects of their culture into revenue streams that can underwrite and bolster the socio-economic conditions required to sustain their traditional local values, skills, and knowledge. In many ways, this notion of using *capitalist* strategies and initiatives as a method of performing cultural sustainability continues to beg the ethical question: does the end justify the means? Often, in my opinion, there appears to be reluctance on the part of cultural academics to consider the use of *capitalist* strategies to achieve sustainability. But while academia debates the issue, it appears that promoters of mass tourism suck up the financial resources and, what might be even more detrimental, they are the ones that determine and control the cultural message that influences the thinking of millions of individuals. I witnessed this first-hand during my field research in Split and Dubrovnik, Croatia, this summer, and multiple times in Ketchikan, Alaska, where massive cruise ships owned by multinational corporate interests offload thousands of tourists who then participate in an afternoon of overindulgent consumerism and cultural deception. The potential audience is huge, but the current message being delivered is shallow in meaning, and is often driven by profit-making rather than a desire to educate, to tell the truth about the past, or to sustain the current authentic culture of a community. This might indicate that it is time to "invest in culture," through good heritage tourism, in order to sustain it. That has been my approach, but few of my former fishing friends have cared to participate.

The article makes me think that Croatia (and the U.S.) needs a more *socially democratic capitalist* strategy regarding tourism studies that better advances an ethic of fairness, authenticity, and community ownership of private heritage. The creation of *social enterprises* that adhere to a *triple bottom line* philosophy, or maritime non-profits that incorporate a profit-making wing in their structure, are approaches to effectively generate the financial resources required to sustain culture. Perhaps the Croatian academic community should consider tourism education, not only as a career path for students but also as a powerful tool that could be used to sustain threatened aspects of their maritime culture and environment. This could empower the young to assume innovative leadership positions within their island communities. Sustainable tourism education, coupled with a mindset toward revenue generation and economic growth, may become increasingly essential in combating the ills of mass tourism.

#### **A personal reflection:**

*Not long ago I was attending a college event during one of my grad school residencies. As part of the Master of Arts in Cultural Sustainability department, I, along with fellow students and faculty, gathered one evening to congratulate and hear from members of the upcoming graduating class. It was an opportunity to learn about their completed Capstone projects, and of their current work in the field. I listened intently, being curious about their personal journeys, and reflecting upon the track I intended to take regarding my own Capstone research and subsequent project. Upon the wrap-up of the student presentations, the entire group took time to socialize and share ideas. Predictably, some of the graduates and faculty wanted to know what I intended to focus on for my Capstone—a question that I was prepared to answer since I had already decided to concentrate within my field of interest, something that I had already dedicated several years of my life to. My response was, “Tourism, heritage tourism.” Initially, their reaction to my answer, which I interpreted as one of disappointment and disapproval, surprised me. Why did my interest in tourism to sustain culture elicit a negative response from my compatriots? Was I being perceived as a traitor, someone deserting his post, a misguided student leaving the enlightened state of academia only to join forces with the dark side of culture—the industrial tourism machine? Granted, the exchange was brief, and I may have misinterpreted their reaction and allowed myself to overreact and jump to hasty conclusions. Nevertheless, the incident lodged in my mind and gave me reason to pause, question, and reexamine my role in the realm of tourism—a term and a movement that often causes me to cringe and recoil in disgust as well. Although I remain uncomfortably aware and continually confronted with the dichotomy of opposing viewpoints that exist around tourism and its impact upon sustainable development, I continue to believe that it is becoming a discipline that needs to be taught, studied, and engaged in. To think otherwise is denying a movement that has the potential to address some of the most pressing global issues.*

**Selection #2: *Heritage Matters: Heritage, Culture, History, and the Chesapeake Bay*.** The author of this book, Erve Chambers from the University of Maryland, believes that “heritage has become a vital addition to the modern places we all inhabit. It is a major industry of the mind as well as of the pocketbook, and has become an increasingly important part of the imagery through which our institutions try to anchor us against the fast pace and uncertainty of our time, to shield us from the seemingly rootless and transient after-effects of modernity and globalization” (Chambers 2006, p. 1).

Chambers views the subject of heritage as an ambiguous concept in today’s world that is difficult to define but is also a notion that is growing in popularity. People seem to hunger for a connection to the past that heritage provides, but few opt to allow that connection to influence or interfere with their future. Heritage as history, although a growing part of society’s current cultural appetite, is not always incorporated into contemporary life-ways, which, in turn, can create a *disconnect* between those who may appreciate heritage from a distance, and those who have actually inherited it. For most, it is not something that is lived; it is more just a *feel-good* idea of what once was—a reflection on historic facts, images, and objects—instead of a way of living. The presentation of heritage often overly distills and dignifies the past, while at the same time, dispels or dumbs-down the present—something that heritage tradition bearers, like myself, are often disturbed by. I have witnessed this with fishermen while in history museum settings where a glorified story of the past is told, one that neglects to acknowledge the realities of their current conditions. This is a matter of telling the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the complete story.

Attempting to simplify the nature of how heritage is perceived, Chambers breaks it down into two separate categories: one being *Public Heritage* and the other *Private Heritage*

***Public Heritage:*** An *outsider* approach according to Chambers is that the “public treatment of heritage can unintentionally become a way to separate the objects and performances of heritage from their actual heirs, serving to transfer them to the marketplace as commodities—properties and experiences to be appreciated and accumulated by strangers who may well benefit from the association, but who generally have no stake in the outcome and feel little or no responsibility for the kind of careful upkeep that heritage truly requires” (2006, p.2).

***Private Heritage:*** An *insider* perspective to “heritage might still serve as a celebration of something in the past, but its vitality resides in its demonstrable relationship to the present and even to the future. Heritage is in this sense a kind of direct and inalienable inheritance of human and environmental properties and relationships, which might well be appreciated by outsiders but cannot be claimed or possessed by them” (2006, p.3).

I am connected to both *public* and *private* aspects of heritage. I have inherited, and continue to live and care for, the cultural traditions of my people. I interpret and celebrate the *private*

heritage of others. I have come to understand the ethical responsibilities inherent in the practice of *cultural sustainability*.

Living out my *private* heritage in the *public* forum was one reason I left museum work and created a new model that I believed was more honest to my spirit, and to the legacy of my ancestors. This concept, of going *public* with one's *private* heritage, is what I introduced to Maryland watermen families through the Watermen's Heritage Tourism Training Program. One unique feature of this heritage tourism education project was its mobility, delivering services to authentic fishing communities throughout the Chesapeake Bay. Courses were provided in Deal Island, Cambridge, Tilghman Island, Rock Hall, Solomon's Island, Galesville, and Reedville. Something similar has been suggested to Croatian heritage professionals, and I am currently networking with Croatian partners to create and offer a similar program in the EU.

Museum involvement assisted me in recognizing the chasm that can exist between *public* and *private* heritage. This realization made it more critical for me to find a better way to sustain culture, which I believe I accomplished in *modest but bold* ways through the establishment of the non-profit organization Coastal Heritage Alliance (CHA) in 2003. Although at the time I did not know the broader significance of my actions, they now seem to have foreshadowed things to come in the field of heritage and preservation studies.

### **A personal reflection**

*Instead of attempting to import authentic culture and tradition bearers to the public, as is generally the approach taken by history museums and folk festivals, I decided to take the public to the heritage by moving beyond museum walls and festival grounds. Performing rehabilitation on the family fishing boat by converting the fish hold space into lodging, a new maritime heritage tourism business was started in 1996. The venture, known as Commencement Maritime, provided passage into the world of commercial fishing family culture by guiding the public through the actual harvesting grounds of British Columbia and Southeast Alaska thereby allowing travelers first-hand experience of the contemporary culture situated within its authentic context. These were designed as experiential adventure voyages where quality and depth of meaning took precedence over quantity of people served or revenues generated. Success was evaluated on the degree to which a passenger's understanding, appreciation, and behaviors were positively influenced by their immersion into a unique and relatively invisible culture, as well as into one of the world's most pristine coastal wilderness areas. Unlike the counting of heads in beds which is all too often the method employed to track tourism success in my current home town of St. Michaels, MD, Commencement Maritime believed that it had an ethical obligation both to the fishing culture and to the aware traveler to provide a potential life-changing experience that promoted culturally and environmentally sustainable, ethical behavior, and a call to take action in saving what matters on earth.*



**Selection #3: *Philosophical Issues in Tourism*.** Author John Tribe is a Professor of Tourism at the University of Surrey, UK. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *Annals of Tourism Research* and Co-Chair of the United Nations World Tourism Organization. Tribe's book is a compilation of scholarly articles contributed by members of the international academic community engaged in tourism research and education. It features 16 entries with topics such as: *Who is a Tourist*, *The End of Tourism*, *Ethics and Tourism*, *Good Actions in Tourism*, and *Tourism and the Arts*. In his introductory remarks, he makes a case for the role philosophy plays in both the study of and participation in tourism. He states: "The ability to locate ourselves in a tourism world that has runaway qualities and identify and question its powerful neoliberal driving forces is in itself a philosophical act. For at its very simplest, philosophizing is the ability to extract ourselves from the busy, engaged world of making and doing things, to disengage and pause for reflection and thought especially about meaning and purpose" (Tribe 2009, p.5).

Although nothing in the book specifically addressed the intersection of fishing family culture being affected by tourism, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that chapter 16 was written by a Croatian, Irena Ateljevic, who currently manages a small yoga tourism retreat on a private island in Dalmatia. Irena is the co-founder of the Critical Tourism Studies Network (<http://www.criticaltourismstudies.info/cts>) that "promotes the epistemological issues of reflexivity in the production of tourism knowledge," and she "explores tourism as a powerful agent of socioeconomic change" (Tribe 2009, p. vii).

Her article, "Transmodernity: Remaking our (Tourism) World?" speaks of humanity being poised to experience a "profound paradigm shift" in all aspects of life (social, cultural, political, economic), and says "that tourism is in fact one of the main indicators that a major shift in global consciousness and human activity is underway" (Ateljevic 2009, p.293). I believe this, or at least I want to believe it. It reinforces my own theory that views the momentum of tourism as an effective *mode of production*, something capable of ushering in a new era of diverse cultural appreciation, justice, and peace. "What is *good* tourism and in what ways can tourism contribute to a good world?" Is it possible that "good tourism" within Croatian fishing family communities could assist in sustaining valued cultural traditions, and, thereby, "contribute to a good world" (Tribe 2009 p.20)?

This is a question which I have addressed through the design and implementation of creative at-sea heritage tourism venues that focus on the quality of unique cultural and environmental experiences along the Inside Passage of the North Pacific Coast. Most travelers that sign aboard these journeys claim that the travel adventure has been *life-changing*, and has provided them a deeper understanding and appreciation of the natural world and the human impact upon it. This is the type of travel experience that provides a "spiritual dimension in life that goes beyond religious dogmas" (Ateljevic 2009, p. 285). It is type of tourism that nourishes the individual while helping to sustain diverse cultures and pristine wilderness areas.

### **A personal reflection:**

*Anna Pollock is the founder of the Conscious Traveler Movement. She believes that there is an expanding market of travelers “who are shaping a post recessionary consumerism—one that is mindful, collaborative, participative and co-creative.” If this is true, and if the trend continues to grow, then a variety of alternate tourism venues should be considered as potential openings for cultural sustainability graduates to carve out their own personal niche as participatory mediators between travelers, diverse cultures, and fragile environments. Creative thinking spurred on by new market demand has opened a range of channels that formally were unimaginable within the tourism industry and, perhaps, not yet seriously considered in the academic cultural education sector. If life-changing, transformative experiences are what individuals seek, then well-planned culturally-sensitive heritage tourism training and activities have the potential of having an impact on the entire world since much of the infrastructure of global tourism already exists. Despite the many negative impacts that are associated with mass tourism, its existence and power should not be ignored, and tapping into its existing structure to some limited extent may be both beneficial and unavoidable. If real change is to happen in how tourism is conducted, then clearly there will be occasions when alternative tourism will brush up against the mega-tourism machine. Battling or denying what exists is not the answer.*

### **Selection #4: “Intangible Heritage in the Maritime Realm: The Pedagogy of Functional Preservation.”**

This academic paper was written by James Bender, a graduate student at the University of Split, as part of the Philosophy/Adriatic Maritime Institute. James and I share much in common about going to sea, love of maritime heritage, and, perhaps most important, a desire to pass on maritime knowledge, skills, and values to others, especially the younger generation. James and his wife currently live in the United States, where they teach, but spend their summers in Croatia working with young children orphaned due to the Serbo-Croatian war. I consider James Bender a maritime cultural *change agent* that understands Irena Ateljević's notion of transmodernity, the belief that a new global consciousness is upon us. However, like most notions and theories, realities on the ground are seldom packaged as neatly as one might like. For Bender and myself, reconciling the growing separation of traditional maritime heritage preservation into two distinct approaches—one focused on tangible objects such as boats, and the other upon intangible qualities like maritime skills—is a situation that both of us find unacceptable. To tell an authentic and cohesive cultural story—about fishing families and their boats, for instance—the tangible objects and the intangible skills and stories are inseparable. Together, these two aspects of heritage complete a *package* that conveys a sense of cultural truth. Every Sumartin fisherman understands this perfectly; heritage preservation professionals, however, at times do not. Maintaining the connection between the tangible and intangible features is crucial if traditional maritime culture is to be sustained; however, reconnecting these two features is an ongoing challenge.

For me, Bender's paper boils down to the identification of this tension that exists between the *forms* and *functions* of maritime heritage preservation. Perhaps the same could be said about tourism development. The *forms* refer specifically to the physical objects, the tangible artifacts of maritime history that represent bygone cultures and are often collected, cataloged, displayed, and marketed to visitors at museums and community heritage centers. The *functions* allude to the intangible attributes such as the skills, knowledge, and stories of a maritime culture. These are more difficult, if not impossible, to preserve in a way that authentically represents their true essence.

Cultural heritage *functions* fall into the category of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), and are most effectually sustained (not preserved) when lived out within their *natural context*, as opposed to displaying them on stage or on festival grounds. What can be done as the authentic *context* of traditional maritime culture diminishes? The *forms* can be saved, but the *functions* are a different matter, with their own set of sustainability challenges. Bender states that "the predicament of representing both tangible and intangible heritage is a problem that museums and their personnel have been grappling with for some time, even before the UNESCO convention," as is explicit in the article "Museums and Intangible Heritage: The dynamics of an unconventional relationship" (2014, p. 11).

It is indeed an "unconventional relationship," and I would go even further, claiming it to be an incompatible relationship in most instances when efforts are made to join *tangible forms* with *intangible functions* of cultural heritage *outside* of their *natural context*. And as natural contexts change and disappear, such as within traditional fishing family communities, local knowledge is not only lost, but efforts to replicate it are not always accurate; this presents a rather *make-believe* and disconnected story. It is questionable whether these attempts serve the public, or just lead to *sugar-coating* the past with romantic images of the way life use to be.

Bender does not take my rather negative approach towards preservation professionals, yet he still struggles with the paradox inherent in the notion of cultural sustainability, like what I have felt throughout my entire career in maritime heritage preservation and education work. Are we doing the right thing, the best thing? This tension, however, assisted me in the field, and it will likely benefit my future work as well. Questioning helps to keep one's mind open and objective, always aware that cultural work plays out in dynamic realms of ever-changing ideas, attitudes, and practices.

#### **A personal reflection:**

*I felt compelled to act on behalf of those who came before me—those generous old fish boat captains and shipwrights who taught me skills that could only be learned through the observation of masters coupled with the opportunity to practice in the real world. Who now would speak for those that likely spoke of me before I was born? Although their built/visible*

*environment was greatly diminished, preserving their intangible knowledge, wisdom, and stories still needed to be undertaken. With literally no formal training in the field of cultural preservation, museum studies, or festival organizing, I proceeded to pro-actively take steps to counteract the loss of heritage, refusing to allow development to sweep it under the rug. Embracing a simple bumper sticker philosophy of “Lead and the LEADERS will follow,” I began navigating the twists and turns of public life as an advocate and spokesperson for the preservation of fishing family cultural heritage and the traditional maritime skills that defined it.*

*In collaboration with a folklorist (Phyllis Harrison PhD.), a few companions, and my boatyard employees, the Commencement Bay Maritime Festival was launched in 1993 as a celebration of the working waterfront, with an emphasis on the remaining fishing fleet. Fish boat parades and maritime skill demonstrations highlighted the annual event in its early days. With the momentum and credibility generated by the festival, our loose-knit band of supporters petitioned the town’s mayor and council members to provide us long-term use of one of the few remaining vacant warehouses on the waterfront to create the Commencement Bay Maritime Center, founded in 1994 as a not-for-profit venture dedicated to keeping the vessels, skills, and stories alive. It is worthy to note that moving these modest but bold ventures forward required mediation between diverse perspectives and modes of operation. Fishermen and boatbuilders on one side of the table and politically motivated decision makers on the other. The table was not in the council chambers or the board room; it was literally the galley table of my fishing boat. The point is that the context of where negotiations transpired made a difference. Place matters. Looking back now from a distance, I realize that these early experiences taught me the importance and power of place, something that has continued to serve me well in the field of heritage tourism as a means of educating the visitor. It’s not just what we do that makes a difference, it’s also where we do what we do. Both the performer and the audience are influenced by the surroundings.*

**Selection #5: “Analysis on Socio-Economic Fisheries Related Tourism in EUSAIR”** (EUSAIR = EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region). In response to the challenge of decreased fish stocks and the underemployment of fishing families, coupled with existing opportunities to market Croatian fishing culture to tourists, the European Union commissioned Med Maritime Consulting to study the potential of sustainable maritime tourism development in Croatia, Italy, and Greece; the document EUSAIR was the outcome. Together, the three-way regional partnership **NEMO** was formed, or **NE**working for the develop**Me**nt of maritime **tO**urism.

With the Mediterranean countries being one of the world’s most popular travel destinations, the EU views their waterfront and beaches as an economic development opportunity. But do they also see it as a cultural and environmental sustainability possibility? Perhaps they do. In 2010 the European Commission stated that “tourism is economically significant as one of the main and fast-growing maritime activities. It strongly benefits the regional economy by

creating jobs and promoting the conservation of coastal and maritime cultural heritage.” The Med Maritime study also reports that the World Tourism Organization (WTO) documented that “one-third of global income from tourism is generated in the Mediterranean region” (2014, p.4). Although mass tourism is primarily marketed by *Madison Avenue* style promotional campaigns hosted by multi-national corporations, it is still the individual travelers that *grease the gears* of tourism’s expansion. And there appears to be some evidence that individuals are shopping for alternative travel experiences that are more sensitive towards environmental and cultural conservation issues. I experienced this firsthand through my own heritage tourism programs.

Although the Med Maritime study of Croatia, Italy, and Greece draws conclusions and offers recommendations applicable to all three countries, the section on Croatia was of significance for my Capstone project, providing me with an overview of current conditions and policy decisions regarding the status of commercial fisheries and tourism within the County of Split, which includes the Island of Brač where the village of Sumartin is located.



The strategies that are put forward in the Med Maritime study were developed through networking among several local partnerships and stakeholder groups concerned with the state of the fisheries and fisheries-dependent families living along the shores of the Adriatic Sea. This effort included members of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF), the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs), and the EU Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET). In 2011, fully aware of the challenges facing European fishing family communities, this coalition went public with a position which stated that “a decline in income and employment in the fishing sector has underlined the urgent need for new, sustainable and inclusive solutions. Europe’s oceans, seas



and inland waters, and the environmental and cultural assets linked to them represent a vast and rich resource which can provide new opportunities for economic and social renewal. A key challenge therefore is to re-evaluate the potential of these assets to identify and develop new, more diversified and more sustainable economic activities and employment” (2014, p. 5).

The deteriorating socio-economic conditions of fishing family communities that the European coalition recognized in 2011 is similar to the alarm that I have been sounding in the United States since 1990. Mine has been a journey that began when I first recognized the decline and displacement of my own fishing family heritage and the working waterfront culture that supported it. Addressing this loss led me down a series of starts and stops, twists and turns, to save what remained of the traditions I dearly valued. Will Croatian fishing families attempt to “develop new, more diversified and more sustainable economic activities and employment” to save what they love, and adapt to the changing conditions in Dalmatia? The answer to that question will require more time, observation, and involvement. But, clearly, additional cultural sustainability practitioners, skilled in innovative approaches, would be advantageous in maintaining traditional maritime heritage in Croatia.

### **A Personal Reflection**

*One element of the new model that was used aboard the family fishing vessel as an integral cultural component during the long-range (1000 mile/14 day) heritage tourism trips was that of storytelling and performance. These two naturally occurring forms of social action were commonplace aboard fishing boats—so common in fact that they were most likely taken for granted by the fishermen themselves. However, the travelers were intrigued by both the text of the heritage stories and their delivery which was performed within an accurate cultural setting—a “natural context”—“i.e. the way the natives do [or did] things on their own, free of compromising outside influences” (Bauman, Briggs, 1990). The power of the story was increased by the how and where it was told. Every evening while anchored in a remote and lonely cove where salmon came to spawn, or in front of majestic glaciers, the stage was set on the aft deck or around the galley table, and it was in these intimate and unique situations that oral traditions were shared with the visitor. Opening the door and inviting the public to enter a piece of one’s cultural story is what heritage tourism is based upon. In the telling, what matters most to the performer gets reinforced. And through that performance the teller provides “a frame that invites critical reflection on communicative processes” (Bauman, Brigg 1990, p.60), a frame and a form of communication that perhaps would not have been possible anywhere else. And it is these processes, not products, that alternate tourism activities must be built upon.*

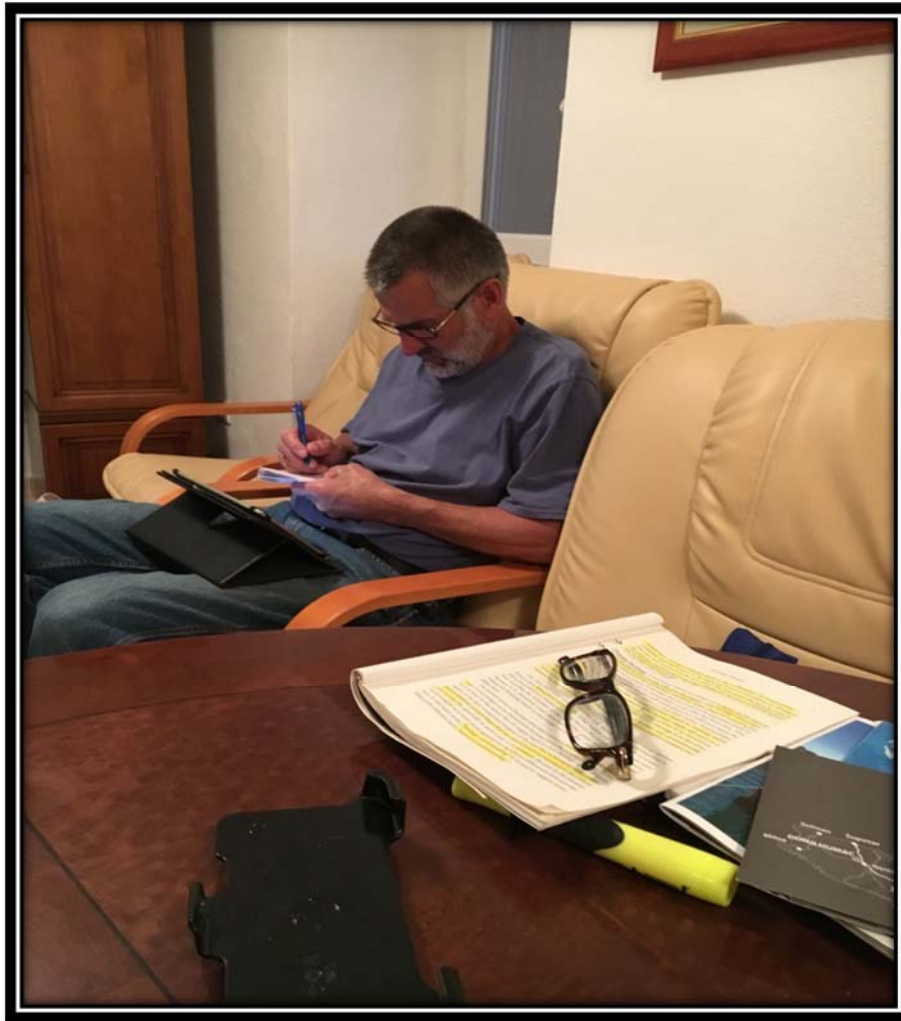


*Staff from U.S. colleges gather around the galley table while at sea with Captain Mike Vlahovich aboard the historic fishing vessel Commencement. Designed as training and curriculum development voyage, this Coastal Heritage Alliance hosted event provided the inspiration behind the development of the undergrad college course titled "Society, Environment and the Sea: Reading the Currents." Offered by Washington College of Chestertown, Maryland, in 2014, it will now be expanded to include Croatian college students in 2017.*

## Chapter 2: Field Notes Talking

*The most important element of fieldwork is being there—to observe, to ask seemingly stupid but insightful questions, and to write down what is seen and heard.*

David Fetterman (2010, p. 9)



*The first two weeks of field research were conducted in my father's birth village where several times daily I would pause to clean up my field notes and reflect upon their meaning. These moments were rich and memorable, helping me to realize the importance of being open to the moment—alternating between observation and reflection.*

The most beneficial method employed in conducting this research was just “being there—to observe—to ask stupid, but insightful questions, and to write down what is seen and heard” (Fetterman 2010, p. 9). While reviewing my raw field notes upon returning to the U.S. and preparing to write this thesis, I was mentally transported back to Croatia, reliving those moments—people, village life, sea, and the simple, also complex, issues that revolved around

my topic. My field notes are a treasure chest that contains and conveys the truth; although they do not provide absolute, definitive answers, they were the truth as I perceived it. Often, this truth was observed through my own predetermined lens, but occasionally, through the eyes and hearts of others. These *talking notes* are my notion of reality along the shores of the Adriatic Sea. However, I am aware, that a researcher is merely a *filter*, a pass-through for the thoughts and feelings of others.

