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To Rome with love: A moderated mediation model in Roman heritage consumption

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1 **TO ROME WITH LOVE: A MODERATED MEDIATION MODEL IN ROMAN**  
2 **HERITAGE CONSUMPTION**

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50 **TO ROME WITH LOVE: A MODERATED MEDIATION MODEL IN ROMAN**  
51 **HERITAGE CONSUMPTION**

52

53 **Abstract**

54 This paper tests a moderated mediation model based on hypothesized relationships in heritage  
55 marketing between event involvement, place attachment, experience authenticity, and revisit  
56 intention, and finds that place attachment mediates the event involvement–revisit intention  
57 relationship and that experience authenticity moderates the mediation. The relationships are  
58 explored with a sample of people attending a Roman heritage festival in Italy (n = 350). Based  
59 on suggestions from environmental psychology, the model is then split to compare neighborhood  
60 and non-neighborhood tourists, and younger and older tourists. Results show that revisit  
61 intention for closer and older tourists relies more on place attachment than on event involvement;  
62 the reverse is true for distal and younger tourists. Finally, tourists’ freely elicited motivations are  
63 analyzed by computing an original place-or-event-relatedness score, continuous and centered on  
64 zero, which corroborates the findings from the moderated mediation models. Theoretical and  
65 managerial implications are addressed.

66 **Keywords**

67 place attachment, event involvement, experience authenticity, revisit intention, moderated  
68 mediation, motivations, age, distance

69 **1. Introduction**

70 The purpose of this research is to investigate the perspectives of consumers on heritage  
71 experience authenticity to assess what drives their revisit intention. Building on Hwang, Lee, and  
72 Chen (2005) and Gross and Brown (2008), we propose that revisit intention for heritage  
73 marketing has two drivers: the location itself, and the event. We aim at providing a consumer-  
74 based approach to investigate the role of the place not through its objective features (quality of  
75 transportation, etc.; Hall, Basarin, & Lockstone-Binney, 2010) but rather through the eyes of  
76 consumers, as the personal connection individuals feel with the place (Kyle, Bricker, Graefe, &  
77 Wickham, 2004). Similarly, we address the event in terms of how much consumers are involved  
78 with it (Gross & Brown, 2008). Based on solid, well-known constructs such as event  
79 involvement, place attachment, experience authenticity, and revisit intention, and focusing on  
80 heritage marketing, we also aim to provide solid, manageable results in showing which  
81 combination of place attachment and event involvement best fits which consumer segment.  
82 However, despite the agreement that the considered constructs are key, previous findings are  
83 sometimes contradictory when it comes to their exact role. For instance, place attachment is  
84 sometimes modeled as an attitude (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001), and thus as a predictor of  
85 satisfaction and revisit intention (Brown, Smith, & Assaker, 2016; Prayag & Ryan, 2012),  
86 sometimes as a consequence of satisfaction (Zenker & Rütter, 2014), and sometimes as a  
87 mediator between satisfaction and revisit intention (Lee, Kyle, & Scott, 2012). Similarly, event  
88 involvement is sometimes treated as a mediator (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010), sometimes as a direct  
89 predictor (Prayag & Ryan, 2012) of satisfaction and revisit intention, and at other times is  
90 neglected. Some methodological reasons might explain these contradictions and differences in  
91 perspectives: on one hand, some models proposed in the literature appear very rich and complex,  
92 and might suffer from excessive complexity, as they advance numerous potential mediation

93 effects that are, however, not tested formally by isolating the dependent, mediator, and  
94 independent variables in a separate sub-model. On the other hand, most studies employ SEM  
95 models, which are insensitive to the direction of causality, so that if dependent and independent  
96 variables are switched the overall model fit remains invariant. Furthermore, SEM models do not  
97 allow testing for moderation effects, so it might be that potential moderators have been included  
98 in previous models, but as direct predictors rather than as moderators.

99         In the present research, we opt for a relatively simple model, based on four constructs  
100 that the literature has unambiguously identified as being key, but whose exact relationships  
101 display instead some ambiguity. In explicitly testing a model of moderation and mediation,  
102 rather than a SEM, we shed some light on the relationships between the considered constructs.

103         Rome's heritage tourism has been chosen as a context for this research because of the  
104 maturity and distinctiveness of Rome's domestic heritage tourism market and the cultural  
105 sensibilities of its neighbors, similar to what Bryce, Curran, O'Gorman, and Taheri (2015) did for  
106 Japan's heritage tourism in the Asian context.

107         Through a moderated mediation model estimated using the SPSS PROCESS macro by  
108 Hayes (2013; model 7), we show that the combined use of place attachment and event  
109 involvement leads to revisit intention; place attachment mediates the relationship between event  
110 involvement and revisit intention; and experience authenticity moderates the relationship  
111 between event involvement and place attachment.

