

ARCHITECTURE AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN RURAL ISTRIA

Pavlo Ružić

Tomislav Ružić

Abstract

Natural resources, scenery and landscapes are the primary components of an area's or a destination's appeal to tourists. To gain economic benefits for the immediate or extended community, tourism development is aggressively imposed upon spaces. This makes tourism the most important, if not the only, factor of the exploitation of natural resources and the "collector" of its economic valorisation. Hence, the point is often made that while tourism is best suited for valorising natural resources, it is also capable of making them worthless by degrading nature and the human environment. Consequently, architects are right to warn that, in the twenty-first century and more than any time in the past, it will be necessary to rationally assess spatial potential for the more versatile development of tourism and other economic and non-economic activities. Architecture in space must have lasting common ground, by relating natural resources as a source of appeal in tourism to natural resources as a market. In the first case, natural resources are the motivation behind a tourist's arrival to a destination, while in the second case, the tourist appears as a consumer, using and jeopardising the natural resource and its appeal. The tourist-natural resource relationship should not be about confrontation or hostility, but rather about balance and collaboration. The aim of this paper is to prove that architecture is a major instrument of control in the concept of sustainable tourism development. The research in this paper is based on the proven method of domestic and foreign authors, and on photographic documentation.

Key words: development programmes, ambience architecture, natural resources, sustainable development, valorisation of space, rural Istria.