I recorded these notes between May 11 and June 28, 2016, while traveling in Croatia. I logged approximately 38 entries throughout that period, most which reflect my time in the village of Sumartin where I conducted the majority of my field research. Some come directly from informant interviews, some from conversations with individuals serving in public roles, still others from observation and reflection. In order to protect the identity of informants, I have withheld the use of their names, or have used pseudonyms throughout this paper. My presence in Croatia was not timed perfectly with the height of the tourist season, so I never experienced what the months of July and August might have looked like regarding potential interaction of fishing family culture and tourism; I unfortunately left the field prior to the peak of tourism in my father's birth village.

I went to Croatia looking to expand upon my existing knowledge. These notes reveal where my work made progress, as well as where it may have come up short—both being important lessons learned. Time in the field stretched me beyond anything I could have imagined. Like the stone roofs on the houses of my father's home village, my field notes became the *high point* of my graduate studies at Goucher College; but more importantly, they have now also become the *foundation stone* of my future work in Croatia. With that said, I will allow a selection of the field notes, with minor alterations, *do the talking*. I hope that they will provide a glimpse of what life is like in the villages, towns, and cities I visited.

## A Sense of Place

**Entry #1:** Arrived at the airfield on *Otok Brac'* and waiting for a ride to Sumartin. Milos asked his friend Jadran to serve as taxi but he appears to be late. So the field study has officially begun. No time like the present to begin my observations, reflections, and field notes.

The sky cleared as we approached Brac' so had a great view of the Island's inland small villages, rock walls/fences, garden plots cleared here and there between the rock outcropping. The island has mostly small trees that might be quite old since I don't imagine that they could grow very fast in solid rock.

Temperature is pleasant, maybe mid 60's with a light overcast and gentle breeze. Nice indeed! The air is clean and refreshing, no smells or aroma, just clean.

**Entry #32:** The drive across the top of the Island Brac' was wonderful. Brac' is a huge rock with tons of small stones, several millions of them made into piles, rows, and fences to reveal what little tillable soil exists. The massive extent of stone collection is just mind-boggling—a hard and grueling task undertaken over centuries. What does this say about the history and the way of life lived out here? How have the environment and geology influenced the culture past and present? We are products of our environments, and we also affect those environments over time. It's a back and forth exchange that is forever in flux.

The large trees from long ago are gone. Perhaps harvested to build wooden ships for ancient civilizations? The trees remaining are small, stunted-looking, mostly pine, olive, citrus, fig, and other Mediterranean-style fruit trees. Came across a flock of goats in the road—they moved and continued to busily eat greens nearby.

**Entry #3:** 8:00 and the village is awake. I slept very well, and needed it. The sounds of the village have my attention. Last evening the neighborhood cat was in heat, the church bells ring on the hour, the ferry from Makarska docks in the harbor at 6am (can see it and hear it from the apartment), stone masons and construction workers have a project right next door so hammers and power tools are disrupting the morning calm—but I love it; it's the people of Sumartin living their life.

**Entry #24:** The birds are an active part of life on the Riva especially in the early morning. They swoop all around and come quite close to the people, which I experienced this morning. I do not know the type of birds they are. Katarina told a story about a woman in the village that has been paying very close attention to the local birds for many years and claims to understand their language. She can identify the bird sound that means that a cat is nearby, and sees how it sends out a warning to the others birds in the area. Bird watching might be a great pastime here on the island being close to nature both land and sea.

**Entry #22:** I hear the sea birds and the chatter of the folks at the cafe tonight from my little home. The kitchen window is wide open and I breathe in the pleasant evening air. Small children are playing in the neighborhood. This is a very safe place for all, especially for the kids. They run free in some respects. Not that they are without parents around, but still it is obvious that the children have no fear of people, cars, the water; they display a love of life and a healthy sense of community living.

I can hear the water/waves lapping up against the stone wall surrounding the Riva. The breeze must have changed directions and is blowing the sound my way. They call for clear skies tomorrow with the weather coming from a different direction. Perhaps the direction change has already begun. And what about the winds of tourism, the waves of tourism that lap along the shores on Croatia? Are they changing the cultural climate?



**Entry #14:** There is a law on the Island that all construction work in the village must cease by June 1st so as not to interfere with the tourist season. Signs of getting ready have started to appear. The rope and floats that section off the swimming area are in place. Lots of weed eaters are busy chopping down the undergrowth, sidewalks have been swept and delivery trucks have been visiting the stores and cafes. The ice cream shop opened this weekend too—great stuff! A few sun bathers have been on the beach seeking their seasonal tan. There is more socializing along the harbor in the evenings. Mothers (a few fathers) walking with baby strollers and small children, more dogs and clearly an increase in cars and motor bikes. The tempo of Sumartin is changing in anticipation of the visitor.

**Entry #21:** 04 June, 2016: at the Gilic` home. I woke up to a beautiful day in Sumartin. No Wi-Fi available here which is nice since its absence provides me some meditation time.... my exhaustion runs deeper than I realized. Went back to bed for a nap and enjoyed such beautiful relaxation. Just sleeping and waking, sleeping and waking, in a state of comfort and peace—body and spirit enjoying a bit of renewal—finally the master of my own time.

Katarina joined me for kava (coffee) this morning. It was so good to see her. It did not take long to catch up on one another's activities since our last visit about one and a half weeks ago. The majority fishing fleet is out working so the view from the Harmony Cafe is different. Several tables with shade umbrellas have been set up on the Riva. No tourists yet, but is likely to change as the day goes on and the ferry arrives. The Harmony Cafe is located very near the ferry landing and Katarina says that sitting there watching the passengers, sipping coffee or beer, is part of the local entertainment. Who has arrived, who is departing, what are they bringing with them, where are they from? This is people watching. She says it's their theater.



*My view of the Riva from the Harmony Café—empty tables awaiting tourists.*

*The sardine boats were waiting for the dark of the moon to set their nets.*

*Might the fisherman consider harvesting tourists using heritage as their bait?*

## Sustainable Lifestyle

**Entry #9:** Went on a photo search this evening for some well-groomed gardens. I'm sure that an entire thesis could be written just about the culture of gardens right here in Sumartin. Most of them are a true work of art, a blending of human hands and nature. It makes me think of the Garden of Eden especially when the Christian faith is factored into the equation. I view their gardens as a visible sign of their private heritage lived out seasonally in their back yards, yet in many instances they are visible to the public—both locals and visitors that walk the stone paths. And then you hear neighbors talking back and forth over the stone walls, so proud of what they have planted. Tomatoes, potatoes, kale, chard, lettuce, peppers, and, oh my, the roses! They remind me of myself, or at least the way I think of myself. A person with one hand grounded in the earth, the other reaching up to heaven. These people are earthy and spiritual at the same time. It's their nature, and it shows in the patterns of their daily lives. It's not about what they say; it's their actions, their performance as they do their dance of life.

**Entry #6:** Life is simple here, but they enjoy the goodness of this island and the sea that surrounds it. Fresh vegetables home grown from their gardens, homemade wine and delicious bread every day (give us this day our daily bread), olive oil pressed from the fruit of their own

olive trees, oranges, lemons, figs, almonds, and more. And yet so many have told me that the young leave Croatia in droves in search of a better life. Maybe life isn't so simple here?

The young and talented go to Germany, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the U.S., and other countries. Most, I am told, never return, except, perhaps, to visit family left behind in Croatia. Might tourism help to keep more of the young in their homeland by providing employment, increased contact with other cultures, business opportunities, a brighter and more cosmopolitan lifestyle? However, the lure of Western living and the notion that places like the United States being the *land of opportunity* may be as prevalent today as it was for my grandparents and my father.

Spent time with cousins in their outdoor patio and their very well-kept vegetable garden. Each plant individually groomed. It was a nature/human work of art. Man and nature in balance. They plant only the amount that they need for home use—such as tomatoes, zucchini, lettuce, parsley, eggplant, grapes, and, of course, olive trees. Aside from a desktop computer and iPhones, their lifestyle and dwellings are simple and do not seem to have been jeopardized in any significant adverse way due to tourism and modernity.

I have of course noticed changes since my last visit 44 years ago. There are small cars and motorbikes, several new homes of substantial size to accommodate tourists and second-home owners. There is a new pier they call the *Gate*, meaning an opening or a door to welcome visitors. The fishing boats are much larger and better equipped, and there is a grocery store of sufficient size—still tiny compared to anything I am use to. Perhaps what I miss the most is the small husband and wife run bakery, and of course the donkey I used to deliver fresh bread each morning to the locals, which included the communist-owned hotel. The intangible occupational skills of stone cutting and fishing remain, but new wooden boatbuilding seems to have disappeared since the current shipyard does primarily repair work with semi-skilled labor. Although there are several small wooden boats moored in the harbor, most are not kept up. So far I have not seen one of them leave their mooring. Maybe they will when the weather improves.

**Entry #13:** Will it ever be possible to return to an economy based upon traditional crafts and small scale gardening? The gardens in Sumartin are still a basic practice of life for multiple reasons perhaps—enjoyment, tradition, financial, health?



*A common scene along the walkways of Sumartin were the small plots of healthy vegetables groomed daily as if each plant were part of the family. There is very little processed food available in the village of Sumartin; residents prefer fresh. I was told that no one had ever starved to death in Croatia, since good food is available along the paths.*

**Entry #8:** Each day I enter deeper into their world. Their hospitality, their resourcefulness, their love of simplicity, their resilience, their sociality, their slow pace and peaceful nature, their skill and nurture in gardening and cooking. Is this what draws visitors to Brac`, for the opportunity to believe that a simpler life might be possible, that human nature was not meant to be so complex?

## White and Catholic

**Entry #6:** It is Sunday. I am looking forward to attending Catholic Mass this morning—both to see more of the residents, and for more of the residents to see me. I want to demonstrate a respect for their way of life and beliefs, and I also want to meet the priest, someone that I would like to interview. There is a crucifix on the wall in my bedroom, a rather large one. Sitting in the living room now I can see it; it's straight in front of me. These people live in faith and die in hope. Katarina told me last evening that on certain Catholic feast days the town has a procession (first the priests, then the men, then the women, and finally the children) where they circle the village in a clockwise direction; but during funeral processions they go the other

way, counter clockwise signifying a return from where they came—dust to dust, a reminder to all of the impermanence of life.

**Entry # 8:** My friend Franjo says that Croatia is *white and Catholic*, and today I meet a tourist boat captain that said that the country is *too much Catholic* and won't allow *night life* in the villages where he takes his passengers. He feels this hinders his business because his guests are looking for action. During the noon-day church bells we walked by a woman that stopped by the stone wall, made the sign of the cross, and folded her hands in prayer. Do the bells, which chime on the hour from 7am to 9pm, call the locals to prayer? There are stone crosses and small shrines to the saints positioned at various places throughout the village, homemade, simple, and well kept. Tomorrow is Sunday and I will be attending church services. Does the Catholic faith and practice play a major role in defending the village heritage from the type of tourism that might erode their cultural values? How much of the lives of the locals is based upon Roman Catholic doctrine? I need to ask the Franciscan priest what he thinks about tourism. Clearly, welcoming the visitor is a precept of the Christian faith, and the village is welcoming; but what about the introduction of different values that is brought to the island due to tourism? Do they welcome those people that may have different values?

**Entry #21:** Seven bells from the church—telling the village the time of day and calling them to prayer, directing their thoughts to God. The Roman Catholic influence surrounds Croatia with churches, chapels, shrines, pictures, crosses—all an outward sign of something that matters to them. Is it devotion, tradition, active living, and loving faith in action, or what? We called these objects *cultural markers* at school, and yes, they make up a community's identity. They send a message to the visitor—this is what matters to us, or what mattered to our ancestors—and maybe it is what the current generation would like the next generation to embrace. These things I do not know with any high degree of certainty. Is going public with what matters to you a sign of humility, or the opposite?





*One of many small chapels throughout Croatia, each one a beautiful, peaceful, and solemn space. Most are very simple structures with modest interiors. This one had cushions on the pews, something that offered less austerity to a setting that generally felt bare and stripped down to the very basics.*

**Entry #23:** I hear the church bells calling people to daily mass.

**Entry #25:** The small church on the island near Dubrovnik had its doors wide open and seemed inviting for that reason. It did have a small sign posted requesting that visitors respect the site and not wear their bathing suits in church. That was also a small Franciscan monastery. The Franciscans have a history of welcoming the stranger. That is definitely lacking here in Sumartin. They are kind and generous to me since I am basically viewed as one of them, but still have not observed bold upfront hospitality being extended to the visitor.



*A view of the chapel at the Franciscan Monastery on the outskirts of Dubrovnik, Croatia. Most services are attended primarily by elderly women that live walking distance from church. The Stations of the Cross hanging on the walls set a tone of suffering and hardship, but were also beautiful works of art. The people along Dalmatian Coast are primarily Roman Catholic, although that may be in name only since the pews were often empty. However, symbols of the Catholic religion were common in the homes and apartments I visited. Even the boat shops were adorned with pictures of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints—quite different from boat shop walls in the U.S. where Playboy pinups are the norm.*

**Entry #6:** I attended church services just now. Understood very little, but felt welcomed. They had beautiful organ music and choir. Is the church a routine, a practice, and a ritual where a foundational tradition can be maintained in the midst of cultural change and disruptions—something solid, a grounding, the heritage anchor and touch stone? Everything is always in flux. So how does a traditional community remain true to their spirit of heritage in conditions that have changed, and continue to change?

## Family Fishing

**Entry #7:** Fishing and what I have learned so far: My cousin, who is a fisherman, does not have positive feelings about its future, although, by the looks of their boats, the industry must be lucrative for some. His son helped translate for his father and explained that the biggest concern seems to be the increased regulations and catch quote enforced by the governments; that might mean both Croatia and the EU. They totally seem to understand, however, that you cannot just keep taking from the sea and expect fishing to last. Although the word *environmentalist* never came up in conversation, one can ascertain by observing their dwelling and lifestyle that they love the natural world, are happy with simplicity, and live an example of generosity. Yes, I may be making it sound more ideal than it is, since I am a guest, a visitor, which may put them in their best light and behavior; but still, their actions give the impression of genuine hospitality. Might that be one factor in attracting tourists to the village?

For anchovies and sardines the fishing happens during the dark of the moon when schools of fish are visible due to the light from the phosphorescence in the sea water as the fish gather toward the surface. So, they work within nature's cycles.

There is a fish packing plant on the island which I hope to visit. Evidently this has provided a steady market and a good price for the fishermen's catch—up to 5 Euros per kilo for large high-grade sardines. Much of the fish is now going to the fresh market on a global scale, but like several other fishing communities that have become "industrialized," it is sometimes hard to purchase fresh fish to eat in the village for personal consumption. This is a sign of modernity and high-volume mass production. It seems to me to be the makings of a "boom & bust" industry. Humans cannot keep taking from the sea in such large quantities. So, the former type of fishing in small craft that would deliver their catch to the village no longer exists in Sumartin. Large boats deliver their catch to the packing plant at another port, so the fishing culture is, in most respects, hidden from the visitor, the tourist. Currently the boats sit idle at the pier waiting for the next government-regulated opening to go to sea and harvest.

The tuna fishing is also done beyond the sight of the public, although each boat has an EU fisheries inspector aboard to ensure all fishers obey the regulations. The tuna are kept alive in a pen and towed to a much larger pen where they are fed and fattened up, and eventually sold primarily to Japanese buyers for high prices. Once again there appears to be little or no intersection between the fishing culture and tourism except for the tangible boats. In many respects the Sumartin shipyard provides a more engaging attraction for visitors because there is action taking place with people performing traditional skills in an authentic fashion. The shipyard represents the working waterfront of Sumartin.



**Entry #5:** What a beautiful morning sky. I'm at the Harmony cafe enjoying a coffee Croatian style. All alone, must have missed the morning locals at the cafe. Four fishing boats are in view: the *Nona Milka*, the *Perko*, the *SV Martin*, and the *Briljant*, each of them looking very well-kept and ready to go fishing. Found out today that it may be 15 days before they head out. New EU fishing restrictions and catch quotas are impacting the industry. The EU is buying fishing boats and destroying them to limit the harvest.



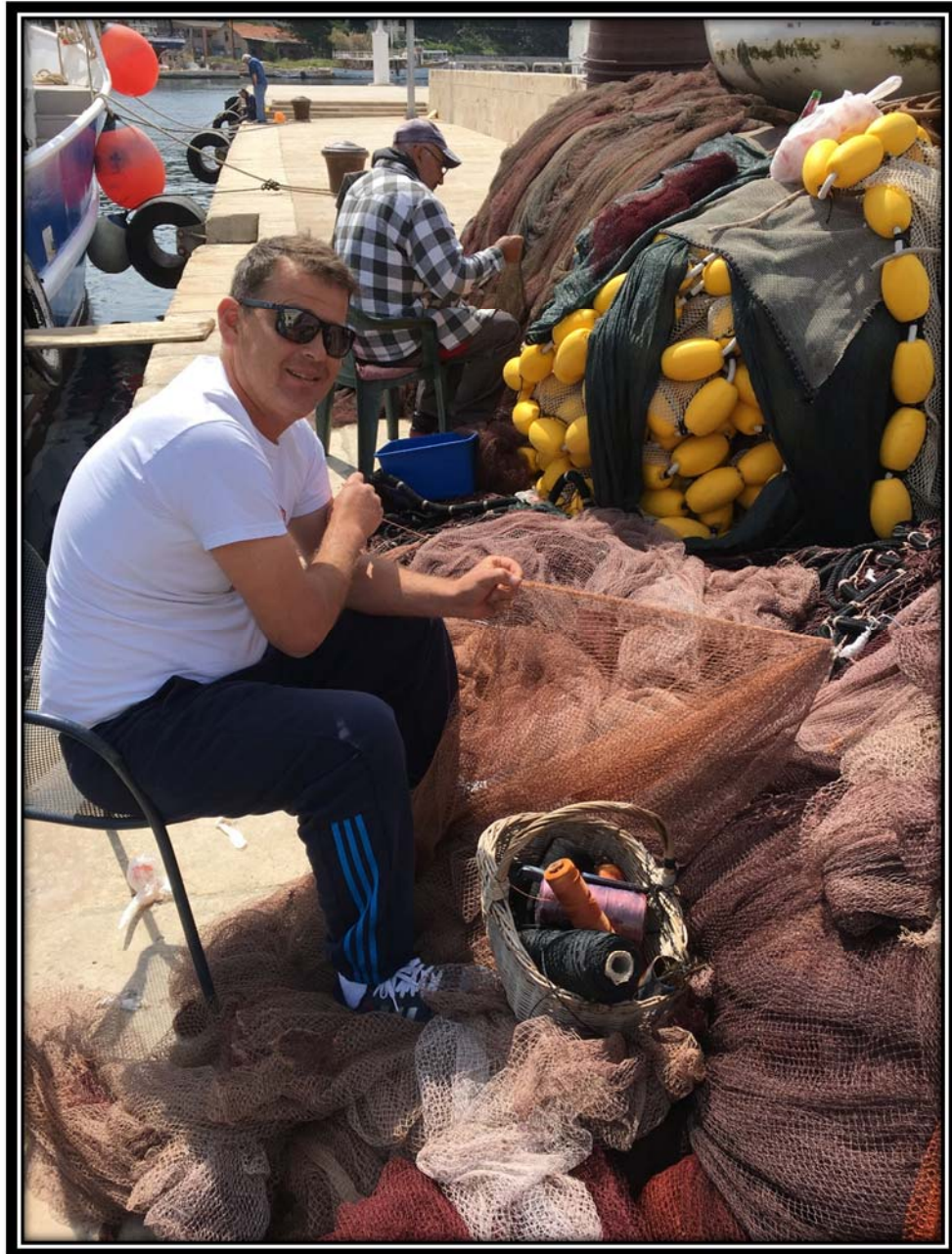
*Another fine morning at the Harmony café, a good way to start each day.*



*Family owned fishing boats awaiting their next scheduled fishing opening.*



It is another very pleasant morning. Sea bird sounds, a light breeze, and some Croatian being spoken at a distance. To the right are two members of a well-respected fishing family mending their nets. I have approached them twice already but it was awkward since we did not speak the same language. Still, I was confident that over time I could build a friendship with them because I was a fisherman for several years. Language is more than words.



*Antun is patching holes in a sardine seine on the Gate. He was once a fish boat captain, but left fishing to open the Harmony Café with his wife. They are trying their hand at generating revenue from the tourist trade. However, he still helps his family when it comes to preparing their fishing gear and boats.*



*Moored at the Gate in Sumartin where yachts and fishing boats compete for space.*

A fancy fiberglass sailing yacht was also moored nearby. It totally created juxtaposition considering the fishing fleet. I did not witness any interaction between the fishers and the yacht folks. I sipped my coffee and watched.