112         Furthermore, despite evidence in tourism that consumers of different ages exhibit  
113 different behavioral and vacation patterns (see, e.g., Romsa & Blenman, 1989), the role of age in  
114 the association between place attachment, involvement in an event, and behavioral intentions has  
115 yet to be explicitly addressed. In addition, literature in psychology addressing place attachment

116 has suggested that patterns of association between behavioral intentions and place attachment  
117 might differ by age (Pretty, Chipuer, & Bramston, 2003) and that age might also affect the desire  
118 for involvement in events external to the self (Maurer, Weiss, & Barbeite, 2003; Roberti, 2004).  
119 We show that the pattern of relationships between revisit intention, place attachment,  
120 involvement in the event and experience authenticity varies by respondents' age.

121 Finally, literature in environmental psychology has found that geographic distance might  
122 affect place attachment (Sarbin, 1983) and has dichotomized locations into neighborhood and  
123 non-neighborhood (Ahrentzen, 1992). We translate these considerations into the domain of  
124 tourism and show how the strength of the relationships related to place attachment in the  
125 moderated mediation model is affected by consumers' travelled distance to reach the place.

126 Accordingly, we split the model for age (comparing younger and older consumers) and  
127 for distance traveled (comparing neighborhood and non-neighborhood tourists). Finally, we  
128 analyze the motivations freely elicited by respondents by computing a simple yet efficient score  
129 of place-versus-event relatedness for motivations, continuous and symmetrically centered around  
130 zero. Results of a MANOVA on the motivation score corroborate the findings from the split  
131 models, increasing their robustness. In the final section we summarize the empirical evidence,  
132 offering conclusions and managerial implications for practitioners.

133

## 134 **2. Literature review**

135

### 136 ***2.1. Place attachment***

137 Recently, tourism and hospitality research has devoted increasing attention to place attachment  
138 (Brown et al., 2016; Hammitt, Backlund, & Bixler, 2006; Lewicka, 2011), suggesting the

139 relevance of developing place attachment for tourism marketers (Kaplanidou, Jordan, Funk, &  
140 Ridinger, 2012). After a long debate about what place attachment means and how best to  
141 measure it (for a review, see Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001), researchers now agree that place  
142 attachment can be broadly referred to as the personal connection one feels with a place (Kyle et  
143 al., 2004), or as the cognitive and emotional connection an individual experiences with a  
144 particular place (Lalli, 1992). In summary, place attachment is determined by an interplay of  
145 affect and emotions, knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors with respect to place (Low & Altman,  
146 1992). Accordingly, place attachment might be more emotional (Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001) or  
147 more evaluative (Moore & Graefe, 1994), as different factors can contribute to place attachment  
148 formation, for instance direct experiences (Hammit, Backlund, & Bixler, 2004) or social  
149 interactions (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992).

150         Place attachment has been found to influence tourists' behaviors and revisit intentions  
151 (Loureiro, 2014; Stylos, Vassiliadis, Bellou, & Andronikidis, 2016). Specifically, for events,  
152 there is empirical evidence of the impact of place attachment on future loyalty (Alexandris,  
153 Kouthouris, & Meligdis, 2006).

154         Although tourism research agrees that place attachment is key, extant contributions are  
155 sometimes ambiguous about how, exactly. For instance, some studies model place attachment as  
156 a *predictor* of satisfaction, loyalty, or revisit intentions (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Ramkissoon,  
157 Smith, & Weiler, 2013). Others instead conceptualize place attachment as a *consequence* of  
158 satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Lee et al., 2012). The reason for these disagreements  
159 might in part lie in the methodology used, as most of the studies rely on SEMs, which are  
160 insensitive to the direction of causality (an  $A \rightarrow B$  path and a  $B \rightarrow A$  path could report the same fit,  
161 though logically opposite; Chin, 1998; Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, & Thiele, 2017; Iacobucci,



162 2009). Moreover, in many contributions no further analyses support the results of the SEMs:  
163 while not detracting from the relevance of their findings, it does detract from their external  
164 validity (Garver & Mentzer, 1999; Koufteros, 1999). We address place attachment as a *mediator*  
165 of relationships leading to satisfaction and behavioral intentions, in line with Lee et al. (2012),  
166 who suggested that treating it as a mediator could help clarify its relationship to revisit intention,  
167 as it is conceptually similar to psychological commitment, which is a component of attitudinal  
168 loyalty (Kyle et al., 2004; Park, 1996) and relates to behavioral intentions such as revisiting  
169 (Kyle et al., 2004; Lee, Graefe, & Burns, 2007). Previous research might have failed or neglected  
170 to address place attachment as a mediator in part because only full mediation was the gold  
171 standard, according to Baron and Kenny (1986), leading researchers to drop promising projects  
172 according to what Zhao, Lynch, and Chen (2010, p. 199) defined as a “nonsensical” approach  
173 that mutilated theoretically interesting results and the potential for new theoretical contributions.  
174 On the other hand, many previous analyses of place attachment develop complex path models,  
175 and recent literature has shown that, especially in complex path models, the overlooking of  
176 indirect effects is likely (Hair, Sarstedt, Pieper, & Ringle, 2012; Nitzl, Roldan, & Cepeda, 2016),  
177 leading researchers to focus only on direct relationships and to ignore mediating effects (Nitzl et  
178 al., 2016).