**Entry #4:** The Arkovic family that own several fishing boats have invested some of their profits in tourism by building villas, apartments, and restaurants in Sumartin; clearly, they see the financial benefits of tourism both for them and for the village. But they stand their ground when it comes to giving up any of their rights regarding the practice of their commercial fishing trade. I find this a very interesting situation. Yes, tourism may eventually displace fishing families in Sumartin, but not without a huge amount of resistance from the Arkovic clan that appears to have the upper hand both financially and politically on the Island of Brac`. I met Antun today who owns and operates a restaurant (the Harmony Café) right next door to the tourism office and the fishing boat pier. He speaks some English which I'm, unfortunately, finding to be rare among the older fishermen. Antun was busy but helpful, and has offered to meet with me again. He quit fishing a few years ago to try his hand at the restaurant and business which his wife assists him with.





*This was my view from the Harmony Café, a place where locals and visitors could connect, although I seldom witnessed what I would consider a significant cultural exchange between Croatians and tourists. The Harmony Café was built with profits made from the fishing industry. Is this, then, collaboration between fishing and the tourism industry, or just a new mode of production? Will it help to sustain culture, or become a vehicle for increased cultural change?*

**Entry #24:** Saw Antun's father, last evening on the Riva near his fishing net. He still needs help to turn over the net to find more torn areas which he diligently patches during the cooler times of day. I'm up early to assist. I believe that he said to meet him here in the morning at 6:30, so I am prepared to show up ready for work. No work this morning; instead he is busy patching a large hole in the net and is not yet ready to pull more net off the pile. So I enjoyed two more cups of kava, one with sugar and one without. I watched the children arrive on the Riva walking to the bus stop next to the ferry landing. Was surprised to see just how many children there are in the village. What will be the future of these young children?

**Entry #25:** Last evening when I was at the cafe that large converted fishing boat swung close by the Sumartin harbor with a load of tourists aboard. The music was blasting and fish was being cooked on the back deck—a real party atmosphere. So far that may be the best example of fishing family cultural commoditization.



*An ocean fishing trawler converted to perform tourism, an example of commoditization.*

Are there signs of fishing heritage or any other heritage being removed or alienated from its natural context; if so, has this action lessened its authenticity, and how so? I keep thinking about the senior fishermen sitting on the Riva every day mending their fishing nets. This is about as authentic as it gets. But Jadran thinks that the nets located front and center where the tourists disembark the ferry is a detriment to tourism enhancement because the fish net smells of fish and he thinks that visitors avoid going close. I do not think the smell is the problem.

There does not appear to be any intentional interaction on the part of fishermen and the visitors. They are busy working on their nets, but also own property and businesses that rely upon tourism dollars. So, what's the deal? Tourism money helps make some fishing families get rich (although it is primarily fishing that has made them wealthy, I think), but their relationship to the visitor is strictly business, a money exchange for a service rendered.

**Entry #8:** I had coffee at the Harmony again. It's the perfect site for me to view any potential interaction between fishermen and visitors, kind of a crossroads. So far zero action between

the two cultures. I am observing the Arkovic family mending nets, deep into concentrating on their work. No apparent sign of them paying any attention to the visitors that just off-loaded from the ferry. Why should they? It is common for them since the ferry arrives three times a day. But I also do not see any interest on the part of the visitors to observe or interact with locals performing their maritime craft of net making. No interaction! This is a missed opportunity.

**Entry #9:** Each arrival of the ferry from the mainland brings new visitors to the island. Since Sumartin is the southern port for mainland traffic, most visitors do not remain in the village, but rather using it as a *jump-off* point for trips to alternative spots on Brac`. They come on bicycles, motor scooters, cars, travel vans, and tour buses. There are no signs of anyone taking advantage of the fishermen's cultural image as a marketing tool for tourism development. Maybe when you have the “real” article active in the village there is no need to attempt to sell or market history or heritage. That type of memorializing generally does not happen until a heritage is viewed as dying or obsolete. That is when the heritage professionals take over through their work at museums where historic objects and photographs are used to tell a story—a story as seen through the eyes of professionals that may have no inherited connection to the tradition. No connection means no inherited responsibility to care for the heritage, *no skin in the game*. In Sumartin, heritage is lived, and, for the most part, lived totally in the open for all to see; what isn't seen however, will still go public. There are no secrets in the village.



*Pictured above is a Sumartin resident preparing his nets for subsistence fishing.*



## About Tourism

**Entry #5:** Is Sumartin a community in transition? Change does happen, so how do the locals view their identity considering the changes? My perspective may be somewhat unique, for 44 years have passed since I was here. What is the feeling regarding the growth of tourism in their village, in their country? So far, I have not heard any direct negative comments about it; however, what feelings might lie below the surface? I do get a sense that everyone wants to *get along*, which might mean some feelings are not often expressed.

I researched a bit on-line this morning regarding the long and rather violent history of this region. Political and religious strife is nothing new to these people, nor is the marketing of the Dalmatia Coast to tourists. Tourism promotion began after WW II, and now Croatia is deemed to be one the most popular travel destination on the globe. Clearly this wonderful environmental and cultural region has been discovered.

Yesterday there was a bus group of Japanese tourists waiting to get on the ferry to the mainland. Today a boat load of *day trippers* from the mainland arrived for a few hours, but neither of these groups stayed the night. In fact, the Japanese never even left their tour bus. Sumartin does not appear to be a *destination* spot, more a *pass through* and a summer home location. Only 500 full-time residents live here.

**Entry #23:** Tourism business is a bit like fishing: it's seasonal; the bait and your position matter; location, location, location; it is competitive; it pays to be aggressive; the payoff is uncertain; may not be sustainable; may need to alter bait and gear to attract the kind of catch you are looking for; may need to take the good with the bad; lots of *by-catch*; may not be properly regulated; requires investment with no promise of a return; requires skilled workers which are hard to find; need to stick and stay to make it pay; must be willing to experiment with new approaches; and best if your wife has a job with a dependable income.

**Entry #22:** German visitors do everything by the book and obey the one stop light on the island, whereas the locals always run the red light if there are no other cars coming the other way. Such has been a common practice for years, but now since the tourists obey the traffic signal it is causing the locals to change their habit of driving. Modern ways are having an impact. This is the best concrete example of tourism's effect on local practices, but there must be more.

**Entry #14:** In the book *Heritage Matters*, Chambers speculates that "tourists may have no past or current association with the cultural markers that have meaning to the locals both past and present." These include things like the church, the Sumartin style of wooden boats, the religious shrines, the stone work, the gardens, the olives, grapes, and flowers. Visitors certainly can appreciate and enjoy experiencing these things, but the depth of meaning to those who have inherited these cultural practices may be impossible for visitors to understand. And visitors

have no responsibility in the care of these valued traditions because they are not the heirs. So, then, where do I witness the locals assuming responsibility to carry the valued traditions forward? Is it an obligation to transfer traditions on to others? Is there community benefit in doing so? Does the community decide what is best for them, or is it left to everyone individually?



*The traditional stone work of Sumartin. The older homes have stone roofs.  
The stone from the Island of Brac` was used to build the White House.*

**Entry #32:** It was easy to recognize the signs of mass tourism even prior to reaching the shore of the mainland city of Split. Several large cruise ships were tied up with small tour boats zigzagging around the harbor. No fishing boats in sight! Lydia took the time to serve as my tour guide through the palace (Diocletian`s) and the old city. History, yes, but contemporary culture as well. The history is the old story and the tangible stone structures. The culture is the tourists, the tourist industry, and the locals that live and work within the ancient city walls. Maybe the most interesting (something that I hadn't considered) is that regular Split citizens live within the walls—in common with thousands of visitors from all over the world that come to see this UNESCO heritage site. But what exactly is that designation preserving, saving, sustaining? Do they give much consideration to the people that live in the old city?

The tourists totally overwhelm the site and play a role in creating the culture that now exists there. Their impact, in a way, is temporary when looked at on an individual basis, but the

cumulative effect of the hordes of tourists is permanent, causing disruption to daily life. At least one would think so. But maybe not if daily life has been transformed and adjusted to the situation. I found the experience not pleasant. However, it might have been different with fewer visitors and fewer retailers. There was just too much going on to be able to appreciate both the history and the life of the permanent residents within the walls. I focused more on the laundry hung out to dry, and the front doors of people's apartments that might give a clue to who lived inside. The history meant little to me.

**Entry #30:** What holds the community together? Does tourism affect the social *glue* that holds things together?

**Entry #29:** I heard from Tilghman Island watermen (on Chesapeake Bay) that they do not mind the tourists arriving, spending their money, and then leaving. In Croatia, I am hearing a similar attitude, but even in a bit stronger tone. Here it is—just come, leave your money, and go home. Or a new one last evening suggested that the visitor not visit at all, just send their money! There is an attitude here of feeling downtrodden and the deserving of *handouts*, so they are fine with receiving visitors' money.

A friend refers to Croatia as the *White Africa*—poor and backward. I think Croatians are far too proud (to a fault perhaps) to accept an out-and-out *handout* from visitors, but still I cannot help but wonder if some of them think that the world owes them a living. Again, it raises the question in my mind about the years of communist rule where much was taken from them by the government; now they may feel that it is time to get back what they lost. At the same time the communist government provided housing/apartments as part of a worker's compensation package, so the memory of government taking care of you remains with them I think. It is a complex social, political, and economic situation in Croatia now, with tourism being the only *source of income* to look toward for stability and an improved way of life, although the definition and notion of the word *improved* may be a two-sided coin. The gap between the poor and the rich can be seen in the homes where people live in these island villages. The new houses and villas have large grounds surrounded with stone walls and iron gates—all well-kept and professionally cared for, in striking contrast to the squeezed-together old stone homes of the old residential area. The two images are in strong contrast.

**Excerpt #18:** Eventually went to the university (of Zagreb) library to locate a book edited by Erve Chambers titled *Tourism and Culture* and settled in for an hour or so to read and jot down notes and thoughts. The reading made me realize just how little I know about the subject, and made me aware that what I do know is rather shallow and biased. I must work at being more aware of my subjectivity towards this cultural practice of tourism.

What do host communities gain, and what do they give up to realize the benefits? This is a good place to start the interviews, to begin to see how different individuals view the pluses and

minuses of tourism within their village. Will they identify similar things, or might their answers depend upon their relationship to the tourism industry? What about potential differing points of view regarding age, occupation, gender, social class, financial status, new or old resident, education level, language—things like that.

Thoughts from my reading yesterday: primarily, tourism is an economic development strategy, but it also provides opportunities for cultural expression as you might witness through various customs of music, song, dance, food, performance, and others means. Can it also be used to establish and reinforce a political identity, strengthen a set of religious beliefs and practices? So, what are the various motivations behind the establishments, and once it is established, how do individuals and communities create ways to use it to their specific advantage? The initial concept and rationale behind tourism development might appear to be singular and straight-forward, but once established its complexity increases. This may be partially due to the wide variety of social, economic, and cultural sectors that tourism influences.

In the village of Sumartin, for instance, what are the observable markers of tourism's presence? Rooms and apartments for rent in homes of the locals; additional cafes, ice cream shops, newspaper, and magazine stands; a tourism office and staff; spin-off enterprises such as boat, motor bike and car rentals; new construction of all sorts from high dollar villas to traditional stone outdoor cooking stations; multi-lingual residents able to cater to foreign visitors.

**Entry #7:** This is not what I expected to find. I came here looking for signs of commoditization of the fishing culture, expecting that the fishing culture would be somehow marketed as a tourism product, but so far, I have not witnessed much evidence of that. Perhaps in the larger towns and cities, yet I have my doubts. I have entered this project with a preconceived notion of how things would be, primarily based upon my own biases and prior experience in the U.S. where I have witnessed the displacement or disruption of working waterfronts that were necessary to support fishing family culture. Here I still see working vessels (modern and thriving), and a very busy traditional shipyard that directly supports the contemporary fishing culture. Yes, there is the conflict over dock space and related revenues that exist regarding fishing vessels and tourism/pleasure boat usage (as explained to me by Irena of the tourism office). She also mentioned that there have been visitors that asked to purchase locally caught seafood, and appeared interested in learning more about the fisheries in general. Sumartin had a paid tour guide at one time but there is no longer a budget for it, so deliberate engagement with the visitor on the street does not currently take place.

## The Director`s Perspective



*The Tourism office in Sumartin, a department of the Selca Tourist Board.*

**Entry #4:** Next stop was the Sumartin Tourism Office that is located across the street from the ferry landing and the fishing boat docks. Nevena from the University of Zagreb helped to connect me with the director of tourism in this municipality. I went in and introduced myself, she said that they expected me yesterday (did I screw up already by being a day late?). No, everything was all right. They wanted to know more about what I was interested in learning, since Nevena had just told them that I wanted to meet the local fishermen. When I briefly explained my project and how it had something to do with the relationship between fishing culture and tourism, the director said, "Let's go have kava and talk about it." So, we did. We had a very enlightening conversation about the intersection of fishing culture and tourism policy here in the village. What I learned is packed with potential, but the unpacking of it will take time; I've got to proceed slowly.

She was not hesitant to tell me that tensions exist between the tourism board (the decision makers) and the fishermen in the village. They all get along and like each other, but issues such



as dock space usage are an ongoing problem because the fishing boats take up room that could be used by visiting yachts that would pay a substantial amount to tie up there. Generating revenues is one of the most important tasks of the tourism office since it is how the staff gets paid and how ongoing administrative expenses are covered; but the fishing boats may not be required to pay anything. Unlike most of the Chesapeake Bay watermen, the fishing boat owners in Sumartin are wealthy compared to the average resident of Sumartin. They are not considered threatened. In fact, I have been told that Sumartin is home to the largest and most successful fishing fleet in Croatia. The fishermen are also supported politically by the EU that wants to ensure a healthy fishing industry and a diversification of employment opportunities not dependent upon tourism revenues which are only seasonal and do not offer high wages.

The director is upset about what she views as incompatibility between tourism and commercial fishing. I understand what she is referring to. Fishing boats and fishing culture generally do not mix well with fancy yachts and high class society. But in this case, now, it appears that the fishing families have the upper hand.

**Entry #8:** I gathered additional info about the disruption at the *tourist gate*. Come to find out that the *Gate* is the new pier recently built in the harbor that supposedly is there to support visiting vessels which would provide direct revenue in support of the tourism office, but the fishermen instead have seized it for their own use, and they pay little or nothing in return. Irena claims that the fishermen lobby the politicians, one of which was recently released from prison, with fish dinners and liquor aboard their boats. I have yet to get the other side of the story from the fishermen.

**Entry #6:** How are the valued traditions of the village being "guarded and nurtured" (Noyes)? Who is responsible for the "care and feeding of tradition" in Sumartin? Who is "likely to be called upon to judge local disputes"? Who, for instance, will prioritize the use of the new pier? Will policies favor the fishing boats or the visiting yachts? Both uses benefit the community in direct ways regarding the generation of revenue in support of local livelihoods. The fishermen could claim that harvesting the seas has clearly been a tradition along the Dalmatian coast for centuries; likewise, the tourism industry can claim that visitations to these islands have been commonplace for just as long. The *pier* issue is a good example of the differing value systems at work regarding these ideological disputes through the *reification* of tradition by taking intangible values of heritage ownership and transferring them into real objects such as a concrete pier that is sought after by differing user groups. This is an example of real conflicts that exist in many of the fishing communities I have lived and worked in. Now I see that the *sense of place* is not only dependent upon the actual built and natural environments, but it is also dependent on how those *places* are used, were used—context matters.



*Fishing boats on left, tourist ferry on right, fishermen in the middle, and a wall between them. The context and the built environment send a message that sometimes comes across louder than words.*

**Entry #4:** The fishing fleet's presence in Sumartin has also created a healthy shipyard economy where it appears that several locals have good employment opportunities. So, it looks like some traditional maritime skills are being sustained here. There is also a good deal of residential construction work happening in preparation for the summer tourism trade. This, too, is sustaining traditional skills in the field of stone masonry, which has been a mainstay of the Island's economy for hundreds of years. Its white stone is what the U.S. White House is constructed from. The village appears to be busy.

Some have said that, after so many years living under the communist rule when the government took over private businesses, the people are now enjoying a period of personal property ownership and capitalist ventures. They may now be attempting to make up for lost time after being deprived of that freedom when Croatia was part of Yugoslavia under Tito's rule. It's all about the context, both how conditions were and about how conditions are now.



*The Sumartin tourism office staff—both very helpful informants.*

### Informants' Opinions (not direct quotes)

**Entry #23:** I received good information this morning speaking with local residents. Some of their responses to my questions were:

- The best thing about tourism is that it provides me with a job.
- Sumartin only gets sufficient visitors after the hotels and apartments in the neighboring towns are all full up.

- Young fishermen and their wives are the only ones having families, some with four and five children. They are the ones that can afford a family.
- The new apartment development is funded by outsiders from other countries. Often, they build an elaborate villa for their part-time use, and then rent it out the rest of the time.
- There is little or no connection being made between the locals and the visitors, except for tourism business connections, and no cross-cultural exchange with visitors from other countries or cultures.
- Comments are made to the tourism office about lodging that is not clean. Some landlords are not providing good hospitality and not demonstrating a warm welcome to the guests.
- The locals just want the tourists to leave their money and go home.
- The decisions about development are made at the district headquarters in Selca, and the feeling is that they sometimes play favorites; it is deemed an inequitable distribution of resources. Was it more equitable under communism?
- Sumartin is the least successful town on the island when it comes to tourism development and revenue generation.
- The problem is us! The residents are unwilling to make changes that would make the town more attractive and show the visitors that they are glad to see them.
- The Riva is loaded with cars which make it less attractive for walkers.
- Parking should be elsewhere, and the Riva closed to autos
- The locals are getting too lazy to walk; they even drive a car a very short distance to go shopping in the village.
- Making more money has incentivized the people to spend more and acquire creature comforts.
- City folks will pay more for modern facilities, and modernization is changing the fabric of life. It threatens traditional values and occupations. I can imagine how important it might be for fishermen to continue fishing, not just for the paycheck, but also for the heritage aspects.
- When you arrive in Sumartin everything seems so perfect, but if you *scratch the surface* you discover many problems.
- Envy towards the success of others, brutal competition in business, and cut-throat practices—all over money. Is tourism bringing out some of the worst in the locals?

- Many are just resigned to the fact of inevitable cultural change, and just seem to ignore the problems and the potential solutions.
- Maybe when young residents return after college there might be the opportunity to make changes for the better in town and in local politics.
- It's not so much that tourism is disliked; it is tolerated since the economy depends so much upon it. But developing a more sustainable, equitable, and authentic heritage representation as part of the local industry does not appear to be happening. In fact, some who have tried have been challenged by others. It is discouraging for the few that are ambitious and seek to make a better life for themselves.
- The lack of incentive among the young is getting worse. They tend to live off their parents, stay at home.
- Tourism development is further hindered by the confusion over property ownership. The government has changed hands so many times over the last 25 years or so that property ownership is being contested.
- The former communist hotel in Sumartin is one example. The development of this vacant structure would provide dozens of good jobs for residents, but those who have attempted to purchase it have just given up because of all the expense and red tape.
- It is almost like most locals want things to be like they were in the past, and are blind or unwilling to face the challenges and opportunities of the current culture which involves tourism—it is not going to stop!
- The residents of the island Vis organized a while ago to block/protest the ferry from landing there to demand that their island received direct ferry service instead of first stopping at another island because they believed that they were losing potential tourists, visitors that may be getting off the ferry somewhere other than Vis.
- Finding a niche—Jure is expanding upon his motor bike rental service because the competition was too stiff in the rental car business. Any venture undertaken in Sumartin is liable to upset someone else and cause animosity in the village. Not a pleasant way to live, especially in a town of only 500 residents.
- Some disagreements go back generations between families, although most people do not even know what may have started the feud.
- The classic case of change vs. no-change is showing itself in the village.



- The Port Authority is a private contractor that does not live here. He lives in Split, and, therefore, is not from the village, but he makes money from the tourists that come to Sumartin by boat.
- Jure has many ideas on how things could work better. Asked him if he should be the one to move things forward. No way—it would mean major conflict for him in town.
- The insider's cultural norms are having a major influence on progress. Those that have the ability and interest to move forward regarding tourism development are faced with the pushback from within their own community.



*Seen here are visiting yachts moored at the Gate in Sumartin. The Gate was constructed to accommodate tourists and generate revenue needed to underwrite operations at the local tourism office. The fishermen refused to give up their moorage, and have also refused to pay for the space they occupy with their boats and nets. The tension that exists at the Gate is due to the intersection of fishing family culture and tourism.*



*A senior fisherman and a young man are mending sardine nets at the Gate in the coolness of the early morning hours. The traditional maritime skill of net mending would be a perfect demonstration to perform for visitors. Some, I believe, would even pay to be taught how to do it.*

## Human Interest Tales

**Entry #22:** I do not have Wi-Fi in the apartment that I am in, so I either need to go to the cafe at a table or sit on the stone steps leading up to my cousin's home. The stone steps and porch are somewhat closed to the public on three sides. The place is a bit dirty and even smells like piss. Anyway, it's clear that others have also used this location to connect to the Wi-Fi next door because of the cigarette butts scattered around. I went there just a few minutes ago, to log in and check email and FB. This time someone else was there. We were both a bit surprised to run into each other. It was a young man with his iPhone. He must have thought it a bit bizarre for an old new guy in town like me to be hiding on the porch attempting to tap into someone else's internet connection.

**Entry #4:** I approached two fishermen, one middle-age, the other older. They were both working on their nets patching holes. They did not speak English so our conversation was short. I understood enough of what they said to know that they wondered why I did not speak Croatian, their native language. Why didn't I learn to speak it? I was a bit embarrassed and

realized that many here know English, although primarily just the young and a few of the professionals. I will need the help of a translator during some of my interviews. I'll give it more time and wait until both they and I feel more comfortable. Again, time may be on my side. I remember what Captain Stony said in his interview regarding visitors to his Island of Deal on the Chesapeake, "Once one (local) accepts you, then most everyone else on the island accepts you—but that does not happen immediately" (excerpt from an audio interview performed by Mike Vlahovich for the Maryland State Arts Council in 2015).

**Entry #11:** The local fishermen were out in the rain working on their nets, turning the net pile over on the pier—maybe looking for more holes to patch or perhaps just getting better prepared for the next opener. It provided a great photo opportunity because I could get up close to the action, and because of the rain they were all wearing bright colored rain gear. Best photos so far of the fishermen in action. While outside of the Tourism Office I was approached by a Croatian man that was all smiles and acted like we had met before, but we had not. He spoke no English but I understood enough to realize that he was inviting me to his home for dinner. With the help of a nearby storekeeper who knew some English we could communicate and confirm his invitation.



*Brac` Island sardine fishermen unloading their nets in the rain. Their activities were positioned in full public view where restaurant patrons and those walking by could watch the fisherman at work. It is yet another opportunity for good heritage tourism.*

**Entry #17:** Yesterday, a young man cried on my shoulder in happiness and appreciation for the friendship that we have developed over just the last three days. I would like to bring him to the U.S. as my apprentice so that he can return to Croatia with the skills needed to be both productive and well respected—and of course happy. He has been through some difficult times with depression, but now he sees a path forward to grow in skills and values and self-love. I recognize potential in him as a sailor and a shipwright because he is very bright and hardworking. This may be the initial opportunity for CHA and the Croatian-American Society to collaborate internationally. I must draw on CHA partners in America to seek support.

**Entry #9:** Stumbled across an open cellar door today and got a glimpse of some old-fashioned boatbuilding tools and machinery. An elderly man and a teenager were inside. I stuck my head in and interrupted whatever they were doing—couldn't help myself, had to find out if there was some active small wood boatbuilding going on. Neither person spoke English so the verbal exchange was awkward. (I continue to feel ashamed about not knowing the language.) Nonetheless, the old man had plenty to tell me. He was animated in his speech and gestures—sometimes shaking his fist, tapping me on the chest, raising his voice, but also holding my hands and coming close to tears. What did he want me to know?

We did communicate somewhat about Croatians in North America that were from Sumartin originally: Skansie, Serka, Kasalin, Vlahovic, and others. Maybe that set the stage for him to unload. Some words and hand gestures were clues regarding different nationalities that visited Sumartin. Scandinavians, French, Germans, English—these were nationalities he mentioned as he pointed to the wealthy tourist area across the harbor. And he would rub his thumb and two fingers together, saying and signifying that they had lots of money.

My impression was that he was not happy with tourism and strange people invading his village, but then I may have it all wrong. I did gather that his wife died a few years ago, and that he was lonely. That may have been the subject that got him teary-eyed. Then he would give me a very big smile and hold my hand as if to say goodbye; but, no, he would once again start in with his monologue and I would feel obliged to remain with him. Finally, I said goodbye and we parted.

It was a special 20 minutes or more of immersion in the culture where understanding the words was, perhaps, not very important to me. I could understand much about the man by looking around his shop. A very cool wooden boat covered up with a tarp, half models of boats on a shelf along the back wall, band saw, table saw, hand tools, and wooden boat patterns hanging from the rafters. Like me, he had also lost a finger or two in his years of boatbuilding. How amazing that our finger loss also connected us.





*This was my boatbuilding neighbor in Sumartin in his basement shop keeping busy.*

**Entry #10:** I returned to visit my neighbor today, the little old man who used to build boats in his basement/cellar. He allowed me to take his picture, and he was clearly happy to see me.

Fortunately, he was busy doing a small project which made it a bit easier for me to cut my visit short to avoid a situation like the one yesterday. I heard from Ivo that he also is cautious about getting in a situation of listening to the old boatbuilder for hours on end. It would be different if I could understand what the gentleman was saying. Still, he represents a village culture of openness, friendship, and trust which I would think must appeal to those who visit.



*This was my neighbor—at work, at peace—in his special place.*

### Chapter 3: Cultural Narratives



*This was an evening performance during the Festival of the Sea, Komiza. It told and retold a story about the fisherman from the Island of Vis and the wooden boats that took them to sea. For the residents and visitors, it was a night of laughter and tears—an authentic good heritage tourism event.*

When setting out to explore, one generally anticipates discovering and learning something new. Exploration can take adventuresome folks into unknown territory. No matter how well-planned, an authentic journey of exploration will certainly contain some surprises. Clearly my investigation into the intersection of commercial fishing and tourism in the Republic of Croatia had its share of epiphanies, even to the extent that the cultural themes and narratives have become more important to me than the specific topic or plot of this thesis. However, it is those



underlying currents of thoughts and emotions—both mine and those of others—that have provided me the opportunity to develop *thick descriptions* of persons, attitudes, and situations encountered along the Dalmatian Coast. Although my time in the field was relatively short, approximately seven weeks, and my primary investigative research concentrated on a rather small *slice of life* in Croatia, the richness and depth of what I experienced during that period was transformational.

In this chapter I present a sampling of narratives that I have identified by means of observation, dialogue, and reflection. These narratives resonated with me in *broad ways* regarding human cultural, social, and economic conditions—things I have witnessed in other small traditional maritime communities intersecting with tourism. Some text has been adapted from my raw field notes, some from my secondary research, and some from my personal interpretation of *what it all might mean*. Jumping from the emic, or *insider's* perspective, to the *outsider's*, or etic perspective, was unavoidable, since I, too, was affected by what I discovered. Becoming intimately connected to the people and places has greatly enhanced the meaning and purpose of this study. I could gain new information on a subject of personal and professional interest, and address my central question regarding how good heritage tourism might assist in sustaining Croatia's traditional maritime culture.

These narratives are not about events, not about what I did, where I traveled, nor necessarily about whom I met and interviewed; rather, they are an attempt to provide additional significance and texture to the human conditions that reside behind the scenes. They comprise some of the distinctive cultural features that captured my attention, recurring poignant motifs that seemed to increase in intensity upon reflection. Some experiences brought me laughter, some tears, some joy, others sadness. However, emotions are part of engaged travel, and they are what makes *creative tourism* initiatives so special, and at times life-changing. It is also this degree of awareness and openness that I believe is required in the design, development, and implementation of authentic heritage tourism venues—a type of tourism not based upon consumption, but rather, deep engagement with people and the nature. Cultural narratives of persons and place are the basis of good heritage tourism.

At times the distance spanning laughter and tears can be very short indeed. The seeming dichotomy that exists between joy and sadness can become somewhat fuzzy, as has been the case throughout my field research. Some narratives depicting tension and conflict within communities have also become the impetus toward conflict resolution and inventive action, leading the way in sustaining valued characteristics of threatened cultural traditions. It's as if every negative thematic feature identified also sparked a potential *ray of hope*, a sign of positive change coming alive to counter the ill effects of mass tourism, corruption, consumerism, brutal capitalism, and the loss of humility. A few of these new and exciting hopeful signs will be introduced in Chapter 5 (*What's Next?*). Again, these narratives are not



the *plot* of this Capstone, but without them, this paper would be lacking in truth. For the casual visitor to Croatia, everything looks beautiful, ideal, and perfect; but I was there long enough, and was perhaps observant enough, to realize that Croatia is not as *dreamy* as it may first appear. Knowledge of the conditions and trends existent in a culture is crucial when facilitating heritage tourism projects, since potential cultural misrepresentation and shallow interpretation may be an obstacle to local community support.

## Narrative #1: Humility & Pride

I am 100% Croatian and know full well just how proud my people are of their ethnicity—their skills and abilities, their heritage, their culture, and, of course, their soccer team. For the most part, we Croats are not lacking in self-esteem; generally, the opposite is the case having an inflated view of ourselves. So, when I met Lovro at the waterfront café and asked him how tourism had changed life in this village, and what, if anything, had been lost, his response took me totally by surprise. Once again I found some of my preconceived notions of what I anticipated discovering in the field overturned.

A mutual Croatian friend joined us at the table to enjoy afternoon coffee and conversation, so when Lorvo said in English that his village had lost *humanity*, both he and his friend pondered whether *humanity* was the correct English word to best describe the loss. Together they arrived at the word *humility* as a more accurate way to express what he believed to be true. I was puzzled by his answer and probed a bit more. Was it that the village residents had lost *humility* toward the visitors? Were the residents treating the tourists in a resentful way? Lorvo felt no, it was not a lack of *humility* towards the visitors...no, not at all! The lack of *humility* was becoming increasingly evident among the local merchants that cater to the tourists.

This made me wonder about what the opposite of *humility* was. At first I thought it must be *pride*, for I already knew how very proud the Croatians were of their country and way of life. Was their inflated self-esteem making them less *humble* towards one another? No, Croatian pride was not the problem. It was not a lack of hospitality towards the visitor, but rather, a lack of *humbleness* among the residents themselves. So, I asked Lovro what was causing the instability in the village. He claimed that the locals had caught a virus—a virus that had come from the West. Its symptoms were showing up in local decision-making regarding tourism business development, which created a climate of unfair and inequitable practices. Some residents had received special permission to expand their businesses at the expense of their neighbors. Politics, favoritism, even greed perhaps, were all causing a lack of *humility* in Lovro's opinion. This sentiment was expressed to me by other individuals in Sumartin where competition over the tourist dollar was causing friction between neighbors. Conditions and feelings such as these can be a potential pitfall while working in small villages where the tourist

season is only a few months in duration, and tourism is the primary revenue source of many residents. It can create a *cut-throat* business atmosphere, reminding me of my commercial net fishing days when limited fish stocks, short regulated seasons, and rather small congested fishing areas would often result in a loss of humility toward your fishing neighbors.

## Narrative #2: Consumerism

The narrative of *humility & pride* is not unique to Lovro's village since it is a thread that runs through other communities facing the challenges and competitions arising from tourism's fast advancing driving force, and its creation of a new economy based upon capitalism. This, of course, is a relatively recent development in Croatia, having existed for decades under a communist/socialist system up until 1994. So, once again, I approached Lovro with a question—did he believe that *capitalism* was to blame for the *virus*? I thought this was likely the case. Wrong again. This time Lovro was even more emphatic. He was not blaming the new *capitalist* system in Croatia. The freedom of property ownership and the right to succeed in business is basically sought after by Croatians; it is what they fought and died for during the Homeland War. But, instead, Lovro thought that *consumerism* was the dreaded virus. He said that *consumerism* was contagious and was serious enough to disrupt life in the village. Then he turned the tables on me and began asking a few questions of his own. He wondered if I liked living in the United States. I said yes, "It's good there." Immediately afterwards, however, I wondered if he was referring to my attitude towards *consumerism*. Clearly, he blamed the West, and especially the U.S., for introducing the practice of "earning more and spending more, and earning more and spending more, a pattern that was addictive."

Lavro was a professional in his career as a marine surveyor for a European insurance company. He spoke very good English and was fluent in German as well. He was intelligent and well-traveled, and called the village *home* for the last 30 years—long enough to have experienced the changes. Recently he had decided to close his consulting business because the *virus* obviously was starting to infect him as well. I do not think that he liked what he himself was turning into. Was he also losing his humility; and how might this relate to the former image of Croatia as being a *laid-back* culture along the Adriatic coast?

Tourism complicates things socially, economically, and culturally. The new and growing revenue stream for the locals may be disrupting the fabric of life—even in a deeply spiritual sense, since human attributes such as *humility* fall into that realm. This is changing the soul of the people; I believe that Lavro would agree. Yet, despite the rather harsh assessment of the situation, I still found hope in the fact that Lavro recognized the loss, and took personal steps to address it.

I think that Lavro's narrative could instruct and better prepare providers of heritage tourism in Croatia. Capitalism is being embraced, but it is developing a society of consumers, which was impossible when the country lived under socialism. Tourism delivers economic benefits that allow people to better their living conditions, and potentially consume more. One way to address this through heritage tourism would be to focus programs and projects on issues of sustainability, and potential ways to improve a community's standard of living based upon simplicity, as opposed to increased consumption and modernization.

### Narrative #3: Social & Economic Gap

*The middleclass in the village is disappearing, tourism is creating the haves and have not's—those that capitalize on tourism grow in wealth and influence that tends to separate people instead of bringing them together.*  
(my cousin's wife)

After a bit of searching and a phone call, I finally connected with my cousins. After 44 years, I was a bit confused about how to locate their family home. Their house is one of the oldest in the village, and very different from the modern apartment I was staying in. The difference made me realize that poverty still exists here in Sumartin, and that all the new construction in the village was funded through tourism dollars for the benefit of tourists and those residents that had invested in the growing industry. Clearly, there exists an *economic class gap* in Sumartin. Cousin Ilija made note that tourism revenues were not equally shared by everyone in the town; yet, it affected all, for better or for worse. He shared a story with me to help clarify his point. It went something like this:

A few years back his mother had a confrontation with a neighbor who owned and operated a café right next door to their home. The café owner, a member of the wealthiest fishing family in the village, wanted to put tables and chairs on the sidewalk in front of their house to enlarge his space and accommodate more tourists. The encounter even got the local police involved, but Ilija's stood her ground and refused to allow the café to encroach on the public walkway in front of her home. Evidently, she won that round of the battle, but I understand that tension remains between the two neighbors. Ilija's family did not appear to be very fond of tourism, yet they own a small guest house in the backyard that does generate some revenue through tourism rentals. Is this the point of dilemma? Must you join in on something that you don't necessarily like, or ending up losing out on the benefits that it might deliver? The story also reveals how clashes over tourism development often arise over the competing use of property that is meant to be part of the public domain.

The other telling comment from the cousins was related to the existence of divergent economies between the successful fishing families of Sumartin and those who are poor in

comparison. They said that the *economic gap* has created a *social gap* as well, where the successful fishing families act as though they are better than the other residents. It shows in the way they successfully wield their influence and power with government officials, and do so to the detriment of others in the village. Sumartin might be a microcosm of the entire Croatian coast that is feeling the after-effects of ill-planned and out-of-control tourism growth?

It was especially informative when I told my cousins about our mutual U.S. cousin and commercial fisherman Captain Donald, whose mother was part Native American and belonged to the Puyallup Indian Tribe in Washington State. It was a long story of Donald growing up part Indian in a Croatian-American fishing community, and consequently being ridiculed by his peers, who called him a “dirty little Indian.” The story ended on a positive note, however, when Donald was finally recognized and accepted as a full-fledged member of Puyallup Indian Tribe, and began to reap the social and economic benefits generated through the tribal gambling casinos, since revenues were shared with each tribal member. On hearing this, my cousin Ilija remarked: “That’s what we need in Croatia.” The sharing of the wealth is what he was referring to. What I found remarkable is that the former communist government of Yugoslavia was attempting to do just that through their socialist system. But, clearly, that system must have failed in the eyes of many. So now Croatia has a form of democracy and a free enterprise system patterned after western capitalism. But they are beginning to realize that democracy and free enterprise do not mandate the equitable distribution of wealth.

My cousin also mentioned the terms *brutal capitalism* and *liberal capitalism* as we discussed the current state of Croatia’s political, social, and economic realities. He, along with others I gathered, expected and continue to hope for a form of *liberal capitalism* that adheres to the notion of a *triple bottom line* corporate business structure—a type of capitalism where free enterprise is allowed and encouraged, but one that also shares profit and benefit with the less fortunate, a model where there is a *level playing field*. Ilija says that there is no middle class in Croatia, and that the break with communist rule has opened doors to investors eager to take advantage of the situation and get ahead of everyone else. At least during the *old days* of communism, he believed that most of the population was treated the same. That is not the case now, and with many politicians still involved in corrupt practices inherited from the *old guard*, back room deals between the wealthy and the government decision-makers is only widening the gap between the classes.

This is the arena where good heritage tourism could play a meaningful role in lessening the growing gap between the classes in the island villages of Croatia where the free-enterprise system has opened its doors to outside investors who may feel no responsibility regarding social and economic justice. Certainly, on a large scale that notion would be unrealistic. However, in the small maritime communities, I firmly believe that good heritage tourism can have an impact by becoming an educational tool and an example-setting structure. Maritime



projects that are constructed to involve tourists and residents, of varying socioeconomic strata, can provide a space and a time where a level playing field can be created, and deeper understanding can take place. I witnessed this recently during the last major historic vessel restoration project I managed on Deal Island, which was performed in full public view. It brought together visitors, decision makers, tourism promoters, and locals to work as a team for the benefit of sustaining culture. Good creative heritage tourism breaks down the barriers that often separate those with diverse perspectives and different socioeconomic positions.

## Narrative #4: Corruption

Everyone that I spoke with in the field about the current government in Croatia absolutely stated that the politicians are all corrupt—no better than before! Their current socio-political experiment has yet to convince the people of its value and integrity. Miche, a Canadian born of Croatian decent, who now works for Croatian National Radio, gave me his interpretation of the government and the attitude of the residents toward the system and those holding political power. He claimed that the existence of corruption is common knowledge, and is viewed as acceptable behavior, as a *given*, an unfortunate fact in Croatia. When the communist rule was ousted, the mindset and governance procedures were not. Miche says that those in the former communist party just “changed hats,” not their philosophy and behavior. Many believe that the country is democratic in name only, and that the left and the right wings of government are so entrenched in their opposing views that nothing ever gets accomplished.

There is a sense that the citizens of Croatia may have felt cheated out of the wealth that belonged to all of them, in theory, while under the socialist system. However, upon the dissolution of communism, the stage was set for a potential money and power grab by the elite. Over time there was a *trickle-down* effect regarding corruption. Those that held positions that could correct the problem and prosecute the guilty were themselves guilty. Of course, that is the way that government corruption propagates itself and remains entrenched not only in those that govern, but also to lesser degree within the very culture itself. Eventually, a situation is created where no one has confidence in the ruling party, especially when it comes to the economy. Like in the U.S., the middle class is shrinking in Croatia. Some have told me that up to 50% of the youth are unemployed and that educated professionals continually leave the country for better career opportunities. The only ones left are the “stupid ones” says Franjo, since the “brains” of the country have all departed.

I continued to reach out to the director of the local tourism office in Sumartin as a reliable informant regarding this theme of corruption. Her position allowed her to witness the corruption in government from the top to the bottom. She considered her position to be at the bottom tier of the country's tourism *totem pole* of management, as she primarily worked with

the locals that operated the tourism businesses in Sumartin. This required that she track the lodging tax revenues within her region. Consequently, she often brushed up against the small-time corruption and favoritism that existed in the village.

Corruption, it seems, is so much a part of life in the tourism lodging and restaurant businesses that almost no one is without some *dirt* on their hands. The director said that people feel as if they have been cheated by their government, so cheating the government from its taxes seems only fair to them. In this case, the taxes were regarding a *bed tax* calculated on the number of beds available to tourists within someone's home or apartment. She felt that almost all residents were dishonest in the number of beds that they claimed on their annual report to the tourism board. She was the person that was required to verify the accuracy of these reports which put her in direct conflict with the very people in the community where she resided and worked. Additionally, there were restaurants that purposely did not give a bill to the customers to keep the sale off the records. Although such things likely take place throughout the world in varying degrees, I still found it fascinating to hear a similar story from people throughout Croatia. Even more telling was that much of the corruption appeared to be related to the tourism industry and the revenues that visitors brought to the villages.

During a follow-up interview with my cousin regarding corruption, he explained to me that his son played on a water polo team in Split, but that he had not been promoted to the first string even though he firmly believed that his son had the talent and ability to be in the starting lineup. He claims that for his son to be selected for a prime spot on the team, he would need to give the coach maybe \$5000 Kuna *under the table*, basically needing to *pay to play*. Although viewed as both illegal and unethical, no one has attempted to stop the practice. If one does not pay off those who hold the positions of power, then one just suffers the consequences of not rising in their field. My cousin's family cannot afford that kind of money, and he was not sure that he would pay it even if he could. He stressed that the situation is similar in the employment sector. To get a good job or a decent wage, a person needs to pay their way in. Evidently, jobs that are available start out at very low salaries. Most offer no benefits and are seasonal or part-time. If an employee wants something better, they must pay off the business owner. Conversations with others left me with the impression that this corrupt system exists to the extreme throughout all levels of government, and continues to infect the everyday dealings of common folk. But it is interesting that no one ever referred to the corruption as something *dishonest*; it is just how life operates in Croatia.

This cultural narrative reflects a serious social problem that good heritage tourism can address through open and honest dialogue with the locals. What this means is that heritage tourism, unlike mass tourism, is not an end; rather, it is tool, a format, and an arena where social and sustainability ills can be addressed in a non-threatening way. Performing good heritage tourism is not only about **what** you do or say, but it is also about **how** you do and say it!

## Chapter #4: Making Tourism Serve Heritage

*If our species does not survive the ecological crisis, it will probably be due to our failure to imagine and work out new ways to live with the earth...*

Val Plumwood (Gibson-Graham 2010, p. 3-4)



*The stone steps leading to the Vlahovic` home in the village of Sumartin;  
did my father walk these steps at age 12?*

While climbing the stone steps of this Capstone project, I was aware that I would eventually have to unpack all the data I had collected, proceed to arrange the puzzle pieces into meaningful and concrete concepts, and attempt to answer the questions that this research was originally built upon. Questions were based upon my desire to understand the relationship between maritime tradition bearers (such as fishermen), visitors, and tourism interests in Croatia. Ultimately, I sought to determine if good heritage tourism could help sustain maritime practices, arts, and occupations. David Fetterman in his book *Ethnography: Step-by-Step* asserts that a researcher needs to test the findings gathered, and claims that the analysis segment of field research is just as important as the secondary and primary sources of data. So here I am, at the top of the stone stairway armed with what I compiled and learned along the way. Analysis will help me to better understand the culture of Croatia, and how it might support my notion about how good heritage tourism can sustain culture on the islands of Dalmatia.

Those who have read the previous chapters of this paper have perhaps gained appreciation for the complexity of the research. Each Brac` Island stone that I turned over revealed yet another avenue of potential study that I wanted to incorporate into the project. Limiting my topic area was a constant challenge. Also, allowing myself to become affected by those I met dampened my ability to be objective at times. Yet, to gain an understanding of people and place, I allowed myself to engage on an emotional level which opened me up to an insider's perspective. As I have heard others say of their field experiences, time in Croatia changed me on several personal levels. This interior transformation added to the project's complexity. Studying Croatia became a study of me—as if looking in a mirror and recognizing similar ethnic physical traits, attitudes, beliefs, and habits. Despite the complexity, my observations, readings, interviews, and images have allowed me to develop a partial understanding of the cultural life in Croatia regarding the intersection of traditional maritime life ways and tourism. The approach has been to break down individual parts of this human drama, and then speculate on potential patterns and connections that answer some of the questions that drew me back to my father's home village.

My mind drifts back to the sound of the Sumartin rooster, as recorded in my field notes, to bring me once again to the simple, the obvious, the daily, the audible, the observable. I believe that much of what the residents of Sumartin value is demonstrated in their actions, and that most of their culture is not hidden from view. It appeared that everyone knew everyone else's business, with the cafes along the Riva being the transmission point of village gossip. What the residents do in public speaks to the *now*, the current visible lifeways within the village. However, what was not quite as obvious to me were those parts of their private heritage that perhaps had been lost—important cultural traditions that they wished to bring forward into the present. Similarly, there are those traditional values that they hoped to renew and transfer into



the future—being influenced, for better or for worse, by rapid changes in their social, economic, and political conditions, of which tourism plays a major influencing role.



*A Croatian alarm clock behind fishing nets.*

What about tourism then? Can it ever be good for sustaining the culture of fishing families? Are the two industries compatible? I believe there are occasions, situations, and locations where tourism and commercial fishing traditions could collaborate, such as Josko Pedisid is attempting on his fishing trawler the *Jadran III*. Captain Pedisid converted his commercial fishing trawler into a good heritage tourism charter vessel and unique venue. He offers trips to tourists along the Dalmatian Coast where he harvests a very limited amount of food fish using a scaled-down version of his former commercial fishing net. His fresh catch then becomes dinner for the guests onboard. Josko's venture is funded in part by the United Nations to sustain the fisheries and the heritage of fishing families. His is a positive example of collaboration and partnership creation—two cultures viewing one another up close. Josko's work responded to the questions I carried around in my back pocket, questions of how tourism could serve heritage. I desperately wanted to find positive answers—yes, for the sake of Croatia, but also

for myself as one who had personally gambled on the belief that good heritage tourism might help sustain what mattered to me, and, of course, for the students that I hope to influence with the results of this study.