179

## 180 **2.2. *Event involvement***

181 Involvement is probably one of the most investigated constructs in marketing research, and it has  
182 been examined with respect to countless objects, from brands to advertising (Lee & Beeler,  
183 2009). The tourism and leisure literature is no exception, having devoted much attention to the

184 role of consumer involvement as a predictor of attitudes and behavior (Havitz & Dimanche,  
185 1990; Prayag & Ryan, 2012), satisfaction (Iwasaki & Havitz, 2004), and loyalty (Kim, 2008).

186 Involvement can be defined as the perceived relevance of an object, based on the inherent  
187 needs, values, and interests of an individual (Zaichkowsky, 1985), and refers to the attachment  
188 one feels to a certain object.

189 Yet, two different kinds of involvement can be identified: enduring involvement and  
190 situational (or event) involvement (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). The first refers to an enduring  
191 concern with respect to a good and is a stable attitude that develops through the association of a  
192 good with individual personal values (Alexandris, 2016). The latter refers to a temporary  
193 increase in the relevance of or interest in an object (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Specifically, event  
194 involvement indicates a sense of personal relevance for and interest in a specific event (Wong &  
195 Tang, 2015).

196 For the purpose of this research, we adopt event involvement as the theoretical  
197 underpinning of the involvement construct in relation to the focal object of interest in this study,  
198 which is the event. In doing so, we follow recent academic interest in this concept and calls for  
199 future research on its role (Wong & Tang, 2015).

200 In tourism, events are usually highly engaging, and involvement is considered in all  
201 stages of the tourist buying process (Seabra, Abrantes, & Kastenholz, 2014). Accordingly,  
202 tourism and leisure studies usually address event involvement, as it is more managerially  
203 operationalizable and can be induced through specific activities and destination attributes  
204 (Kaplanidou & Havitz, 2010). Event involvement can influence consumers' intentions and  
205 behaviors (e.g. Carneiro & Crompton, 2010), lead to heightened relevance to the consumer

206 (Gration, Raciti, & Arcodia, 2011) and increases the likelihood of attendance (Pope & Turco,  
207 2001).

208

### 209 **2.3. Experience authenticity**

210 Experience authenticity refers to the extent to which tourists perceive products, events, and  
211 experiences as genuine (Shen, Guo, & Wu, 2014), true (Castéran & Roederer, 2013), real  
212 (Akhoondnejad, 2016), and historically accurate (Wang, 1999). Different facets of experience  
213 authenticity have been identified, such as objective authenticity (reflecting the way individuals  
214 see themselves in relation to external objects; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006), constructive  
215 experience authenticity (comprising the socially construed perspectives of the consumer, the  
216 situation, and the context; Akhoondnejad, 2016), and existential authenticity (pertaining to the  
217 emotions felt during a touristic experience, detached from the objects; Bryce et al., 2015).

218 Experience authenticity is key in the tourism and hospitality literature (Kim & Jamal,  
219 2007), which has examined it with regard to revisit intentions (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010),  
220 satisfaction (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003), and loyalty (Brida, Disegna, & Osti, 2013).  
221 Furthermore, experience authenticity is connected to the past (Lee, Fu, & Chang, 2015) and is  
222 therefore particularly relevant in the experience of heritage tourism, where the quest for  
223 experience authenticity is crucial (Castéran & Roederer, 2013). Nonetheless, the formal  
224 conceptualization of experience authenticity is inconsistent. For instance, some studies have  
225 considered it a *predictor* of satisfaction or revisit intention (Girish & Chen, 2017; Ramkissoon et  
226 al., 2013), others as a *mediator* between motivation and behavioral intentions (Kolar & Zabkar,  
227 2010), and still others as a *consequence* (Chhabra, 2005). As for involvement, these  
228 inconsistencies might stem from the insensitivity to causal direction in SEMs and from the

229 relative difficulty of including mediation and moderation analyses in SEMs. Furthermore, the  
230 heterogeneity in the conceptualization of experience authenticity might reflect the possibility that  
231 its effects vary across different contexts and consumer segments, so that studies focusing on  
232 different contexts or segments might have addressed it differently.

233

#### 234 **2.4. Revisit intention**

235 Revisit intention has been referred to as the visitor's intention to return to a place (Baker &  
236 Crompton, 2000) and has been suggested as the major proxy for the actual return of tourists  
237 (Loureiro, 2014; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Hence, revisit intention is key for tourism operators  
238 (Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008). The centrality of revisit intention is apparent, given the wealth of  
239 studies that consider it as the major dependent variable, in a wide array of settings, from festivals  
240 (Baker & Crompton, 2000) to destinations (Stylos, Bellou, Andronikidis, & Vassiliadis, 2017;  
241 Yoon & Uysal, 2005) to sport tourism (Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008). Revisit intention has  
242 probably received even greater attention in the specific context of events, where it is key (Mason  
243 & Paggiaro, 2012; Tanford & Jung, 2017). As such, revisit intention is addressed as the  
244 dependent variable in the present research, also.