Prior to leaving the U.S. and heading to my field study site, I sought the opinions of others in hopes of *jump-starting* a collection of answers regarding my quest. I contacted social researchers and professors in Croatia hoping that they would be able to refer me to existing scholarly works on the intersection of commercial fishing and tourism in Croatia. With the assistance of one of my Capstone advisors, an email blast to his academic colleagues in Europe led me to a professor from the University of Zagreb. Goran Pavel Santek, an Associate Professor in the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, had performed a study on the economies of the Islands of the Dalmatian Coast and provided me a response. His email to me, dated March 26, 2016, led me to believe that I might be on the right track—a future direction that would allow me to learn, to teach, and perhaps someday play a leadership role in Croatia as part of my *theory of action* in the world. It made me hopeful that my investigation and experience might be considered by other tourism studies students who are preparing for new careers in the industry.

*Hello Mike,*

*Thank you for your interest in Croatia and our culture. It is really nice that you have chosen to do research in the land of your father, and I hope your second homeland.*

*I must confess that I am not so connected with the topic of fishermen (or fishing). Namely, my two articles on fishing practices and economy of Croatian islands were written almost 20 years ago. So, one of the reasons why I am so late with my answer is that I had to do a small research about researchers that explore connections between tourism and fishing. Unfortunately, I wasn't successful and despite finding many family firms registered both for tourism and fishing, I haven't found any research focused on that. As always, life goes before science... Shortly, I believe you would have a lot of possibilities to do your research, but without works to compare to, which doesn't need to be so bad...*

*It seems that your research could be the first in Croatia on that topic, which means you may open new horizons for both fishing and tourism sectors in Croatia. I am sure that people whose job is to develop tourism and fishing at all levels of government (from local to national) will be interested in your research and ideas. I can try to connect you to some of them.*

*All the best,  
Goran*

Goran's remarks brought me a sense of encouragement regarding the potential importance of my work. Not just the Capstone, but even more than that, it helped me to justify the time, talent, and resources I had already invested in sustaining fishing family culture—my own and

that of others. I especially appreciated his phrase “life goes before science....” It made me smile a bit when thinking about how much life I had lived prior to starting graduate school and investigating social science. My experience in witnessing the displacement of traditional maritime heritage is expansive. Now applying science to regenerate what has been lost, and to sustain what remains, is the task—a daunting one. For me, presenting good heritage tourism about fishing families and maritime skills is simply a matter of going public with what I already hold privately through inheritance, prior knowledge, and innate passion for the culture. Instilling something similar in social science students, prior to their devoting time in the field, may be a challenge requiring a period of hands-on immersion in the culture before engaging in the delivery of heritage tourism. I doubt *book* learning will ever replace experience. Because of this, the tourism venues I have developed have always include the *real article*, those seasoned maritime individuals that hold their heritage in their hands, hearts, and minds. It is a matter of facilitating occasions and seizing serendipitous opportunities—when, for instance, visitors to Sumartin could approach and interact directly with the local fishing families, thereby having an authentic experience rather than one that has been staged or fabricated or is lacking depth.

Facilitating is like being the gate (*Gate*) keeper to cultural practices that may be partially invisible or inaccessible to the curious visitor because of physical or social barriers that exist. It requires a skill that either comes naturally or needs nurturing. My success as a heritage tourism facilitator within maritime communities has been due to the *built-in* credibility I possess as a maritime tradition bearer and a master of my trade. This allows me to approach other maritime tradition bearers that may otherwise be reluctant to engage with tourists. It is why I selected over 100 fishing family members in the state of Maryland, USA, and introduced them to the field of heritage tourism, training them as tour guides aboard their boats. Similar training of fishermen, sailors, and boatbuilders should be an integral part of any long-term heritage tourism strategy for Croatia. Additionally, developing similar curriculum for Croatian college students that would prepare them to train maritime tradition bearers in local island communities would advance cultural sustainability by improving the interaction between fishermen and visitors. One very positive and immediate result that comes from a tradition bearer telling his or her story to the public is that, in the telling, the speaker reinforces their own commitment to what they value. It is a technique that works; the story sticks with both the teller and the listener. This, then, becomes a type of performance that can entertain while also influencing the audience’s thinking and behaviors.

The advancement and nature of mass tourism, which sociologist Anthony Giddens believes “is delivered in a largely uncontrolled neoliberal market environment, and often precedes and overpowers attempts at planning and management” requires that those of us that are committed to the development of good heritage tourism must remain open and flexible regarding how we operate within this quickly advancing cultural phenomenon (Tribe 2009, p.4).



In other words, we must also keep watch over those tourism initiatives that may be counter to the precepts of cultural sustainability. Giddens goes on to say, “The world in which we find ourselves today, however, doesn’t look or feel much like they predicted it would; rather than being more and more under control, it seems out of our control—a runaway world” (Tribe 2009, p. 4). I suspect that Croatians may be feeling the effects of having transitioned from a more predictable communist/socialist framework, to their current less-certain system of democracy and free enterprise; theirs appears to be a “runaway world.”

One perspective on this might be that of hopelessness. Another might be one of opportunity, since in a “runaway world” I believe that people look for grounding, search for a foundation. This creates a situation where good heritage tourism could play a significant role in connecting people to the basic values of human existence—not just traditional maritime value, for that is only one arena. I am referring to values that are needed to sustain human life on the planet earth. Although small scale heritage tourism might seem insignificant to some, affecting the hearts and minds of even a few does matter. I believe it may matter a lot in the remote island communities of Croatia. Mass tourism counts heads, such as in the town of St. Michaels, Maryland, where the driving concern is putting *heads in beds*; that is how they gauge success, by the number of beds slept in on any given night. Good heritage tourism is geared toward changing the hearts, minds, and, at times, the behaviors of the visitor, and that may need to be accomplished one person at a time.

For instance, a small-scale heritage tourism effort could be used to address the loggerhead between the Sumartin Tourism Office and the fisherman regarding the use of a recently constructed pier known as the *Gate*—meant to be both a sign of welcome for tourism visitors and a revenue source to promote tourism in the village, which would in turn assist those who rent out rooms and apartments. This situation has yet to be resolved through effective cultural mediation among the various user groups, to the point where the fishermen, I am told, formed a blockade of the *Gate* in protest of visiting tourist yachts wanting to use it for temporary moorage. Although their blockade was illegal, the fisherman—perhaps because of their relative wealth—secured support from national and regional politicians by entertaining them on their boats with the finest Adriatic fish and Croatian wine. Even though lobbying decision-makers is nothing new in the world of commercial fishing or tourism, it just seemed unexpected and out of place in a remote island community. This is, perhaps, an indication of an “uncontrolled neoliberal market environment” that has yet to achieve the knowledge and experience that will be required to form compatibility between the emerging competitive interests over the use of what was intended to be part of the *commons*. An effort to facilitate good heritage tourism at the *Gate* might be a place to start, for it has the potential to change perspectives and behaviors, while also sustaining culture and improving the conditions in the community. A win-win scenario!



I have witnessed similar conflicts arising due to the surge of tourism and waterfront gentrification that inevitably follows. The Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, and Alaska are three locations that I have become familiar with over the last 50 years of working the water as a fisherman and a provider of at-sea heritage tourism and education. One such island community is Ketchikan, Alaska, that I first visited in 1966 as a crew member on a salmon fishing boat. It was operated by Croatian immigrants that came to the U.S. in search of a better life.



*Mike Vlahovich commercial fishing with Croatian immigrants near Ketchikan, Alaska, in 1972.*

Ketchikan's economy at that time was built upon the harvesting and processing of fish and timber—all in abundance in the Alaskan panhandle. The center of Ketchikan was home to a huge Spruce and Yellow Cedar saw mill. The shoreline was packed with salmon canneries, fishing boats, and traditional maritime boatyards. Since then, much has changed. Ketchikan, as other Alaska towns and native villages, has become a *Mecca* for the tourism cruise ship industry. Gone is the aroma of fresh cut lumber and fish processing; only memories remain in the minds of those who once lived that culture. I do not know how the advancement of tourism was regulated in Ketchikan, but I certainly know the results of it. A waterfront and a town center, that was once a place where locals were employed in good paying jobs, has now become a drop-off point for thousands of visitors that frantically run to the endless number of

trinket shops for souvenirs and postcards during their half-day stop in port—a blatant sign of commoditization and consumerism. In the tourist off-season, which lasts about eight months per year, the shops close and the locals are left with empty streets and stores—something that some might welcome. Yet, the entire fabric of the Ketchikan culture has been altered. The fate of their economy and social structure is now in the hands of multinational corporations driven by their bottom-line profits. Resource extraction is no longer Ketchikan's *mode of production*.



*Welcome to Ketchikan, Alaska—once a fishing family town.*

Through the non-profit organization Coastal Heritage Alliance (CHA), I developed a series of small scale heritage tourism venues aboard the rehabilitated commercial fishing boat *Commencement* that I had removed from commercial salmon harvesting in 1996. The fisheries could no longer support the upkeep of this historic vessel due to diminishing fish stocks, but the maritime stories, skills, and values that the vessel represented still had worthwhile lessons to teach. Consequently, seafaring trips known as Natural Heritage Adventures were established to counteract the inauthentic and diffuse nature of the visitor experience that the cruise ship industry was selling. Instead, CHA provided deep immersion into both the coastal culture and marine environment along the famous Inside Passage where travelers were exposed to the interaction of coastal peoples and wilderness and experienced how they influenced and affected each other. This was tourism with a twist, where each person was confronted with the

real thing, and where conversations about sustainability, both cultural and environmental, were stimulating and efficacious. This is the type of hands-on visitor participation that good heritage tourism can provide. It turns visitors into crusaders for a better planet.



*Is this Ketchikan, the community where I once  
fished and built wooden boats?*

Croatia may never become a Disneyland such as Ketchikan. But without proper planning and management of its authentic history, its meaningful heritage, and its valued maritime cultural traditions, tourism has the potential of damaging, disconnecting, displacing valuable ecological knowledge. This is knowledge gathered over generations that provided fishermen with resilience when confronted with environmental and cultural change. The fishing families of Sumartin displayed resilience and adaptability by standing their ground at the *Gate*; however, their position has brought tensions and diverse opinions to the surface. This would be a good place to foster cultural dialogue, partnership formation, and program development. Croatia is ripe for cultural sustainability practitioners that desire to bridge the existing gap between tourism and the fishing communities of Croatia.

I believe this because cultural sustainability is not only about traditions being documented, displayed, passed on, maintained; it also includes the *re-creation* of heritage in situations that have changed, and may require new thinking—a new set of eyes, creativity, imagination, risk-

taking, and a willingness to adapt traditions in the light of global cultural shifts and fluctuations in the availability of natural resources. That is what I looked for in Croatia—positive signs of encouraging projects, actions, and individuals that were on the front line where traditional maritime heritage intersects with tourism. And I did find some of these; however, they were not as directly connected to active fishing families as I had hoped, and as I would like to encourage. Still, in all cases, efforts were pro-maritime traditions which included fishing history and heritage since they remain a part of the built environment and cultural story of the Dalmatian Coast.

### Change agents investing in good heritage tourism

Field research allowed me to meet and engage with individuals that are assuming roles as *change agents* in Croatia, as facilitators and mediators. They understand the emerging new *modes of production* and the diverse political, religious, and cultural ideas and beliefs that are entering their country due to tourism, globalization and advances in mobility and communication. They are the ones designing and experimenting with alternative forms of creative tourism within Croatia's free-enterprise marketplace, something that was impossible just 20 years ago. I view these individuals as grassroots leaders of cultural sustainability. To cite a few examples, I will introduce some of the players that are applying new thinking, coupled with a new set of eyes that are focused on the past, the present, and the future of maritime heritage in Croatia and beyond. They have inspired me, and hopefully their story will inspire the tourism students of Croatia to become actively involved in their communities.

**Goran Stojanovic** is one of the founders of the Croatian-American Society (CAS) of Zagreb, and has recently rejoined the Society's governing board to establish a maritime curriculum as a satellite program of the CAS school. Goran is a practicing Buddhist, which is unusual in the coastal regions of Croatia where the Roman Catholic faith seems to prevail—clearly, a sign of change in the way people have traditionally thought about religion. From the very beginning of my relationship with Goran, I sensed that his Buddhist faith had a bearing on his commitment to impart to the youth of Croatia the skills, knowledge, and values that a seafaring life offers. He is also a strong advocate for the stewardship of the sea.

Goran my host and CAS was the entity that sponsored my role in Croatia as a presenter of *best practices* regarding maritime heritage education in the U.S. Chapter 5 will highlight one of his current youth sail training projects which I was involved in, but Goran has also established a heritage tourism business on a traditional Croatian sailing vessel known as a *bracera*. He operates this in Dubrovnik where mass tourism has a strong foothold. Goran is a creative risk-taker that understands the dangers that mass tourism poses to the fragile environments of the sea, and the threatened traditional cultures of the island communities. He strongly

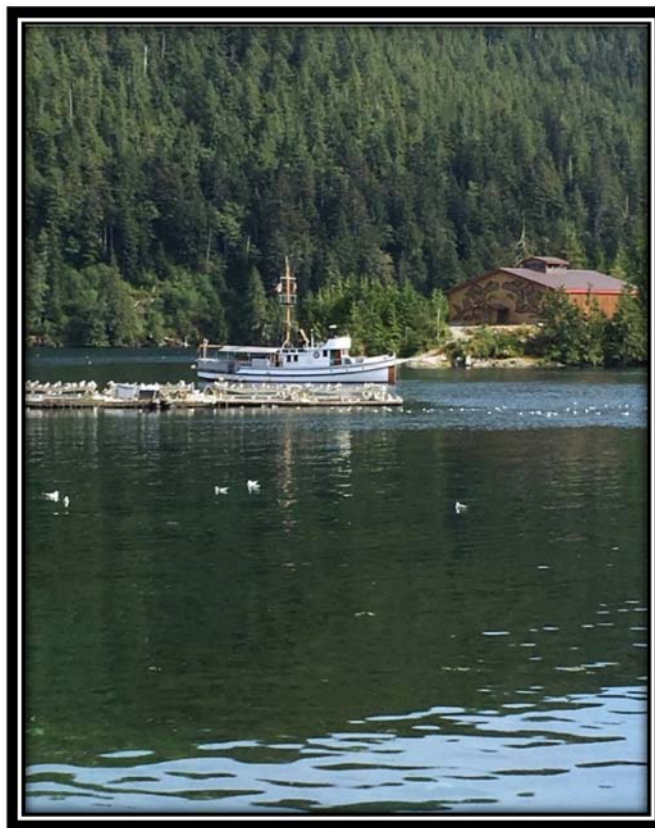


acknowledges the lack of sustainability regarding mass tourism in his home of Dubrovnik, and is offering his own brand of good heritage tourism as an alternative.

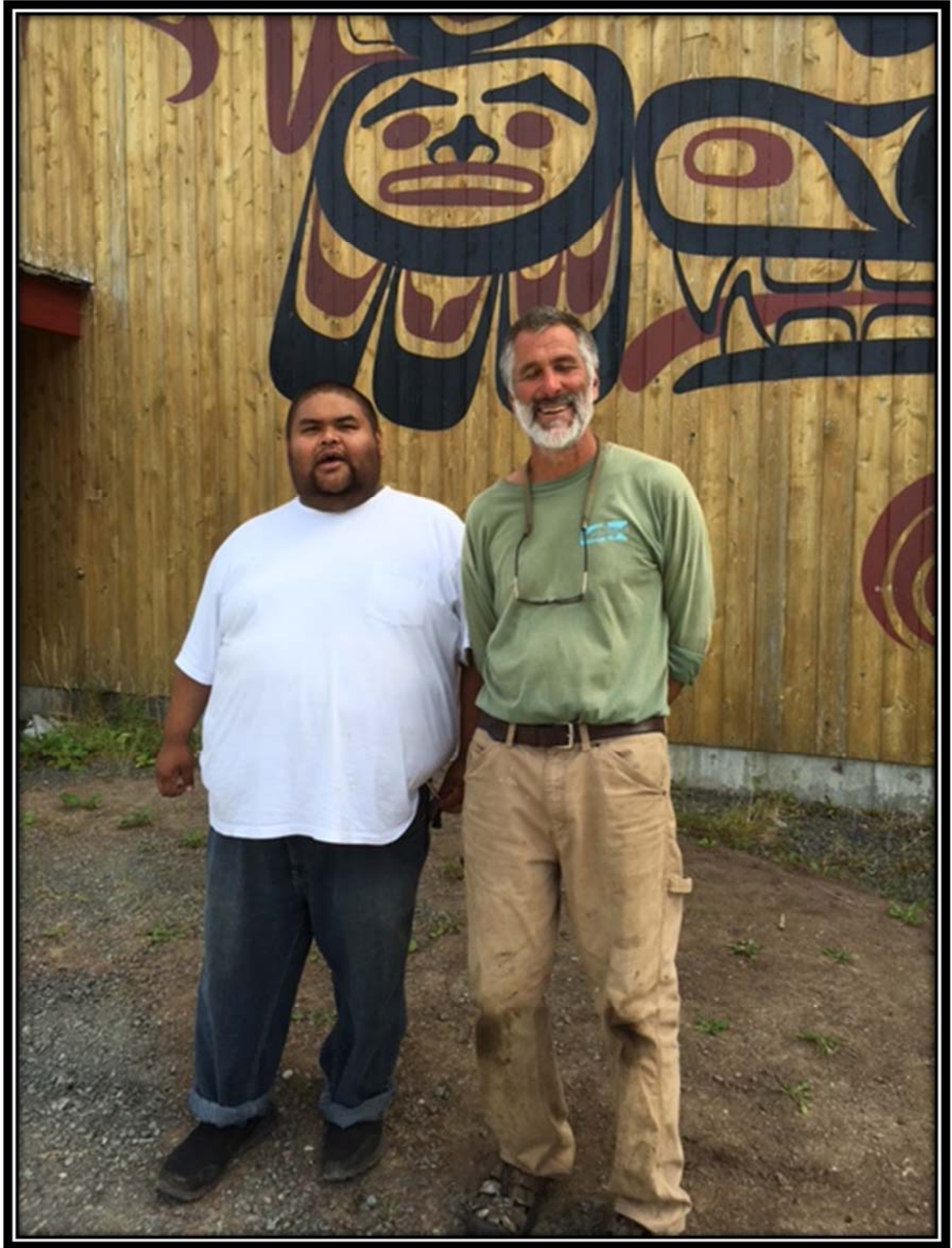
**Miro Cvitkovic`** is the current president of the Association Palagruza whose mission is to sustain the maritime heritage of the town of Komiza, Island Vis. Association Palagruza hosts the annual traditional sailing regatta from Komiza to Island Palagruza, which are the traditional fishing grounds of the Komiza fishermen. The primary focus of the Association is the introduction of traditional maritime skills to the children of the village. Their Facebook site tells the story well. What I found especially unique was that the education of the children, during festival time, took place in full view of the visiting public. It was maritime skill training that made a strong statement about what the community cared about, what they wanted to implant to their youth. It also showed a commitment to sustaining what they valued, and it presented a sign of hope and faith that the next generation would carry the traditions forward. What it may have lacked, however, was the involvement of skilled maritime masters—those who had inherited Croatian maritime knowledge from the prior generation. There appeared to be a bit of a *knowledge gap*, showing me that what they were attempting to transfer to the young had already been lost or forgotten to an extent. This drives home my perspective regarding the urgency of knowledge transfer, and the importance of identifying and supporting maritime masters in the transfer of knowledge. An example of a program in the U.S. is Maryland Traditions, a branch of the Maryland State Arts Council that identifies master artists and connects them to apprentices desiring to learn traditional skills.

**Irena Sertic** from the city of Zagreb is developing a multi-country partnership to address some of the *Priority Areas for Action* as called for in a resolution of the European Union regarding the *European Agenda for Culture*. Croatia, Slovenia, Greece, Lithuania, and the United States (Coastal Heritage Alliance) will participate in creating and presenting a new form of heritage tourism. Some of the Priority Area objectives are: the “promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue;” the “promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy for growth, employment, innovation and competitiveness;” and the “promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union’s international relations.” A brief description of the project, as included in the current EU grant application, reads: “The project is devoted to maritime heritage (tangible and intangible) broad legacy and its aim is to develop a model of participatory open innovation cultural resources management as a guide for increasing the value of maritime cultural resources through COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT and CREATIVE INTERPRETIVE STRATEGY (artistic approach), and with a practical reference for initiating and sustaining successful public programs through heritage tourism at maritime historical sites” (Sertic, draft grant proposal).

**Shane Robinson** is not from Croatia; he is a member of a First Nation community in British Columbia and resides in the island village of Klemtu. I am featuring him and his community to broaden the scope and depth of this paper, wanting to show my tourism student audience the global movement towards sustaining culture through good heritage tourism. Shane's people have relied upon the bounty of the seas for centuries, but, like fish stocks worldwide, resources are dwindling. I met Shane in his village after returning from Croatia, when my mind was still focused upon the cultural sustainability of fishing family communities. Twenty years had passed since I last stopped in Klemtu during one of my Natural Heritage Adventure trips heading to Alaska. I remembered a rather poor community that was not very welcoming to strangers. I had some apprehension about going ashore this time, but I wanted to know how their culture was fairing, considering the decline of commercial fishing. What I found out, however, was remarkable. Their native culture was thriving, and the community had positioned itself in the heritage and environmental tourism business. There was nothing artificial about it. Shane, my tour guide, was also the real article. He spent two hours interpreting his culture to me and my traveling companions—a culture he lived, and a style of presenting his story that he had learned from his grandfather. My adventure travelers and I were impressed. A few images will help to illustrate how his community is sustaining their once-threatened culture.