245         Yet, authors such as Yoon and Uysal (2005) and Stylos et al. (2017) did not clarify the  
246 specific variables that can influence the intention to return to a destination (i.e., behavioral  
247 loyalty). Literature in tourism has shown that the intention to return to a destination depends not  
248 only on satisfaction (Kozak, 2001) but on other variables, such as the image of that destination  
249 (Bigné, Sánchez, & Sánchez, 2001), that in this case would translate to the image of the event  
250 itself (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Similarly, Um, Chon, and Ro (2006) related revisit intention to  
251 the perceived quality and image of the attended event/performance, building on the evidence of

252 Bowen (2001) for tour itineraries, based on the “what” and “how” of the performance (Grönroos,  
253 1984). In this regard, Tilaki, Marzbali, Abdullah, and Bahauddin (2016) considered image and  
254 satisfaction as antecedents of the loyalty to a World Heritage Site. Similarly, Petrick and  
255 Backman (2001) suggested that revisit intention stems from satisfaction and the perceived value  
256 of the experience (for travelers to golf-related events), while Beerli and Leon (2012) also  
257 addressed emotions as drivers of behavioral loyalty. In this vein, novelty seeking was suggested  
258 as a significant antecedent of revisit intention by Jang and Feng (2007), and from that  
259 perspective an event might constitute a novelty that revitalizes a location. In summary, a  
260 destination can comprise both a place and events that together determine the overall  
261 attractiveness and drive future behaviors (Um et al., 2006).

262

### 263 *2.5. Distance*

264 Studies in tourism have addressed the influence of personal characteristics in relation to  
265 individuals’ reactions to a place (Kimpton, Wickes, & Corcoran, 2014). Some argue that  
266 geographic distance can determine or ease, to some extent, individual attachment to a place and  
267 have found that place attachment is likely to develop from personal experience with the physical  
268 environment (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001). Thus, locals are  
269 more likely to develop a stronger attachment, as they experience more often the environment,  
270 than those living in distant areas (Argan, Kaya, Argan, Akyildiz, & Korkmaz, 2015). In this vein,  
271 previous tourism literature has shown that whether an individual was born in a place or comes  
272 there as a visitor affects their attachment to that place (Budruk, Wilhelm Stanis, Schneider, &  
273 Anderson, 2011; Lee et al., 2012; Moore & Graefe, 1994).

274 Also, environmental psychology has addressed distance, explaining individuals' behavior  
275 toward and reactions to a place in terms of a dichotomization of neighborhood and non-  
276 neighborhood, or closeness and distance (Ahrentzen, 1992; Brown, Perkins, & Brown, 2003;  
277 Fullilove, 1996). Feelings of belongingness and identity have been found to stem from  
278 geographical closeness (Brown et al., 2003; Hammitt et al., 2004) and to drive attitudes and  
279 behavior (Manzo & Perkins, 2006).

280 Finally, literature in psychology has established a correlation between psychological  
281 perceptions of closeness and objective measures of distance, so that objects more physically  
282 distant from the evaluating self are usually also perceived as more psychologically distant  
283 (Henderson, Wakslak, Fujita, & Rohrbach, 2011; Liberman, Trope, & Wakslak, 2007; Trope &  
284 Liberman, 2010).

285

## 286 **2.6. Age**

287 Scholarly examination of place attachment has also addressed the effect of demographics on  
288 tourists' behavior. In this vein, evidence shows that the degree of place attachment is likely to  
289 vary for individuals of different ages (Argan et al., 2015; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001; Kimpton  
290 et al., 2014), with older individuals being more likely to develop greater emotional bonds to a  
291 place than younger individuals. Furthermore, tourists' age has been found to influence the  
292 cognitive and affective components of a destination image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli &  
293 Martín, 2004), interest in relaxation (Beerli & Martín, 2004), drivers and attributes of destination  
294 attractiveness (Cho, 1998), need for arousal and involvement (Walmsley & Young, 1998),  
295 spending behavior (Mok & Iverson, 2000) and even the impact of tourism advertising (Kim,  
296 Hwang, & Fesenmaier, 2005) and the reliance on personal experience and different information

297 sources online (Jacobsen & Munar, 2012) and offline (McGuire, Uysal, & McDonald, 1988).  
298 Finally, older consumers also exhibit less interest in involvement in events external to the self  
299 (Maurer et al., 2003; Roberti, 2004).

300 Consistently, literature in psychology has suggested that patterns of association between  
301 objects and behaviors differ by age (Pretty et al., 2003) and has established a correlation between  
302 elder age and place attachment (Anton & Lawrence, 2014; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001;  
303 Sugihara & Evans, 2000) and younger age and desire for excitement (Maurer et al., 2003;  
304 Roberti, 2004).

305

## 306 ***2.7. Conceptual model and hypotheses***

307 This research proposes that revisit intention has two antecedents, one pertaining to the location,  
308 the other to the event. As we adopt a consumer-based approach, we consider the place through  
309 the eyes of consumers; that is to say, we consider the personal connection between the individual  
310 and the place (Kyle et al., 2004) rather than the tangible features of the place (Hall et al., 2010).  
311 Also event involvement has been suggested as a relevant predictor of revisiting (Lee & Beeler,  
312 2009; Regan, Carlson, & Rosenberger, 2012), and providing events is a major task of a touristic  
313 destination, one that influences visitors' re-patronage intentions (Kaplanidou et al., 2012). On  
314 this basis, drawing from the arguments found in leisure and tourism marketing, we posit that  
315 both place attachment and event involvement will influence the likelihood of their revisit  
316 intention. Accordingly, and incorporating the suggestions by Hwang et al. (2005) and Gross and  
317 Brown (2008), we posit that place attachment together with event involvement build intention to  
318 revisit. More formally, we posit the following:

319            ***Hypothesis 1. Event involvement(H1a) and place attachment (H1b) both have a***  
320            *direct positive impact on revisit intention.*

321            The tourism and leisure literature provide evidence of a close relationship between place  
322 attachment and event involvement (Hwang et al., 2005), suggesting that event involvement  
323 contributes to consumers’ evaluation of the location (Brown et al., 2016). Similarly, in the  
324 domain of sport marketing, Higham and Hinch (2009) suggested that place attachment can  
325 extend to the event venue in shaping the overall experience. In this vein, Hwang et al. (2005)  
326 documented that tourist involvement in outdoor activities and place attachment have equal  
327 impacts on participation in such outdoor activities. In summary, there is ample evidence of a  
328 relationship between event involvement and place attachment (Hwang et al., 2005; Williams,  
329 Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992); thus, we include the event involvement–place  
330 attachment relationship in the theoretical model. We acknowledge that some studies have  
331 advanced that the direction of the causal relationship between event involvement and place  
332 attachment is from the latter to the former (Wong & Tang, 2015); however, place attachment  
333 represents “an emotional or affective bond between a person and a particular place” (Kyle,  
334 Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2003, p. 251) and results from the meaning associated with that  
335 place (Budruk, 2010). To have place attachment, a sense of “my place” and/or “favorite place”  
336 must arise first (Argan et al., 2015; Oh, Lyu, & Hammitt, 2012). In turn, this requires that  
337 consumers establish some relationship, experience, feelings and thoughts about the place (Alam,  
338 2011). Thus, place attachment is connected to the levels of relations that are established between  
339 a place and an individual, in terms of memories, social relationships, meanings and experiences  
340 (Budruk, 2010; Kyle et al., 2003). Event involvement represents an increase in the personal  
341 relevance for and interest in a specific geographically located event (Wong & Tang, 2015), that



342 might well generate memories and social relationships, and that constitutes an experience. Thus,  
343 we posit that event involvement should help generate an increase in the levels of relation with a  
344 place, and therefore positively affect place attachment. Accordingly, we test the following  
345 relationship in the model: Hypothesis 2. Event involvement has a direct positive impact on place  
346 attachment. Accordingly, we test the following relationship in the model:

347 ***Hypothesis 2.** Event involvement has a direct positive impact on place*  
348 *attachment.*

349 To the best of our knowledge, it remains unclear from the existing literature what,  
350 exactly, the relationship between event involvement, place attachment and revisit intention looks  
351 like. For instance, Hou, Lin, and Morais (2005) established a positive relationship between  
352 involvement and place in the context of a cultural tourism destination. Prayang and Ryan (2012)  
353 posed involvement and place attachment as parallel drivers of revisit intention (and satisfaction).  
354 George and George (2004) established place attachment as a driver of revisit intention.

355 Thanks to events, individuals attach meaning and memories to places, so that the self gets  
356 reflected in the place. These aspects of one's self, reflected in the place, generate attachment to  
357 (or revulsion toward) a place (Williams & Stewart, 1998), and such attachment in turn  
358 contributes to revisit intention (George & George, 2004). We propose that event involvement  
359 impacts place attachment (H2) and that the two—jointly—impact revisit intention (H1). Yet,  
360 event involvement refers to heightened relevance to the consumer (Gration et al., 2011), can  
361 influence consumers' intentions and behaviors (Carneiro & Crompton, 2010) and is a predictor  
362 of loyalty (Kim, 2008). Thus, event involvement builds the base for developing experiences,  
363 emotions, relevance and – eventually - place attachment (Argan et al., 2015; Hou et al., 2005;  
364 Hwang et al., 2005), while place attachment is an emotional reaction to a physical and social

365 setting (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), akin to the affective component of attitude (Jorgensen &  
366 Stedman, 2001). Instead, revisit intention represents a behavioral intention. Thus, it can be  
367 argued that event involvement is an antecedent of place attachment, which in turn is an  
368 antecedent of revisit intention. Such theorization would also answer recent calls in the literature  
369 for consideration of mediation relationships (Wong & Tang, 2016) and address the consideration  
370 that place attachment as a mediating variable could fill gaps in the knowledge of the  
371 relationships between revisit-related constructs (George & George, 2004). Accordingly, we  
372 advance the following hypothesis:

373 ***Hypothesis 3.** Place attachment partially mediates the relationship between event*  
374 *involvement and revisit intention.*

375 Although full mediation was the standard according to Baron and Kenny (1986), more  
376 recent developments on mediation analysis (Iacobucci, 2008, p. 12) note that “when all tests are  
377 properly conducted and reported, the majority of articles conclude with partial mediation”. Based  
378 on the extant literature the present research advances that both direct (H1) and mediated (H2)  
379 effects could exist, and that they should point in the same direction (revisit intention) and display  
380 the same (positive) sign. Thus, such partial mediation (H3) is a complementary mediation,  
381 according to the terminology of Zhao et al. (2010).