*CHA's vessel on anchor in the Klemtu harbor, during its 2016 heritage tourism season.*



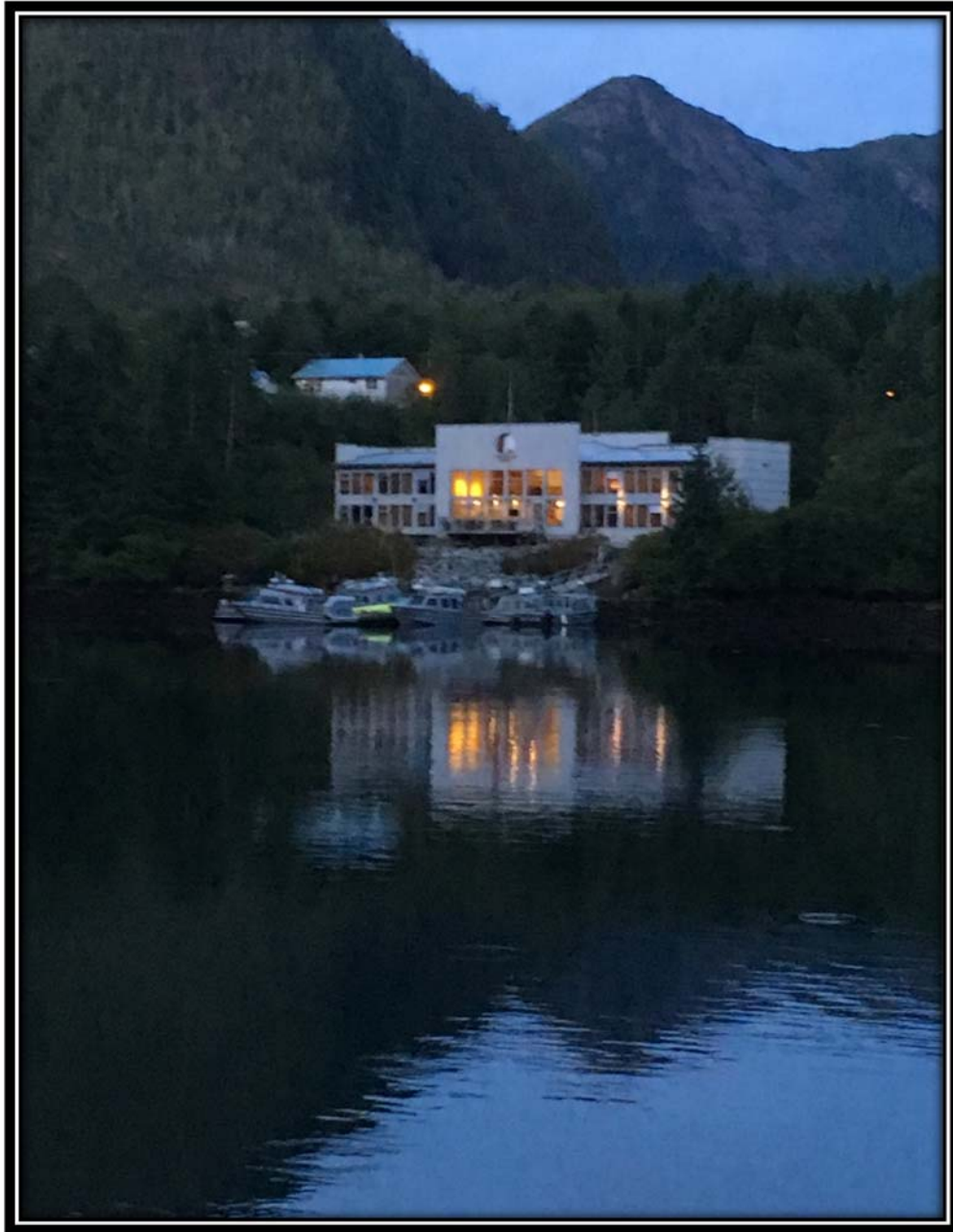
*Klemtu heritage guide Shane Robinson sharing a happy moment of cultural exchange with Captain Mike of the vessel Commencement. Welcoming the stranger—a crucial element of good heritage tourism. It is people that become the connector of the local to the stranger.*





*The inside of the Big House has tangible art telling intangible stories of First Nation heritage. The Big House is used for tribal events, and for performing native dance and song, which tourists can view on occasion. This is an example of putting heritage to work.*





*Spirit Bear Lodge was built in the spirit of the Kitasoo First Nation people. It conveys respect for the environment and the spirit they believe lives in all forms of nature. Good eco-tourism has also become a mode of production for the people of Klemtu.*

A few final thoughts about tour guide Shane and his First Nation Village of Klemtu. The Kitasoo tribe has gone from a fisheries-dependent society to one that has used its heritage (knowledge,

skills, and stories) to create a revenue stream, celebrate their culture, and pass on their values and customs to those who visit. All of this developed over a relatively short span of time, perhaps 20 years or so. Could something similar be created in the villages of Croatia? Are there lessons to be learned from the First Nation people of British Columbia? I think there are. One very important story of their recent development, which certainly fits into the theme of this study, is that the Kitasoo tribe has collaborated with a Norwegian Aquaculture entity to develop salmon fish farms within the local fiords. Although there are differing opinions about the environmental concerns associated with fish farming, the point being for me is that a profit-driven partnership has allowed the village of Klemtu to develop near 100% employment among their residents, and has generated additional revenue to invest in infrastructure and culture by way of heritage tourism. This brings home the point that Bendix makes in her article “Forget inheriting—invest in culture.” As I often heard while working in the museum field, *No margin—No mission!* This might mean that heritage tourism efforts in Croatia may require the financial backing of big business to fund both the initial establishment, and the sustainable operation of heritage sites and programs. Certainly however, cultural sustainability efforts would need to be vigilant that for-profit entities investing in heritage preservation adhere to a *triple bottom line* philosophy of providing social benefit, environmental conservation, as well as generating profits.

### Recapturing meaning through good heritage tourism

Several times throughout my field study in Croatia I realized that I was viewed by most locals as a tourist, not a researcher. When I began to consider that, it provided me with several insights into why people might choose to travel and become a tourist. I imagine the list of reasons is long and varied, but, all I could be sure of was my own reasons for having lived an adventuresome life full of travel to other regions and cultures. For me, it has been an ongoing search for meaning, seeking out meaningful experiences that would help me to live a more fulfilled life. I get bored quite easily I guess, and traveling to new places has provided me with a very exciting way to learn, to teach, and to grow as a person. I believe that my reason for travel has a bearing on this topic because good heritage tourism has the potential to provide a real depth of meaning in the lives of both the ones that deliver it and those who are present to participate in it. It is about adding value and meaning to life, to culture. And it is precisely what I have emphasized to the students I have instructed, the travelers I have guided, and the maritime tradition bearers whose skills and stories I have helped to facilitate in public forums. During rapid cultural change and uncertainty, I believe that most people seek out something to anchor to, something that can help them weather current and future doubts about the state of the world, society, their community, and their individual well-being.

Few would debate the notion that humanity is living in a *runaway world*. Risks are high, and some predictions about the fate of humanity are daunting. In the article *An Economic Ethics for*

*The Anthropocene*, Gibson-Graham and Roelvink present their position on this: “The end of the Holocene, the coming of the Anthropocene, the displaced trajectory of evolution—these apocalyptical images toss us onto a meta-historical playing field without a clue as to how to play the game (Chakabarty 2009). Suddenly, we are not billions of individuals and millions of collectivities but a single species alongside other species, one whose survival is threatened by its own behavior.” (2010, p. 2) Yes, we have been tossed into the “playing field,” and, although good heritage tourism is not a cure-all for the enormous challenges ahead, it is an arena. This arena is one that has open entry and real opportunity to engage with the peoples of the world in questions like: What matters to you? What is worth saving? Where do you find meaning? Heritage tourism offers a forum, a platform for the meaningful exchange of ideas, concerns, and visions. It can change behaviors—something I have witnessed aboard at-sea heritage voyages when people’s actions regarding respect and protection of nature and culture increase day by day. Understanding the significance of behavioral change, through good heritage tourism, is a concept that the *change agents* I have profiled believe in. It is the message that I want Croatian tourism and social science students to consider as they get tossed onto that “meta-historical playing field,” where mass tourism is an influential player.

### Good heritage tourism serving as a road map

I prefer using paper maps and nautical charts to plot my course, but, I have noticed recently, that I am beginning to become increasingly reliant on electronic gadgets, like Google maps on land and chart plotters at sea. When I started out as a young fisherman, all courses were determined by *dead reckoning*, a rather old process of calculating one’s position at sea. Hence, my preferences on determining directions on land and sea influenced how I approached my journey into the field. Fetterman, in his book *Ethnography: Step-by-Step* suggests that a researcher select a specific theory in advance of conducting a study to serve as a “theoretical road map” (2010, p.8). However, I entered the field using what I had personally experienced as a commercial fisherman and wooden boatbuilder, one who had witnessed the decline of natural resources which caused the displacement of a culture that had become the fabric of society where I lived. From that premise, I built a makeshift model, one that considered the importance of both the tangible and the intangible facets at work within a fishing family culture and how the two facets would need to overlap if authentic maritime culture were to survive through the development of good heritage tourism projects. Fetterman might call my approach “an implicit model about how things work” (2010, p.5). When it comes to fisheries-dependent communities, I steer my course based on intuition and *mileage*—my years and miles of experience in the field.

The built and natural environments that comprise the islands and villages along the Adriatic Coast speak to circumstances that the Croatians have operated within for decades, as was the case for my family prior to moving to the United States. Natural resources—such as water,

earth, fish, salt, stone—provided the materials necessary for them to produce, consume, survive. Social relationships were constructed around these *modes of production*, which created a workable community culture that sustained itself. This materialist theory of how things work—namely, that “major political and historical events result from the conflict of social forces, and that conflict is believed to be caused by material needs” (Wikipedia)—was reinforced under communist-controlled socialism during Croatia’s incorporation as a province of the former Yugoslavia. For decades this state socialism kept communities functioning reasonably well and at peace with one another. This was the case during my early years as a commercial fisherman in the U.S. Tensions between fisheries user groups did not arise until resources declined and the need for material goods required for survival increased—a situation which humanity is destined to face unless major behavioral changes occur.

The islands of Croatia once possessed the raw materials necessary to fuel an economy, and to build a stable culture of harvesting the seas. Even today this is viewed by many Croatians as having been a more equitable social and economic system than what is currently in place. This was expressed to me by several individuals that longed for the *good old days*—a period in time, that they considered to have been more fair and impartial in terms of the economy and property ownership. It is my understanding, based upon conversation and observation, that in the villages of Sumartin and Komiza, the communist state invested in the fisheries and the maritime craft of boatbuilding, since the traditional occupations complimented one another. I observed the rundown shipyard and boarded-up hotel in Sumartin that was owned and operated by the state at one time, where 44 years ago I delivered freshly baked bread to the communist state employees who vacationed there. I delivered it with my donkey that carried that aromatic load in two baskets slung over its back. The state also owned the sardine processing plant which is still in operation on the Island of Brac, but is currently privately owned. In Komiza, I was shown where seven boatyards were once located, also state-owned. The former sardine plant in Komiza still stands, but is no longer in operation. Two fully equipped workshops, one for wood and one for metal, are partially in use today in Komiza. These are heritage places where I performed some work for the community during my stay. As a maritime craftsman who loves the working waterfront and the infrastructure (tangible culture) that supports it, I can well imagine what these two villages must have been like during the *heyday* of commercial fishing. I may not fully understand how they contributed to the overall national economy of the former Yugoslavia, but realizing the investment once made in the fishing industry, I have a pretty good sense of just how the decline in fishing resources may have devastated an authentic maritime culture. The condition of the built environment tells the story. And it is the story that young Croatian students may not know or appreciate. However, it is precisely that story of communities transitioning from abundance to scarcity that needs to be told—a perfect narrative for a good heritage tourism program and a college curriculum that international visitors and students could relate to and benefit from.



For communities to establish themselves, access to the materials of production is not in itself sufficient; it also requires intangible “ideas, cognitive maps, beliefs, and knowledge” (Fetterman p. 6) to complete the action of producing the goods, and creating a societal structure that allows the *modes of production* to exist at all. Various extrinsic and intrinsic forces, once controlled and maintained by the Yugoslav state, are no longer legislated in Croatia. Extrinsic forces include such things as access to tangible goods like fish and infrastructure in support of boat yards and processing plants; intrinsic influences include government-mandated beliefs and ideas. Instead, the country now has a free market economy and a democracy which has opened the doors to corporate enterprise and freedom of thought. I sensed, through interaction with informants, that these dramatic cultural shifts, although welcomed by those who possess the resources and *know-how* to work within them, have left others feeling powerless to engage and benefit from the new economic and political realities, to the point of causing contentious relationships within the village of Sumartin. Simply put, some people feel left out and cheated when they observe their neighbors succeeding within the new system. They would tell me that, although they were poor, and could not own property under communism, at least everyone was viewed as equal members of society. The socialist structure provided what many believed was a level playing field. Now competition in business reigns, especially when it comes to tourism.

Most residents in Sumartin can no longer depend upon the former *modes of production* that were once the basis of community life in the village. For generations, fishing, boatbuilding, and the ancillary traditional maritime folk crafts that were a mainstay of production, were made possible by the bounty of the sea and the generational skills and knowledge possessed by tradition bearers. These no longer exist in sufficient quantities to maintain that style of life. I detected an unsettled cultural atmosphere in Croatia, a tension that may be indicative of situations where old ways give way to the new, creating a sense of socio-economic struggle and uncertainty, but, one that may also be full of opportunity and ripe for the picking. Perhaps the feelings expressed by Ivan Gilic` capture this dichotomy of views in Sumartin: on one hand, he resented the wealthiest fishing family in the village because they had the means to capitalize on tourism by building apartments and cafes for visitors; yet, he also saw potential in restoring his family home and converting it to a small maritime museum as a tourist attraction. Ivan understood that the *new natural resource* growing in abundance appears to be people—visitors, that are customers of the tourism industry. And, like sardines, tourists need to be harvested and processed if there are to become an integral component of the new *mode of production* in Sumartin. Seeing the excitement that he exhibited when talking about his maritime museum dream, convinced me, that good heritage tourism, developed on the lines of a social enterprise, could act as a neutralizing force between the social and economic gaps that exist in Sumartin.

## Good heritage tourism being used as a tool for sustaining culture

Heritage tourism can be used as a tool, a tool that requires knowledge, care, and practice to master. Like the tools of maritime artisans that assist in making fishing nets, building wooden boats, or carving totem poles, good heritage tourism can be used to create something needed, something useful, and maybe even something beautiful. Unlike mass tourism, good heritage tourism is not an end but a beginning—a start of a new and creative way to frame society. Good heritage tourism looks at reality through a new lens, used to focus on cultural and environmental questions, issues, concerns, problems. It is a workshop space and a finely-honed chisel that have a defined purpose—a purpose of sustaining culture and conserving the environment through the intersection of heritage and tourism. It seeks out cultural crossroads, and, at times, even those places of collision, such as the *Gate* in Sumartin. It can be used to deliver a message, and to teach. It has the potential of moving the classroom from the college and museum campus to places where regular people live day to day. This perspective is why I departed my staff positions at technical colleges and museums and founded the Coastal Heritage Alliance in 2003 with a mission of taking cultural sustainability work *on the road* and into fishing family communities.

To reinforce and further justify my argument regarding the importance of good alternate forms of tourism as a tool in addressing some of the world's pressing problems, I turned to the writings of Irena Ateljevic contained in the book *Philosophical Issues in Tourism* by John Tribe (2009). Irena puts forth a theory that claims humanity is poised to experience a “profound paradigm shift” in all aspects of life—social, cultural, political, economic—and “that tourism is in fact one of the main indicators that a major shift in global conscious and human activity is underway.” Her position is one of *hope*, and that tourism offers the potential to “remake the world” (Tribe/Ateljevic 2009, p. 21).

I tend to believe that Ateljevic's conjecture is a correct, valid perspective; I have witnessed in myself and others a desire to *remake* our communities, our world. An example that demonstrates that a shift may be in process, very close to my home, is the establishment of the cultural sustainability program at Goucher College which attracts *change agents*. Over a short span of time, the program has developed a critical mass of high quality professors and students from several different cultures and disciplines that have the desire and potential to “remake the world.” Would that have happened if a “profound paradigm shift” were not taking place? I do not think so. And in Croatia, it is not only experiencing cultural challenges due to local changes in their physical environment and mental processes, but is also increasingly being exposed to the ideas and thoughts of others from around the globe. Depending upon one's perspective, this *mixing* of diverse thinking due to international visitors frequenting the small island communities may be heralded by some as an exciting new future but may be resented by

others who feel threatened by the transmodernity concept and its tenet of a profound paradigm shift taking place.

Transmodernity refers to the ushering in of a new “state of being,” one that would take humanity “from the edge of chaos into a new order of society” (Sadar, 2004: 2). In her article “Transmodernity: Remaking Our (Tourism) World,” Atejevic believes that this emerging planetary vision opposes the endless economic progress and obsession with material wealth, and, instead, promotes the concept of quality of life as a measure of progress. Her message is one of hope for the planet, one that she arrived at through her extensive tourism studies, coupled with her personal involvement in providing alternate tourism venues in Croatia.

My field work revealed two sides of the tourism coin: one is the cruise ship industry that may be putting Croatian culture on the “edge of chaos” by creating a society of consumerism and economic inequality; the other includes the positive indicators of community-based tourism (CBT) efforts that I participated in during the Festival of the Sea in Komiza. This event and other encouraging signs that a new “state of being” is growing in Croatia are explained in greater detail in the next chapter. What I feel is important for students to consider regarding their future involvement in tourism is that tourism may be a “main indicator” that a “shift” is in process, and that travelers are seeking experiences that reflect the tenets contained in the transmodernity theory. I would venture to take it one step further and postulate that tourism is not only an indicator of a major change, but that tourism is one of the primary delivery systems of that change, controlling both the thoughts and ideas and the pace of their transmission. It’s an industry that leaves its mark on societal structures and the environment—a potent, influencing factor that has already affected the cultural relations within Croatia. That is why I believe it is critically important, at this juncture of mass tourism’s advance, that the students of Croatia learn how to use the *tool* of good heritage tourism to sustain culture and begin to counteract the ill effects of bad tourism. If students were to develop good heritage tourism skills, they could step into the tourism arena as cultural mediators, facilitators, and cultural sustainability advocates. I believe that Croatia is a prime region to practice and master the tool of heritage tourism, for it has all the right stuff: a rich maritime history, small island villages where good tourism could have a beneficial socioeconomic impact, and abundant natural beauty that draws visitors to its shore. The stage is set, the audience is waiting; let the performance and cultural exchange begin!

I believe good heritage tourism can help to sustain Croatia’s traditional maritime culture—its vessels, its skills, and its stories. This answer has a foundation in the real world; it is anchored in those *change agents* that I have profiled in this chapter, and will be further strengthened in Chapter 5 where current and future heritage based sustainability projects are highlighted.

Yet, I do harbor both hopes and fears regarding tourism's advancement into traditional maritime communities where long-held and cherished cultural skills, stories, and knowledge are threatened and vanishing. I am hopeful, because of the exceptional opportunity that exists to influence the direction of the *paradigm shift* by creating opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue, while sustaining the most valued aspects of Croatian maritime culture. This notion of hope was reinforced at the EU parliament member conference in the town of Betina, Island of Murter. Several European maritime heritage professionals shared views on various sustainable models of heritage preservation, and the role heritage tourism plays in the funding and advancement of their programs. It showed me that there is a serious and coordinated effort to create policies and strategies in Croatia, and throughout the EU, to employ the momentum of heritage tourism to save the region's maritime traditions within local waterfront communities. However, I am also somewhat fearful since I know, through experience, how the rapid advance of mass tourism can be insensitive toward the private heritage of those that are struggling to sustain and re-create their valued maritime traditions in new and unfamiliar socio-economic conditions. In other words, there is risk in engaging on the front line of tourism: risk of immersing oneself into remote island communities that may not always appreciate the help of outsiders; risk in brushing up against an industry that is primarily profit driven; and risk in dealing with governing structures that have become economically dependent on the tax revenues that mass tourism provides them. That is why a *community-based tourism* approach is necessary. Village residents need to play an integral role in the design, development and implementation of heritage tourism venues. They need to learn how to use that *tool* to benefit themselves and their culture.

## In summary

My contention is that what the future may look like in Croatia is difficult to predict. Croatia's social, political, and economic status is a moving target. It is going through an evolution—a very exciting one in my opinion. I believe that the *change agents* documented in this report, although not the force behind the dynamic change Croatia is experiencing, are a few of the ones that are working as *cultural mediators*, attempting to counteract the loss of Croatia's traditional maritime heritage. My Capstone fieldwork documented what they are accomplishing through their development of creative tourism venues and education programs that teach visitors and influence their thinking about critical environmental and cultural issues. I admire their attempts to achieve financial stability while providing public benefit. They stand opposed to embracing a business model that is based on continual growth and profit-making—an apparent goal and operational standard of the mass tourism industry. Their work and values set an example of what can be accomplished at a time of cultural and environmental challenge.

These *cultural mediators* realize that most of Croatia's mass tourism industry is comprised of "thin encounters" that are "characterized by speed of engagement, over-easy access, and

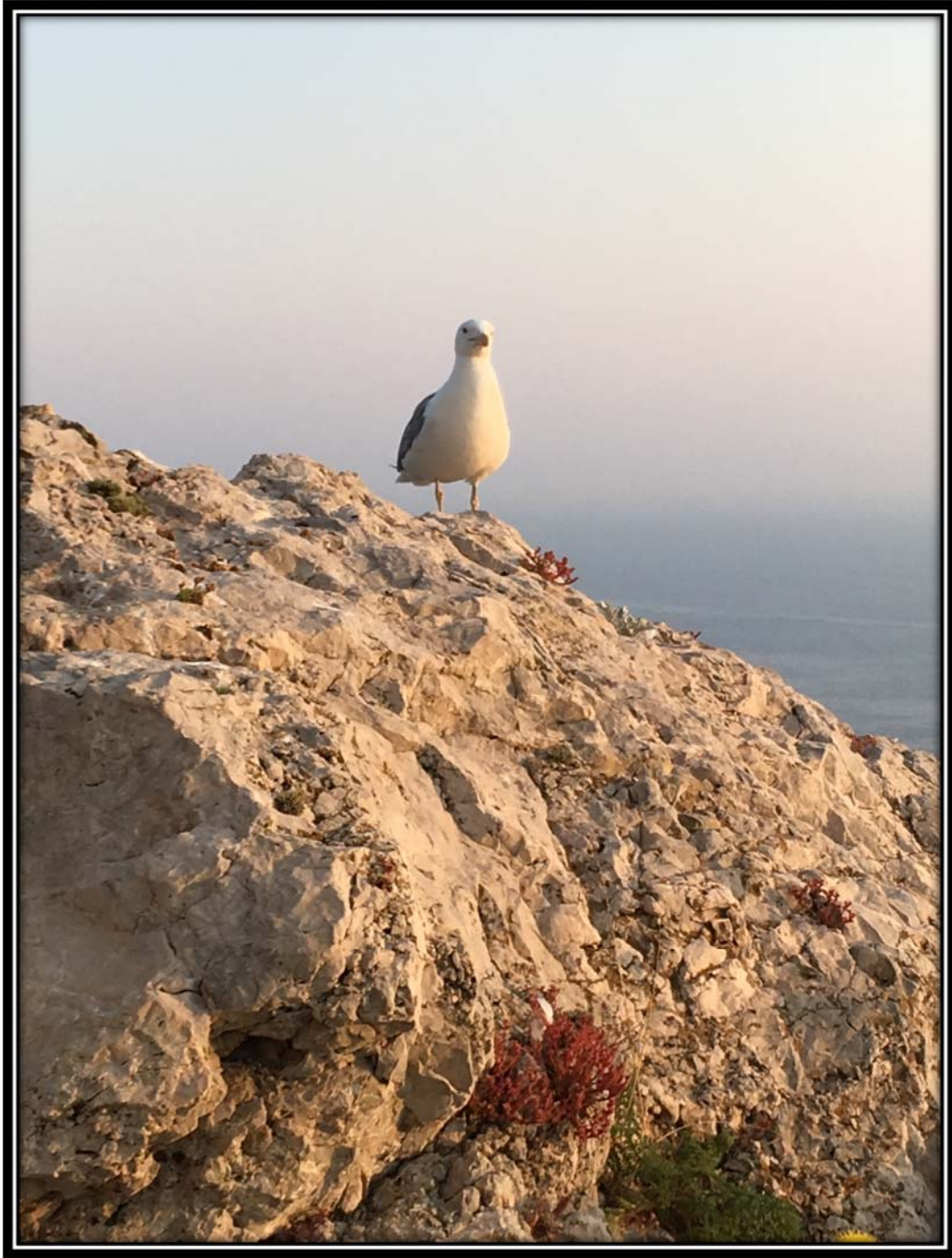


simplification”—in contrast to “thick encounters characterized by slow appreciation, hard won labor of access, deeper intellectual and physical engagement” (Tribe, p.13). Since I have pursued similar approaches in the delivery of maritime heritage tourism and tourism education in North America, I identified with my Croatian counterparts as kindred spirits. Together, we make up a group of visionaries and dreamers that hold out hope for the future, despite the turmoil and uncertainty that surrounds our maritime communities and marine environments. I am convinced that a growing trend of international companions, working together to create good tourism for the betterment of the world, has begun.