382 Experience authenticity refers to the extent to which experiences are perceived by tourists  
383 as genuine (Shen et al., 2014), true (Castéran & Roederer, 2013), real (Akhoondnejad, 2016),  
384 and historically accurate (Wang, 1999). Experience authenticity has been extensively discussed  
385 in tourism and hospitality literature (Kim & Jamal, 2007), with respect to revisit intention (Kolar  
386 & Zabkar, 2010), satisfaction (Chhabra et al., 2003), and loyalty (Brida et al., 2013).

387           Scholars consider experience authenticity particularly relevant in heritage tourism (Boyd,  
388 2002; Lu, Chi, & Liu, 2015), where tourists often express an “ardent desire” for experience  
389 authenticity (Lu et al., 2015, p. 88). Perceptions of experience authenticity, historical accuracy,  
390 realism and genuineness might therefore enhance event involvement, determining in turn the  
391 consumer’s attachment to a place (e.g., Brown et al., 2016). There is also evidence for a positive  
392 correlation between place attachment and experience authenticity (Ram, Björk, & Weidenfeld,  
393 2016). For instance, Belhassen, Caton, and Stewart (2008) found that pilgrims developed place  
394 attachment for sacred sites where they perceived experience authenticity, while Wildish, Kearns,  
395 and Collins (2016) found that tourists visiting a hostel established stronger attachment especially  
396 for places where they experienced authenticity through freedom and proximity to nature.

397           In this context, experience authenticity might have a potential moderating role between  
398 event involvement and place attachment. A direct relationship between tourists’ involvement and  
399 place attachment has been empirically documented (e.g., Xu & Zhang, 2016). Moreover, as  
400 noted by Brown et al. (2016), event involvement impacts tourists’ evaluation of the event venue.  
401 If tourists develop event involvement, and perceive the experience as authentic, they may  
402 transmit this positive state to the hosting venue (e.g., Brown et al., 2016), reinforcing place  
403 attachment. Consequently, we posit the following:

404           ***Hypothesis 4. experience authenticity positively moderates the relationship***  
405           *between event involvement and place attachment (H4a), in such a way that high*  
406           *levels of experience authenticity increase place attachment attributable to event*  
407           *involvement (H4b).*

408           Place attachment has also been addressed in environmental psychology, where it has been  
409 found to be affected by geographic distance (Sarbin, 1983), leading to a dichotomization of

410 neighborhood and non-neighborhood, or closeness and distance (Ahrentzen, 1992), as place  
411 attachment develops to different degrees within different spatial distances (Hidalgo &  
412 Hernandez, 2001). In this vein, the concept of familiarity (or experience) with a place has been  
413 developed, for instance, in explaining the psychological consequences of displacement from  
414 neighborhood to non-neighborhood (Fullilove, 1996). Accordingly, literature in environmental  
415 psychology has addressed the spatial dimensions of neighborhood familiarity (or experience)  
416 (Aitken, Stutz, Prosser, & Chandler, 1993) and its relationship to place attachment (Brown et al.,  
417 2003). Familiarity has been found to positively relate to geographic closeness (Brown et al.,  
418 2003), with which it shapes feelings of belongingness and identity (Hammit et al., 2004), and  
419 has also been found to be a driver of attitudes and behavior for individuals psychologically  
420 and/or geographically close to that place or environment (Lewicka, 2005; Manzo & Perkins,  
421 2006).

422         Thus, a link has been established between place attachment - which refers to a  
423 psychological perception - and neighborhood, which is related to a geographic measure of  
424 distance. In this vein, literature in psychology further supports the connection between physical  
425 and psychological distance, as many kinds of distance (e.g., social, temporal, probabilistic  
426 distance), including - if not even primarily - physical geographic distance (Henderson et al.,  
427 2011), have been shown to translate to (and highly correlate with) psychological distance  
428 (Liberman et al., 2007; Trope & Liberman, 2010), affecting attitudes, preferences, and behaviors.

429         Previous experience with a destination is related to both spatial and temporal distance  
430 (Trope & Liberman, 2010), and the farther removed an object is from direct experience, the  
431 higher the psychological distance from the self. Consistently, literature in tourism has established  
432 a link between experience with a destination and behavior, showing that experience can

433 influence attitudes, choice, satisfaction and revisit intention (Alegre & Cladera, 2006; Chen &  
434 Lin, 2012; Huang & Hsu, 2009; Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 2001).

435 Building on the psychological concept of familiarity or experience with a place, we posit  
436 that revisit intention will be driven more by place attachment than by event involvement for  
437 consumers coming from close locations, whereas place might exert a less incisive role in  
438 attracting non-neighbors. More formally, we advance the following hypothesis:

439 *Hypothesis 5. The intention to revisit is driven more (less) by place attachment*  
440 *than by event involvement for consumers coming from close (distant) locations.*

441 Literature in psychology has suggested that, where patterns of association between  
442 behavioral intentions and place attachment have been found to differ by age (Lewicka, 2005;  
443 Pretty et al., 2003), with elder individuals driven more by place attachment than by the need for  
444 excitement (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992). Overall, a solid link has been established in  
445 psychology between elder age and place attachment (Anton & Lawrence, 2014; Hidalgo &  
446 Hernández, 2001; Pretty et al., 2003; Sugihara & Evans, 2000), and between younger age and  
447 desire for excitement (Maurer et al., 2003; Roberti, 2004).

448 In tourism, older consumers are an increasingly a managerially appealing segment  
449 (McGuire et al., 1988; Vigolo, 2017), and often have more free time and money than younger  
450 consumer segments (e.g., Moschis, 2012). Literature in tourism has suggested a link between the  
451 degree of place attachment and tourists age (Argan et al., 2015; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001;  
452 Kimpton et al., 2014) finding that older individuals are more likely to develop emotional bonds  
453 to place than younger individuals. Yet, despite evidence in tourism that consumers of different  
454 ages exhibit different behavioral and vacation patterns (see, e.g., Romsa & Blenman, 1989), the

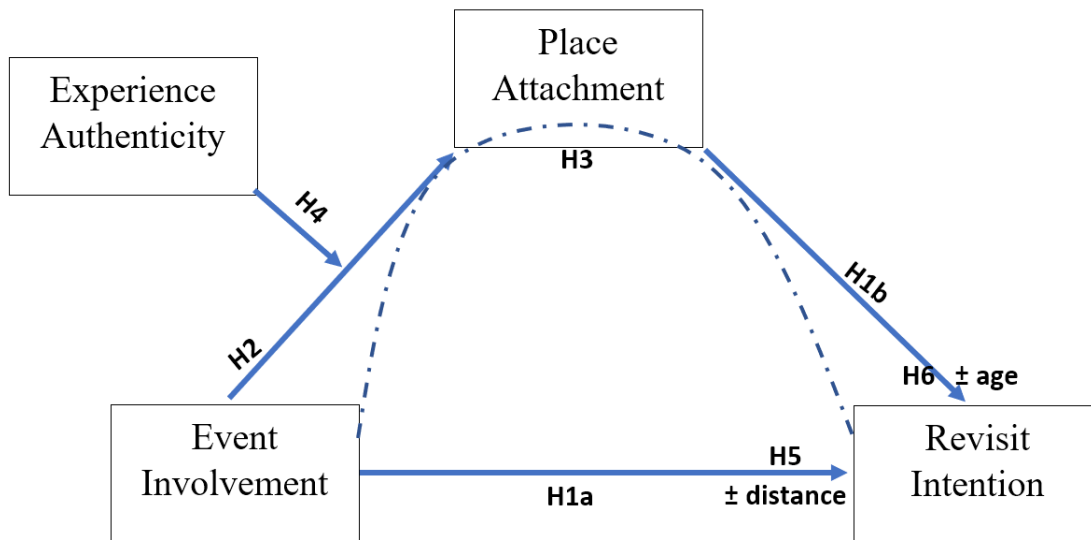
455 role of age in the association between place attachment, event involvement, and behavioral  
456 intentions has yet to be explicitly or systematically addressed.

457 Therefore, we split the model estimation for younger and older consumers and posit the  
458 following hypothesis:

459 **Hypothesis 6.** *Revisit intention is driven more (less) by place attachment than by*  
460 *event involvement for older (younger) consumers.*

461 In summary, we develop a moderated mediation model, where place attachment mediates  
462 the relationship between event involvement and revisit intention, and experience authenticity  
463 moderates the mediation. Fig. 1 depicts the proposed relationships.

464



465 **Fig. 1.** The conceptual model.  
466

467

468 **3. Methods**

469

470 **3.1. Setting**

471 The present research investigates heritage consumption in the context of a Roman heritage  
472 event—the *Aquileia Tempora* (see Figs. 2-4). The festival is staged annually, in mid-June. First  
473 held in 2009, it has become a major event for the Friuli region, which lies between northeastern  
474 Italy, southern Austria, and Slovenia. It is held in Aquileia, a major archeological site in  
475 northeastern Italy, often referred to as the Pompeii of the North, and based on its millennia-old  
476 history (Fig. 5). Tied to the defense of the borders from the Celts, the exploitation of the nearby  
477 gold mines in southern Austria, and the adoptive home of the emperor Diocletian, Aquileia was a  
478 strategic port and one of the largest and wealthiest centers of the Roman empire, with over  
479 100,000 inhabitants around the 2nd century AD. After the persecutions of the Christians by  
480 Diocletian, it became home to the patriarchate and for many centuries was one of the most  
481 important ecclesiastical jurisdiction centers, after Rome, of the Catholic Church, with temporal  
482 sovereignty over the whole region. Aquileia still bears many traces of the magnificence of the  
483 Roman Empire, like the ancient stone-paved *cardo* (the main street), the *forum*, the basilica, the  
484 baths, and parts of the city walls. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1998.



485

486 **Fig. 2.** A moment of the Aquileia Tempora event.