The opportunity to engage and educate Croatian fishing families and international visitors has enormous potential to transform, not diminish, the private heritage of maritime tradition bearers into public instruction and enlightenment regarding global environmental and social issues. The classroom will be the vessels, the boat yards, the *Gate* in Sumartin, and the stone Riva's that line the charming harbors of the Adriatic. The students will be the village residents in community with foreign travelers. The teachers will be the *cultural mediators*, those *change agents* that will facilitate the cultural interpretation and dialogue. I believe, in time, I will be able to better prove this concept—this present and growing trend of Croatians who are combining their past, present, and future into innovative ideas and new modes of production. Ideally and together, we will use the *tool* of good heritage tourism to build the foundation of a cultural sustainability network and infrastructure that delivers results.

Searching for, and discovering what exactly is happening along the Dalmatian Coast has become my passion. Answering my central question, regarding the viability of sustaining fishing family traditions through heritage tourism, is only the beginning of my pursuit. Yet, I take heart that there is excitement in the Croatian air—something that was palpable at the EU maritime conference, the Festival of the Sea in Komiza, the voyage to Palagruza Island, the traditional sail training in Dubrovnik, the faces and voices of the children on the Island of Vis, and in the poetry and companionship of my friend Pepe. This healthy air I long to continue breathing. It is the inhaling and exhaling, the taking in and the giving back within the Croatian culture that provided me with what I learned, and what I now know I have yet to learn. Although my summary may still contain some gaps, it is those unknowns—those cracks that let in the light through the missing puzzle pieces—that will incentivize my future research and active participation within the fishing village of Sumartin and other island communities along the Dalmatian Coast.

## Chapter 5: What's Next?



*Keeping a watchful eye over the Adriatic Sea*

What has been included in this paper, up to this point, has focused primarily on the specified question of my Capstone—namely, a question that revolves around the intersection of fishing culture and tourism. I wanted to know if good heritage tourism might serve as a tool to assist in the sustaining the traditional maritime culture of Croatia. A secondary component of my field experience, which I considered to be more of a project than a paper, included a series of presentations, meetings, and participations at Croatian maritime heritage conferences, colleges, and events. The audience of my talks varied, and some connected to the theme of heritage tourism more than others. However, two of the groups had a strong interest in tourism as a revenue stream to help fund maritime sustainability programs: the attendees at the conference on the Island Murter hosted by Croatian EU parliament member Mr. Tonino Picula, and the tourism student group from the Rochester Institute of Technology in Zagreb who were seeking careers in the tourism industry.

These were pre-arranged engagements where I played an active role as a speaker about *American Maritime Heritage Education: Best Practices*. I did so as the Founding Director of the non-profit organization Coastal Heritage Alliance, and as a guest of the Croatian-American Society located in the city of Zagreb. My presentations included an introductory talk, a PPoint that I interpreted, and a five-minute video about the accredited at-sea maritime education that Coastal Heritage Alliance and Washington College collaborated on. Project travel obligations took me to several additional locations throughout Croatia. Like the sea gull on the Island Palagruza, this additional element of cultural immersion provided me a *bird's eye* view and a much broader spectrum of maritime cultural sustainability challenges and opportunities regarding the development of good heritage tourism in Croatia—something that I would not have acquired if my focus had remained entirely upon my father's birth village of Sumartin.

The experiences made me more alert and future-directed beyond anything I could have imagined. They concretized the development of my career path beyond the MACS program. These additional experiences answered the question of "What's Next?" for me in Croatia. Because of the speaking tour, I met several qualified individuals working in the maritime heritage tourism and preservation field. This networking has already opened opportunities to partner on EU funded heritage tourism projects, such as the training of fishermen to become tour guides, and the design and implementation of a traveling *open-air* museum project that will provide an innovative model of maritime heritage tourism in Croatia and Greece. The concept of a traveling team of heritage professionals is like the work I have done in the U.S. and Canada. My prior experience, MACS education, and the presentations made in Croatia have provided me several exciting opportunities—all leading to engagement with heritage tourism. I am now able to influence the quality of emerging efforts in Croatia and in the European Union.

It's interesting to review and reflect upon field note #33 recorded Sunday 19, June 2016 while overlooking the outskirts of Split, with the bare rugged mountains as a backdrop. That morning

I found myself wondering what I had missed or neglected regarding my project. At times, it seemed more like a tourist vacation than a well-focused field study, but there were good reasons for that. The student in me went to Croatia with preconceived notions of what I would find— notions that were in most cases incorrect. I expected to find major commoditization of the fishing culture, as I had witnessed in the U.S.—but I did not. As a researcher, I felt compelled to *study* the culture as an *outsider*; as a tourist, I was more willing to absorb and appreciate the culture as an *insider*, since Croatian hospitality was seductive. These provided me with two different lenses through which to view Croatia. The *outsider* attempted to remain objective and removed, like being a *fly on the wall*. The *insider* allowed me to be affected, emotional and willing to engage more wholeheartedly in the customs, rituals, and relationships. The *outsider* discovered new perspectives, new places, new people, and new opportunities. The *insider* fell in love with the new sites, people, and opportunities. Both lenses helped me to better understand the Croatian culture, a culture that I eventually realized still lived deep within me. It was that realization that seasoned my entire experience in the field, and ultimately beckoned me to consider multiple lens through which to describe my experience.

Between the extremes of *outsider* and *insider* viewpoints exists a realm of unlimited perspectives—those areas that are neither black nor white, but contain shades of both. We are multi-faceted individuals, and although perspectives may often be generalized in academic texts and studies to meet specified project objectives, the reality I experienced in the field is not so simply defined. My *subject positions* were far more nuanced than that of tourist or researcher, for I had several additional identities and roles that influenced conversations, observations, reflections, and results of this experience. As a Croatian-American, former commercial fisherman, and recognized master boatbuilder, I garnered credibility within the Croatian maritime community. I believe this had a bearing on my dialog and relationships with individuals, organizations, and student groups. The speaking engagements at conferences, colleges and festivals were promoted in advance of my arrival in Croatia. This established my position as an expert from the U.S., and flavored how I was perceived. It also placed unrealistic expectations upon me, often making me feel inadequate to live up to the promotional hype that foretold of my arrival.

Another *subject position* that I found myself in, was that of being a male in a male-dominated culture. This made me uncomfortable since it was quite different than my personal American experience where I felt that I lived in equilibrium with the sexes. Although the all-male social groups readily accepted me, it just did not feel quite right to me. This was one aspect of the culture that I disliked. However, my respectful attitude and sensitivity towards females in Croatia opened opportunities for greater in-depth sharing about the social challenges that Croatia faces in a changing world. The traditional maritime sector in Croatia is considered a male occupation, whereas in the U.S. I have trained several female apprentices and students.



So, I found myself more willing and able to approach women in Croatia, to socialize and to discuss cultural issues. In many cases it was the females that were moving forward with innovative approaches in the development of good heritage tourism projects, even in the maritime sector. My position became one of a friend and partner in support of their efforts. I was no longer a tourist or student; I became personally invested and part of a movement. Recognizing my multiple roles in the field made me realize my own complexities. This, in turn, increased my fondness of Croatia and my appreciation for the opportunity that this field study provided me.

For me, it was a time of emotions rising to the surface and begging the question of what would be next for me in Croatia. I did not want to leave. My ethnic traits came to the surface, many that had been partially buried while living the American lifestyle. In reflection, my approach to the culture as an *insider* is what I remember most. It was a lens that looked back at me, like a two-way mirror. I understood why my grandparents and father left Croatia 90 plus years ago: war, poverty, and a desire to find a better life are what they told me. I believe they never had regrets; if they had, they never voiced them to me. Still, they maintained their native tongue, customs, and the maritime occupational skills they had acquired in Croatia. They found what they were looking for in the U.S., since it was a time of abundant natural resources in the Pacific Northwest where they settled. For fisherman and boatbuilders, the salmon and old growth forests provide everything they needed to survive, and eventually thrive. I imagine that they felt as though their dreams had come true. Retuning to Croatia was not a very attractive option for them.

But in a relatively short span of my 66 years of life, so much has changed...EVERYTHING! The salmon stocks and old growth timber have been largely depleted. Traditional maritime skills are primarily maintained for display and demonstration at festivals and museums, rather than being a part of an occupational culture. I know this very well, since I have played an active role in such events for over 20 years. Rather than losing interest in what may be considered a bygone culture, I am, instead, growing in interest and passion to sustain what remains, and to re-make what has vanished. I desire to return to my maritime cultural roots in Croatia, back to the source of knowledge that I inherited directly from those who immigrated to the U.S. My new Croatian friends and compatriots view me as completing the circular transmission of maritime skills—those that once left the Dalmatian Coast, flourished for a time in the U.S., passed on to the first generation of Croatian-Americans, and are now being retuned via my involvement in Croatian maritime education and heritage tourism.



*Pictured is a view of the mountains under an overcast sky from my apartment in Split.*

There was so much to ponder that morning as I looked out to the mountain range that separates the Croatian coast from the interior. I was approaching the end of my field experience, with only one more week to go. It was to be spent at the festival in Komiza, a community where I had not yet met anyone, except for a few email exchanges with the festival organizer. It had been a great seven weeks in Croatia, but I was feeling a bit depressed—like being stuck in the dark, not knowing which direction to go. And I wondered, as I stared at the city before me, do we choose our futures, or just allow the future to determine our fate? What I was going through provided me insights into the attitudes I had encountered among some people here—namely, their apparent inability to determine the fate of their country or their lives. It seemed to have caused indecision, a lack of control regarding their future, and a reluctance to move forward with new possibilities. I have sensed in some a feeling of hopelessness and reluctance to even try to make their life better. Yet, some of their ancestors had the courage to move thousands of miles to resettle all over the globe. Might I be able to bring a bit of hope to the situation—not encouraging them to leave their country, but to invest

in their own culture at home? This quest makes it more important for me to inspire the young students of Croatia.

What now for me and Croatia? Shall I pursue partnerships and collaborations on maritime heritage programs and international exchanges as are being discussed? I love the ideas, and to hesitate would be a mistake for me personally, for the Coastal Heritage Alliance and for the friends I have made here in Croatia. Discussions will need to take place. A draft game plan will need to be developed during my next visit—something modest in cost, but bold in creativity.

These summed up my thoughts on 19, June 2016. Much has transpired over the last five months. This chapter will articulate how I have already put into practice the skills and knowledge gained through the MACS program, and how this Capstone will continue to influence my life. Although I anticipate new audiences and communities along the way, this undertaking has provided me with a foundation. I have built deep meaningful professional and personal relationship with students, professors, politicians, fishermen, boatyard owners, and so many others. These relationships were significant to me in many respects—I discovered in them dreams like my own, strong committed individuals that immediately won my trust and respect. Their welcoming and generous spirit overwhelmed me at times. They will remain my audience and my cultural sustainability project that I will continue to build upon. For like the gull sitting on its solid rock perch, I stand ready to take flight with the confidence and wisdom gained both in myself and in humanity. The connections I have made in Croatia, and the work that I have begun there, have the potential of becoming my real Capstone, the one that will represent the final phase of my life's work in the homeland of my parents. To describe the connections made, the programs I was involved in, and the cultural partnerships that are currently being developed due to this MACS Capstone, I present the following concrete examples with accompanying images.

## Example 1: Youth Sail Training on Traditional Vessels



*Sailing training students hoisting the Lateen sail on the bracera (above).*

*This is the 2016 graduating class with instructors (below).*







*Goran Stojanovic and his 1st mate aboard the Lady of the Sea*

This sail training program was designed to transfer knowledge and skills in the field of maritime culture and traditional values to the youth of Dubrovnik aboard a reproduction of a traditional freight boat known as a *bracera*. It brought together the experience of Croatian and American maritime tradition bearers that, together with the high school students, explored the wealth of tangible and intangible maritime heritage through active participation in varied sea conditions and cultural situations. This was viewed as a pilot project, a practice run that would assist in laying the ground work for future program expansion between Croatia and the U.S. regarding maritime cultural sustainability. The *Lady of the Sea* also performs heritage tourism charters as a way to sustain culture and generate revenue to underwrite youth education programs.

Goran Stojanovic was my host during my speaking tour. Additional information has been provided on him in Chapter 4 of this paper. I will be meeting with him in Croatia in December, 2016 to discuss future youth training and heritage tourism projects in both the U.S. and Croatia.

## Example 2: Maritime Heritage in Local Communities—Sustainable Models (an EU sponsored event)



*The maritime heritage conference was held in a large warehouse at the Betina Shipyard on Island Murter.*

Sponsored by the office of Mr. Tonino Picula, the Croatian Parliament Minister to the European Union, this conference on sustaining maritime heritage in local communities was hosted by the Town of Betina on the Island of Murter June 10 and 11, 2016. I had the privilege of being one of ten international speakers on subjects such as: Building a Sustainable Maritime Heritage Story; Traditional Vessels and Education Under Sail; and EU Funding Challenges and Sources. Tourism was highlighted as a major revenue source for Croatia, Greece, and the other countries in attendance. Some guest speakers represented programs and projects from Spain, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, UK, Greece, Croatia, and the U.S. This two-day conference was developed to address the lack of coordinated government policy and strategy in addressing vanishing traditional maritime heritage—a situation which is witnessing a decreasing number of wooden boatbuilders and local shipyards. Although not strictly focused on fishing family heritage, most boats and skills being sustained were directly connected to past or present fishing culture, since a substantial amount of maritime skills was developed around the harvesting of seafood. One important message that became a *take-home* for me was the general feeling about the existing threats to the continuation of traditional occupational maritime arts, and even the

diminishing opportunities to expand authentic heritage tourism interpretation along the Dalmatian Coast. This made my work seem even more important. My role at the conference allowed me to make connections with the office of EU parliament member Picula and his assistant Ivan Matic. It is likely that I will be invited to assist in the development of a follow-up conference in 2017. Initial discussions regarding next steps will transpire in December, 2016, when I return to Zagreb to meet with Tonino Picula and his representatives.

### Example 3: Roto Palagruzona— Festival of the Sea



*The view from an upstairs room in Komiza; it was like a painting.*



The Festival of the Sea has been an annual event in the village of Komiza, Island Vis, for over 50 years, a community that for centuries depended upon the bounty of the Adriatic to fuel their *modes of production* that sustained local maritime knowledge and skills. Now, however, with the decline in commercial sardine and lobster harvesting, all former boat shops and fish processing plants have vanished. Like other maritime communities in similar situations faced with diminishing fish stocks, Komiza is inventing new ways to celebrate who they were, who they are, who they may become. Tourism, hopefully good heritage tourism, is becoming more of an option for the town as its festivals increase in popularity.



*Traditional falkusa boats at rest along the Riva in Komiza, Island Vis.*

A revival in the construction of traditional fishing boats has been started, most of which have been built in the town of Betina where the EU conference was held. The building of some of these sailing vessels were commissioned and are currently owned by residents of Komiza. They have become a center piece of Rota Palagruza—the Festival of the Sea. As well as being on display along the Riva for festival goers to enjoy, a highlight of the weeklong event is a 40-nautical mile race from Komiza to the Island of Palagruza, the traditional fishing grounds of the



sardine fisherman. This is a re-creation of heritage, an attempt to carry forward skills, values, and history from the past, and, in so doing, help sustain culture, protect the environment, and support the development of community-based tourism (CBT). Komiza has become a model for other coastal villages. It is the town that I will be returning to in December 2016 to participate as a skill demonstrator during the feast of St Nicholas celebration where I will be teaching children ship's caulking—something I have done on both coasts of the U.S. for several years.



*Pictured are the children of Komiza learning about their boatbuilding heritage.*

During the Festival of the Sea, I assisted members of Association Palagruza in their efforts to introduce children to elements of traditional boat design and construction. These daily workshops were performed in the local museum which was originally built as a fortress to protect the village treasure from pirates. The wealth of Komiza, at that time, was salt. Salt is something that many of us might take for granted, but for sardine fishermen, without salt there would have been no way to preserve and market their catch. This is yet another natural resource story, one that reinforces the intimate connection between humans and nature. It is simple elements, like salt, that can become the *story stuff* of good heritage tourism.



*The festival volunteers are preparing the beach kitchen on Palagruza Island for the evening events. They have brought everything they need by boat from Komiza, a 40-mile trip at-sea.*

The Festival of the Sea, and the people of Komiza, could be a major field study, something I hope to do some day. For this current research, however, there is just one more facet of the event that I want to highlight—namely, the community celebration on the Island Palagruza, which is situated in the middle of the Adriatic Sea, a fishing area that has been fought over for years by various countries. As the culmination of the traditional sailing race, a few hundred of us gathered on the remote shores of the Island to cook fish, play music, sing traditional songs, and basically celebrate cultural life. It was surprising, inspirational, and comforting to be a part of such a heartfelt expression of authentic maritime traditions. I will no doubt return, but perhaps with a bit more knowledge of how things work on the local level.



## Example 4: Pepe`s Fifty Project



*Ante Bozanic`, known as Pepe, is being filmed for an Italian travel television show.  
Take note of the picture of the Last Supper on the wall behind Pepe.*

Pepe, like me, is a wooden boatbuilder and former commercial fisherman. He has become somewhat a living legend along the coast of Croatia. I spent three days working with him in his shop preparing parts for the children`s boatbuilding classes, held daily during the Festival of the Sea. Pepe spoke very little English, and me, very little Croatian, but a bond developed between us because of the commonality that we shared in our traditional art form of boatbuilding. He told his friends that Pepe and Mike communicate with their hands, that our hands spoke a language that both of us were fluent in. Maritime craftsman like Pepe are highly respected in Komiza. He told me that most of his childhood friends had moved to other countries, but he stayed and practiced his trade. He desires to visit me in the U.S. and help me restore wooden boats. I look forward to working once again with Pepe as part of future heritage tourism

projects in Komiza. He is genuine, the type of authentic maritime tradition bearer that makes heritage come alive. But Pepe is so much more than a wooden boatbuilder, he is also an accomplished poet that writes and speaks of the village he loves...Komiza, Island Vis.

I do not know if his poetry has ever been published, and since I do not read or speak Croatian to any great extent, I was only able to pick up a word here and there. In some ways, however, it did not seem to matter all that much that I could not understand his spoken words. What I was most interested in was his performance, and the interaction that developed between him and his audience. When he recited, everyone listened. I believe Pepe spoke with a kind of cultural authority that was admired and respected within his community. And, although words are important, actions are what create real performance, like a dance. In good heritage tourism, it is not only what is said, but it is also how intangible cultural heritage stories are presented.



*At the annual Firemen`s Hall Lamb Roast, Pepe`s recites a poem  
as if saying grace before meals.*



I had the pleasure of accompanying Pepe at several social events during the Festival: on stage with the mayor of Komiza; lamb roasts at the fire hall; meals at various homes, including his own where he treated me to lard spread on bread topped with sugar. (His daughter laughed when she saw my reluctance about trying it.) For a morning coffee break at his workshop, we would toast each other with a small glass of vinegar, for good health. Pepe treated me to all his favorite foods. I think he liked me because I was a craftsman, too. We connected through common intangible maritime skills, like a brotherhood. Pepe was animated, soulful, entertaining; he demonstrated a zest for life that was contagious. He spoke for his people.

Pepe attended my presentation on maritime heritage at the community center which was part of my speaking tour. I had a friend translate my presentation into Croatian, and the PowerPoint was photo rich, so Pepe could understand the work I did in the U.S. regarding historic vessel restoration, skill training of apprentices and prisoners, and the delivery of at-sea education and heritage tourism. Upon the completion of my talk, Pepe made a comment. In his broken English, he said something like, "If there were 50 more like Mike, we could change the world." I thought about his complimentary words upon returning home from Croatia, and decided to form a Facebook group known as "Pepe`s Fifty Project" with a mission of inspiring 50 Croatian youth to become maritime cultural sustainability leaders in their communities.

The FB site has 89 members made up of Croatians and Americans. Various potential projects have been identified as ways to address its mission of inspiring the youth of Croatia to become *change agents* in sustaining local maritime heritage. The scopes of the projects address issues and opportunities in heritage tourism, education, cultural sustainability, and environmental stewardship. The intent is to create small teams of individuals around projects that best suit their interest, knowledge, and expertise. Several former MACS graduates have expressed a keen desire in becoming involved. This was one of my objectives in starting the project—to create a way to harness the energy and passion of Goucher College cultural sustainability students, and to take what they have learned and apply it in a multidimensional context, such as I believe Croatia offers. I see it as a post-graduate field experience of great value.

### Example 5: Tradition in Motion—A Journey of Discovery



*Northbound along the famed Inside Passage of British Columbia.*



Example 5 is a maritime educational program designed for Croatian college students as a field experience, to be offered during the summer of 2017. It is the first undertaking being developed through the Pepe's Fifty Project to train and inspire Croatian youth regarding the sustainability of their maritime heritage. The course will be comprised of three distinct phases, each of which will be presented in different marine environments and diverse maritime cultures.

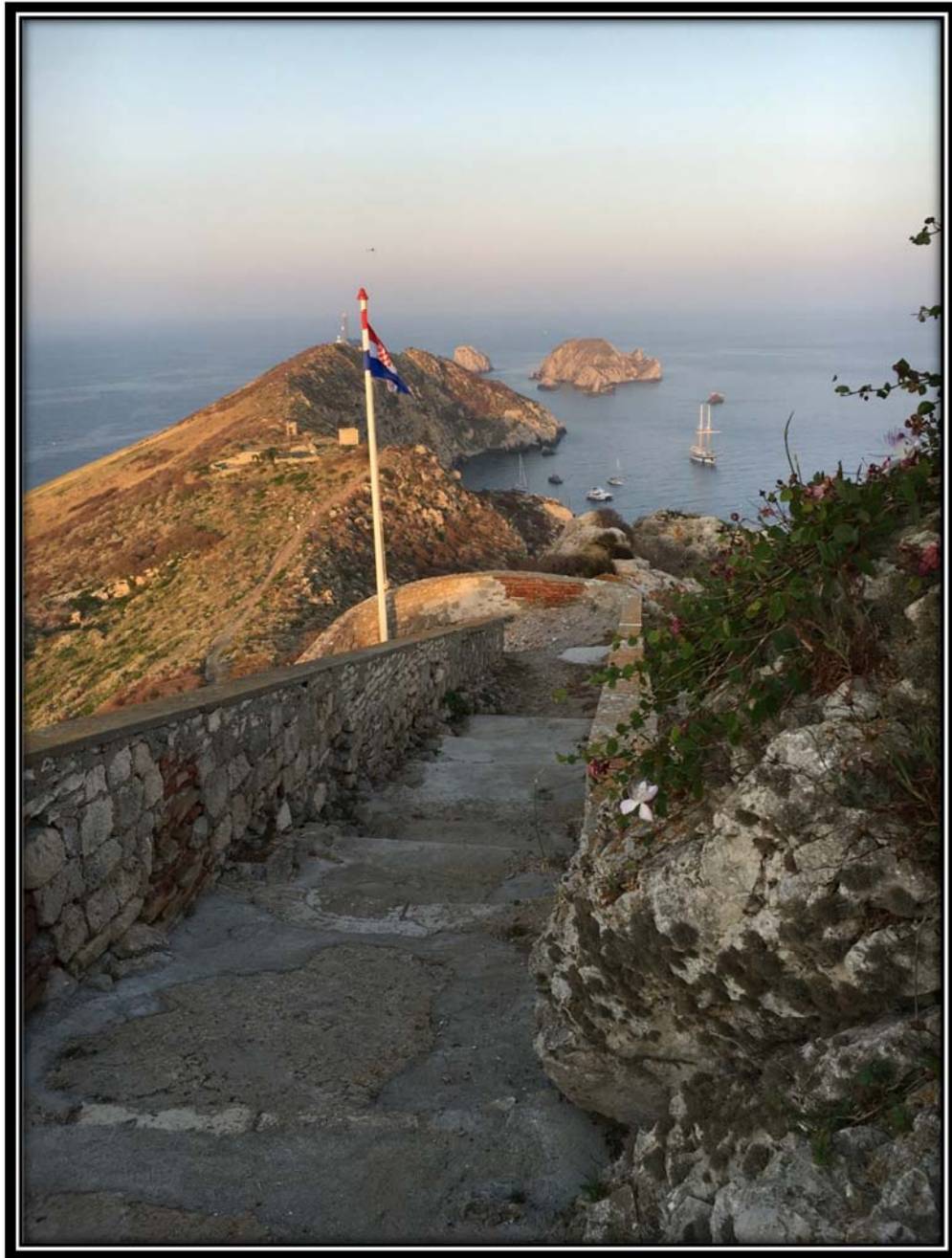
Phase 1 of the learning experience will take place within the Croatian village of Komiza where the students will be introduced to, and then perform, *hands-on* work on historic vessel design, construction, repair, and maintenance. It will include lectures, presentations, and demonstrations.

Phase 2 will be conducted *at-sea* along the Inside Passage of North America aboard the historic vessel *Commencement*, the flagship of the Coastal Heritage Alliance. Students will be required to participate in all aspects of vessel operation. The experience includes visits to spectacular coastal regions, unique First Nation villages, pristine wilderness areas, and marine life.

Phase 3 returns to Croatia where each student will select a maritime community to volunteer time and put into practice what they learned during their time in the field. This practicum phase is about students giving back to society.

The overall goal of this course will be to ignite a keen interest in each student to work toward preserving the traditional vessels, skills, and stories that still exist to a limited extent within their local maritime communities, while also acquiring knowledge and values that will assist them in future careers in Croatia's developing economy. Substantial preliminary work has already been accomplished on this project, and further development will transpire in Croatia during my December, 2016, trip to Zagreb. In February of 2017, promotion and marketing of the program will begin at the University of Zagreb and at the Rochester Institute of Technology, which is also located in Zagreb, Croatia.

## Final Thoughts



*The view from atop Island Palagurza.*

It was a stunning view from atop the island that evening, and it was where I said my goodbyes to Croatia, to the Adriatic, to the people who embraced me for two marvelous months during the summer of 2016. The hike to the top made me aware of my physical age, while at the same



time invigorated my spirit to carry on along the path I embarked upon six years ago, when entering the first cultural sustainability cohort at Goucher College. The assorted emotions of my Capstone experience caused me to ponder whether achieving a master's degree will mark the beginning or the ending of my active life—a capstone or a foundation stone? I watched the sunset from Palagurza that evening, but failed to wake up early enough the next day to see it rise. Might there be another opportunity for me in Croatia to catch a sunrise? Will the work that I have begun there take root, accomplishing good results? Will the answers to my Capstone questions contained within be of benefit to those who read this paper? Time will be the judge of all of that. In the meantime, networking, and planning with my contacts in Croatia will continue. There are festivals to attend in Komiza, heritage tourism to facilitate in Sumartin at the *Gate*, partnerships to finalize in Zagreb, curriculum to create for the at-sea Croatian student trip to Alaska, historic vessels to document and restore, tour guide training for Croatian fishermen, another EU maritime conference to help plan, and the Pepe's Fifty Project to continue developing. There is little doubt that I will have several more opportunities to see the sun rise over the Dalmatian Coast.



*A beautiful sunset over the Adriatic Sea—a special moment of goodbyes,  
and wondering if my grandfathers had ever set foot on Island Palagruza.  
Did they look West at sunset and dream of new horizons  
in the United States of America?*

## Appendix: Presentations and Curriculum

### Document #1

(Mike V's) Presentation Brief

Betina EU Conference

#### [Bridging the Maritime Heritage Gap...Remaining True to Our Past in Situations Which Have Changed](#)

I am here with you today on behalf of the Croatian-American Society and the non-profit organization Coastal Heritage Alliance from North America. My intent over these next few days is to share with you some of my experience and knowledge regarding efforts I have made to revive and sustain traditional maritime practices and values in the U.S. during a time of rapid cultural change. This cultural change unfortunately has disrupted the "natural transfer" of traditional maritime knowledge from one generation to the next. In the past, as I am sure you are aware, maritime heritage was transferred within families and communities as a natural part of life, such as I experienced growing up in a Croatian-American fishing community. Fifty years ago I began living that heritage—first as a commercial fisherman in Alaska, then as a boatbuilder, and more recently as a teacher of maritime traditions. I learned my heritage through the generosity of others, so now I attempt I extend that same degree of generosity in the world.

In the U.S. I design and develop new ways to educate the young about the sea and the traditions that we are here to talk about. Our organization restores the boats, practices the skills, trains the apprentices, and tells the maritime heritage stories to new audiences through creative projects on both coasts of North America.

Coastal Heritage Alliance is a service organization and a social enterprise with a mission to assist others in maintaining their private maritime practices. We provide both youth and adults the opportunity to participate in a variety of maritime experiences in order for them to grow in knowledge, embrace important values, and to consider their life and their role in society. Our work is not so much about the boats as it is about the people, as our efforts are directed towards supporting those that share a similar vision of maritime cultural sustainability as opposed to primarily preserving the past. We believe that maritime heritage is a powerful teaching tool that should be expanded upon and used as a primary platform for youth development, not as history but as a vital part of living.

Like I am sure may be the case with many of you, I learned my maritime heritage from the older generation. That treasure was passed down to me as an inheritance—what I call a "natural transfer" of skills, generational knowledge, wisdom, customs, a strong work ethic, and important life values. But now, in many communities that "natural transfer" of maritime heritage no longer exists. What we value is rapidly disappearing. And the "chain" that connects us to a living breathing maritime heritage is growing weaker.

I believe that there exists a "gap," a "distance" between our maritime heritage past and our maritime heritage future, and it is us that reside in that "gap." We are the ones that stand between the past and the future, and only we can build the bridge that connects the next generation to that proud working waterfront heritage and its values that are so desperately needed in the world today.

The causes that have created this "gap" are easy to identify. Modernization, industrialization, and the ever-increasing pace of life are not conducive to advancing traditional maritime heritage which requires patience, time, and dedication to master. In many ways, we have attempted to address this "gap" by filling it with history museums, festivals and various forms of heritage tourism. We collect, display, interpret, celebrate, and market various elements of the past—the history of what was. As beneficial as these efforts may be, they still are not sufficient to turn the tide of maritime heritage loss because they seldom address the actual transfer of a living and authentic maritime heritage to the young. Often these efforts are more about providing activities for the tourists and generating revenue than they are about transferring heritage to the next generation. Have we allowed maritime heritage to become a commodity rather than a living culture? Are we somewhat to blame for our actions or inactions when it comes to addressing the loss of maritime heritage?

In order to build a bridge to the future, I first call upon those of us that have directly inherited maritime skills, knowledge, and values from our ancestors since we are the strongest link in the chain to the past. We have been given a valuable treasure that needs to be shared. It is critically important that we do not take this heritage to the grave where it will be of benefit no one. So, I ask all of you to identify, support, encourage, and honor those individuals in your community who still live the maritime inheritance which they received. This is a challenging situation, because an inheritance is a private issue which needs to be respected by all. Asking those to share with the public the traditions that they carry in their hearts, hands and minds is a delicate undertaking, but one that is required if their experience is to be transferred to others.

I know through experience that the young are eager to learn directly from those who have dedicated their lives to mastering a maritime occupation. They are not only seeking the technical skills of sailing or boatbuilding, but they are also searching for mentors who represent life values earned through years of dedication to disciplines connected to the sea and other maritime heritage activities.

In addition, I also call for immediate and innovative action on behalf of all conference attendees regarding the need for increased cooperation, partnership building, and mutual support between all sectors of society, not just those within the maritime realm. Potential joint efforts should be considered and pursued among the leaders and decision makers of government, education, tourism, NGOs, and the maritime industries. These are the entities that should assume initial responsibility for new and innovative actions. If there is serious interest in doing so, creative thinking and networking can begin today right here in Betina. I have found partnership arrangements in America with colleges, prisons, museums, environmental groups,

municipalities, and civic organizations to be most helpful in advancing maritime heritage. So, let's talk!

Finally, I would like to emphasize the need for each of us to contribute something towards the sustainability of traditional maritime practices. No one person or organization can accomplish this task on their own. We find ourselves faced with the task of being true to our past in situations which have changed. Working together and sharing ideas, talents, time, and resources will be required to change the course of maritime heritage loss. It is up to those of us today to make a difference. I look forward to sharing more American best practices with you tomorrow and on into the future. We need to be in this endeavor together.

## **Document #2**

(Mike V's) Presentation to tourism students at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)  
Zagreb, Croatia, May 2016

Part 1: Introduction of the topic & Mike V.

(Begin with PowerPoint title slide #1: *Stories from the Galley* while reading the following text)



*Mike Vlahovich presenting to tourism students at RIT in Zagreb, Croatia.*

*Dobar Dan* (Good Day)!

It is an honor and a great pleasure for me to be here in Zagreb with you today to share my story, an American story that has its roots in Croatia. It seems only fitting that I have this



opportunity to try to add to that *circle of knowledge*, that international transfer of maritime *know-how* that for me started over a hundred years ago, when my father and grandfathers left the islands of the Dalmatian Coast and immigrated to America. They came to America in search of a better life. Although they were poor in possessions, they were rich in maritime skills and knowledge. That Croatian maritime heritage served them well in America, and I consider myself very fortunate to have grown up learning from them. My hope is that during my stay in Croatia I might be of some assistance in reuniting our past, celebrating our present, and looking ahead to the future regarding efforts to maintain that valuable maritime culture that we hold in common.

My main goal here today is to highlight a few American maritime heritage educational projects and programs to create a platform where we can share ideas about common goals and challenges. I believe that the best education takes place when all of us assume the role of both student and teacher – learning from one another. So, I hope you will ask questions and give your perspective and insights about maritime heritage education and cultural tourism. I believe that sustainable tourism offers us fertile ground in which to affect positive social change. I hope our time together will be more of a conversation than a lecture. But to accomplish this I would first like to give some background about my personal journey in the field of maritime cultural heritage—a journey that began as a birthright, but over time changed into an endowment that I now share in the public realm for the good of society. Some of this involves using heritage tourism to engage the public and influence global practices. This is a subject that I would very much like to get your opinion on. I hope this talk, along with visual images, will provide us a historic and present day context in which to consider and discuss these topics.

I'll start with the theme of natural resources since my life once revolved around the harvesting of nature's bounty. Old growth timber was the material I used to build and restore the wooden fishing boats that my family and our Croatian relatives relied upon to commercially catch wild sockeye salmon along the Pacific Northwest Coast of America. This was my heritage and cultural identity, practices that I still cherish even though my most active years are now behind me. These two traditional maritime occupations, fishing and wooden boatbuilding fueled a healthy economy and helped form a community of skilled workers that passed on their maritime knowledge to each successive generation. It was what defined life on the working waterfront of my hometown. Eventually, however, the depletion of natural resources and a change of priorities regarding waterfront development led to the displacement of this traditional maritime culture, which in turn began a movement towards large scale gentrification along the shores. Big coastal infrastructure changes have taken place within my lifetime and have in large part displaced the maritime heritage that I knew as a young man. With the displacement of *maritime cultural markers*—the objects—a unique *sense of place* was also

lost—an environment that once embodied much of our intangible maritime heritage: our skills, our stories, and our work ethic.

No doubt, the reduction in commercial fisheries and wooden boatbuilding, both dependent upon the harvest of natural resources, caused an unfortunate decline in the **natural** transfer of traditional maritime skills from one generation to the next. Generational **local** knowledge transfer was once a normal part of life growing up in American maritime communities. But the traditional lifestyles that supported this type of cultural learning have changed. No longer is life along the shore as conducive as it once was to the passing on of traditional maritime skills, something that is critically important in keeping unique maritime cultures alive and healthy. So, those of us who continue to value the merits of **authentic** maritime heritage education, which can include the cultural tourism sector, are faced with the task of developing new and effective ways to not only sustain existing knowledge, which continues to diminish, but to also create new and innovative education programs and tourism venues that transfer that threatened local knowledge to our others — to the next generation and beyond.

So how might that knowledge transfer best be accomplished considering this rapid global change along our coastlines? First, there need to be the **will** and **desire** to do just that—to pass on maritime knowledge and skills. It must become a priority to compete with the growing assortment of other concerns, interests and distractions that often monopolize our daily lives. Many of us will need to contribute time and talent to this effort if maritime education and related heritage tourism programming are to be developed and made sustainable. And for those of us that have directly inherited and benefited from the traditional maritime knowledge that has been handed down to us from our Croatian ancestors, we have a special responsibility to the next generation to transfer those skills and that passion that have so defined our lives. It would be sad to take that experience and mastery of marine occupational arts to the grave. What we know and what we have been given needs to be left behind in the hands, the hearts, and minds of others for the benefit of all humanity. This is the foundation of my work in America, and it is the message that I want to share with you today.

I hope that each of us will be positively affected by our exchange of ideas!

Presentation Part 2: Providing background & context via images and “off the cuff” narration as a way to reinforce the above text. Might also be an occasion to field a few questions/comments and make it more of a running dialogue?

(Allow 20 minutes for the following slides)

1. Title slide (*Stories from the Galley/why stories?*)
2. A maritime journey
3. Stories (how I learned about my heritage/truth behind the facts)

4. WWI (Archduke Ferdinand)
5. Leaving Dalmatia (searching for meaning)
6. Arriving in America (land of opportunity)
7. Settling in the Pacific Northwest (rich in natural resources)
8. Salmon fishing
9. Stable fishing families
10. Big trees = wooden boats
11. Wooden boats = shipyards
12. Shipyards = maritime skills
13. Maritime communities
14. Economic boom
15. Then the decline
16. North to Alaska
17. Living fishing heritage
18. Practicing boatbuilding heritage
19. End of harvesting
20. End of commercial boatbuilding
21. Changing course
22. The Aha moment
23. F/V Victory discovery
24. Deck repair
25. Crew's quarters
26. The dilemma (how to stay true to my heritage?)
27. The *mission* question
28. Seeking transformative action
29. Giving new life to old meanings
30. Heritage is our anchor
31. Seafaring our culture
32. Chained together
33. Each a link in the chain
34. Pause?

Presentation Part 3: Introduction to Coastal Heritage Alliance/Reflecting on 50 years of experience/what is CHA/list a few programs & projects

35. Saving What Matters coin
36. Built on real experience

### 37. Social enterprise

Our structure: a social enterprise

- a not-for-profit educational corporation
- dedicated to sustaining traditional maritime culture
- founded in 2003
- active on both coasts of North America
- considered a hybrid business model
- works *hands-on* in coastal communities
- moves beyond museum walls
- believes in the value of *experiential learning*
- encourages the transfer of local knowledge & skills
- strives to lead creative & innovative efforts
- adheres to principles of social & environmental justice
- visions a future of collaboration for a better world

### 38. Theory of action

Our approach: transforming private heritage into public programming such as:

- Traditional Shipwright Apprenticeships
- Cultural & Environmental Seafaring Education
- Prison Inmate Training/Rehabilitation
- Traveling Maritime Skill Demonstrations for Kids
- Heritage Tourism Tour Guide Training for Fisherman
- Museum *Apprentice for a Day* Programs
- After School Youth Programs

Presentation Part 4: Program Examples/images/narration/discussion

Traditional Shipwright Apprenticeships (slides 39 to 65)

Seafaring College Field Trips (slides 66 to 75)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrW2QYhZiRU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFtEyOptgK4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7HZE2hJX4nA>



Prison Inmate Training/Rehabilitation (slides 76 to 94)

Traveling Maritime Skill Demonstrations for Kids (slides 95 to 107)

Heritage Tourism Tour Guide Training for Fishermen (slides 108 to 119)

<http://www.watermenheritagetours.org/About-Us>

Museum “Apprentice for a Day” program (slides 120 to 131)

After School Youth Programs (slides 132 to 142)

Knowledge comes from Experience (slide #143)

### **Document #3**

A **draft** proposal of the Coastal Heritage Alliance & the Croatian-American Society (a work in progress)

#### *Maritime Journey of Discovery*

This three-week intensive summer course is designed to inspire and prepare college students to lead efforts in sustaining the traditional maritime traditions and heritage of the Dalmatian Coast of Croatia. The course is comprised of three distinct phases, each of which is presented in a different maritime environment and culture.

Phase 1 of the learning experience will be conducted within the Croatian island town Komiza.

Phase 2 of the learning experience will be conducted at-sea along the inland waters of Puget Sound and the American San Juan Islands of Washington State, U.S.

Phase 3 of the learning experience will be conducted in the traditional maritime communities of Port Townsend & Port Hadlock, Washington State, U.S.

The course will be conducted as an experiential field study where the student will employ research methods such as: the reading of academic articles, nature and cultural observation, photo documentation, journaling, interviewing, group discussion and reflection; all intended to deepen the student's understanding and appreciation of diverse maritime cultures and marine environments. The overall goal of this course is to ignite a keen interest in each student to work towards preserving the traditional vessels, skills, and stories that exist within their local maritime communities, while also acquiring knowledge and values that will assist them in their future careers.

This course provides the student with the opportunity to: connect with pristine coastal environments and wilderness areas; learn applicable maritime skills; gain local maritime

knowledge; develop important life values; consider one's role in society; chart their future course; earn valuable "sea time"; get maritime job experience.

Phase 1: Introduction to Traditional Croatian Vessels: Types, Design, Construction, & Maintenance. (8 days: students will be introduced to hands-on sailing, Croatian historic vessel design, construction, repairing, and maintaining. It will include related lectures, presentations, and demonstration.

Phase 2: Voyage along the Puget Sound & San Juan Islands, Washington, U.S. (8 days: students will go to sea aboard the historic vessel *Commencement* and participate in all aspects of vessel navigation and operation. This will include visits to spectacular coastal regions and pristine wilderness areas and marine life) Phase 3: Learn about and perform "hands-on" historic vessel maintenance in Port Townsend, Washington State, U.S. (4 days: students will be required to "earn" their passage and education aboard their floating classroom the *Commencement* by assisting with its maintenance while hauled out of the water at a traditional shipyard. This phase will also include mini-field trips to a wooden boatbuilding school and a maritime center. Housing will be provided aboard the vessel while out of water)

Possible course topics during all three Phases: 1) Skills: navigation, marlin spike seamanship, cooking at sea, deck general, mooring, anchoring, cleats, shore boats, rowing, at-sea repairs and maintenance, boat systems, safety. 2) Knowledge: self-knowledge; maritime history, heritage & culture; storytelling, performance, interpretation & presentation; leadership. 3) Values: responsibility, self-discipline, team work, self-reliance, respect for self & others, honesty, acceptance of others, appreciation of self & others, providing service, patience, understanding, forgiveness, kindness, dedication, commitment, work ethic, supporting the common good, self-confidence, community living. 4) Environment: natural resources; resource management; human impact upon the environment; weather, tides & currents; sea life, wildlife & habitat restoration; aquaculture, inner title zone, environmental protection and regulations.

Draft Syllabus for course: 14 days = 14 topics designed around a reading, a lecture, a discussion and a student assignment. 1) Each topic will include an informative/challenging/compelling article. 2) Each lecture will be provided by CHA staff and guest informants such as: native fishermen, forestry experts, marine ecologists, boat captains, historic preservationists', heritage tourism professionals, civic leaders, fisheries regulator, naval architects, naturalists, photographers.... 3) Each topic must require student participation in discussion 4) Each topic must require a short follow up assignment for each student.... 5) Each topic must require that the student present a "deliverable" regarding their personal thoughts and feelings related to the lecture, reading, discussion and observations of the day.... 6) Topics, readings, lectures, assignments and student presentations should, when possible, focus on the primary theme of environment, but also connect with the importance of local knowledge and life values.

While at-sea in Phase 2 each day will include a lesson, or lessons, in hands-on maritime skills as they relate to at-sea operations of vessel *Commencement*. 1) Deck General (anchoring, mooring dockside, basic knots, splicing, laughing punts, rowing, setting crab & shrimp pots, positioning fenders, coiling lines, throwing lines, cleats, chocks..... 2) Systems General (bilge pumps, sanitation, fresh water, ending check, PTO, auxiliary generator, fuel, hydraulics, electrical systems, gauges, steering, rudder, throttle, reverse gear... 3) Navigation General (compass, charts, course plotting, chart plotter, GPS, fog horn, radar, Fathometer, log book duties, ETA's, timing slack water, tides, currents, steering a straight course, standing watch..... 4) Safety General (man-over-board, fire drills, distress calls, stations) 5) Rules of the Road (per USCG regs, introduction to the basics regarding vessel traffic, lights, aids to navigation, requirements in situations of limited visibility.... 6) Team Work!

Goals/learning objectives: Upon the completion of this maritime heritage experience each student: 1) Will each student be qualified to serve as First Mate aboard the training vessel *Commencement*; to be determined by the captain and instructors. 2) Will have gained an increased sense of self-worth and confidence; to be determined through their personal reflections documented in their journal. 3) Will exhibit responsibility for their actions; as well as concern for the safety and welfare of others on board; to be determined through self-evaluations, and the evaluations of fellow student crew members. 4) Will be able to demonstrate an increased understanding of diverse marine environments and coastal cultures; to be determined through their field notes, their participation in academic discussions, and their photo log.

Costs to include:

- 1) Land travel within Croatia during Phase 1
- 2) Lodging and meals during Phase 1
- 3) Instruction staff and materials necessary during Phases 1
- 4) RT airfare and related land travel expenses from Croatia to Seattle, Washington during Phases 1 & 2
- 5) Passage and instruction aboard vessel *Commencement* to include meals, lodging on the boat, instruction staff and materials during Phase 2 & 3—No Charge/CHA to provide funding
- 6) Sport fishing/crabbing licenses in Washington if desired
- 7) All personal items and optional extra purchases while on shore

What is needed:

- 1) MOU (memorandum of understanding)
- 2) Goran and Mike to meet in Croatia to discuss all three Phases
- 3) Create marketing video that includes all three Phases

- 4) Determine marketing and recruitment plan
- 5) Secure funds
- 6) Seek additional partners?? (Just an idea)



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