487





488

489 **Fig. 3.** A moment of the Aquileia Tempora event.

490



491

492 **Fig. 4.** A moment of the Aquileia Tempora event.

493



494

495 **Fig. 5.** Part of the Aquileia archeological site.

496

497           The festival is held throughout the whole city but is tied mostly to the archeological site  
498 and to the 313 AD cathedral (still in place, though renovated in the 11th century).

499           The festival board developed a charter outlining strict guidelines for the festival re-  
500 enactors, performers, volunteers, and various “merchants and artisans,” including food and  
501 beverages. These guidelines are meant to convey a sense of experience authenticity underpinned  
502 by historicism.

503           The festival regularly attracts around 30,000 participants, including large re-enactment  
504 groups and tourists. Besides being recognized as one of the largest festivals of its kind, it is also  
505 sponsored by local government and educational institutions, and a secondary aim of the festival  
506 was to make a positive association between the festival and the local museum collection.

507           Note, however, that the festival represents a narrow era (200 AD), which reflects the lack  
508 of historical consensus on what is “Roman.” Furthermore, the interpretation of experience  
509 authenticity of certain parts (e.g., the gladiatorial games) is sacrificed to spectacularization. And  
510 while all food-service stallholders are required to comply with merchandising and clothing  
511 guidelines, some local canteens are exempt, and the strictness of the guidelines is limited by the  
512 national laws on free trade.

513

### 514 ***3.2. Sampling and measurements***

515           A total of 350 randomly selected participants in the festival were interviewed during the event  
516 (44% females; median age = 35; 342 usable questionnaires) by means of a paper-and-pencil  
517 questionnaire. The questionnaire was pretested on a pilot sample of 100 respondents to ensure

518 that the questions were easy to understand and unambiguous. In preparing and administering the  
519 questionnaire, we took particular care to avoid method biases as described in Podsakoff,  
520 MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003). To reduce evaluation apprehension and social  
521 desirability biases, we reassured respondents that there were no right or wrong answers and  
522 explicitly asked them to answer questions honestly. Furthermore, the order of questions was  
523 randomized, and the data were collected during the event at different times and on different days  
524 (i.e., on all three days of the event, nearly equally split across days: 98, 135, and 117  
525 questionnaires, respectively).

526 Experience authenticity was measured by five items: products, local staff, traditional  
527 presentation, atmosphere, and event as in Akhoondnejad (2016). Revisit intention was measured  
528 by four items as in Bryce et al. (2015). Event involvement was measured by eight items as in  
529 Kaplanidou and Havitz (2010). Place attachment was measured by six items as in Kaplanidou et  
530 al. (2012). All items were measured using 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*completely*  
531 *disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*). Respondents were also asked to express their motivations for  
532 their presence in Aquileia. Finally, respondents were asked about their demographics (age,  
533 gender, occupation), and how far they had traveled to reach the event.

534

## 535 **4. Results**

536

### 537 ***4.1. Mean ratings and scale dimensionality***

538 The mean scores of the 24 items are displayed in Table 7 in the Appendix and range from 4.31 to  
539 5.46. The items with the highest mean scores are: “For me, attending Aquileia Tempora is a  
540 pleasure”(5.46), “Buying tickets to the Aquileia Tempora event is like buying a gift for myself”  
541 (5.39), “Attending Aquileia Tempora as a spectator gives a glimpse of the type of person I am”

542 (5.39), “It is rather complicated to choose which heritage event to go to” (5.39), and “I attach  
543 great importance to Aquileia Tempora as a leisure event” (5.37). These items indicate that the  
544 respondents are involved with the event being hosted and favor buying a ticket. The items with  
545 relatively lower mean scores are: “I will visit Aquileia Tempora” (4.31), “I will visit tourist  
546 attractions in Aquileia” (4.45), “I will visit festivals in the Aquileia area” (4.55), and “I will visit  
547 the archeological park in Aquileia” (4.56). These items measure the respondents' intention to  
548 visit the event again. The fact that their mean scores are merely beyond the middle point  
549 indicates that the respondents will not automatically return for the event in the future.

550 Other items whose lowest mean scores are merely beyond the middle point are among  
551 those measuring place attachment. They are “Aquileia is the best place for Roman heritage  
552 events” (4.68); “No other place can compare with Aquileia for this event” (4.72); “I feel like  
553 Aquileia is part of me” (4.81) and “Aquileia means a lot to me” (4.82). They show that the  
554 respondents did not hold a very positive or very negative perception in terms of their attachment  
555 to the place. In other words, the respondents may not have felt a particularly strong personal  
556 connection with the place.

557 As for the variable that captures the authenticity of the experience, scores show that  
558 respondents felt that the ‘atmosphere’ was more significant for conveying experience  
559 authenticity than the ‘unique products’ or physical objects used for the events (5.25). Overall,  
560 these results seem to show that, although Aquileia is positioned as a destination for heritage  
561 tourism, and tourists are highly involved with the Aquileia Tempora event, they do not display a  
562 particularly high place attachment. Further, experience authenticity is driven more by intangible  
563 features, and there is no necessary guarantee that they will revisit the event.

564



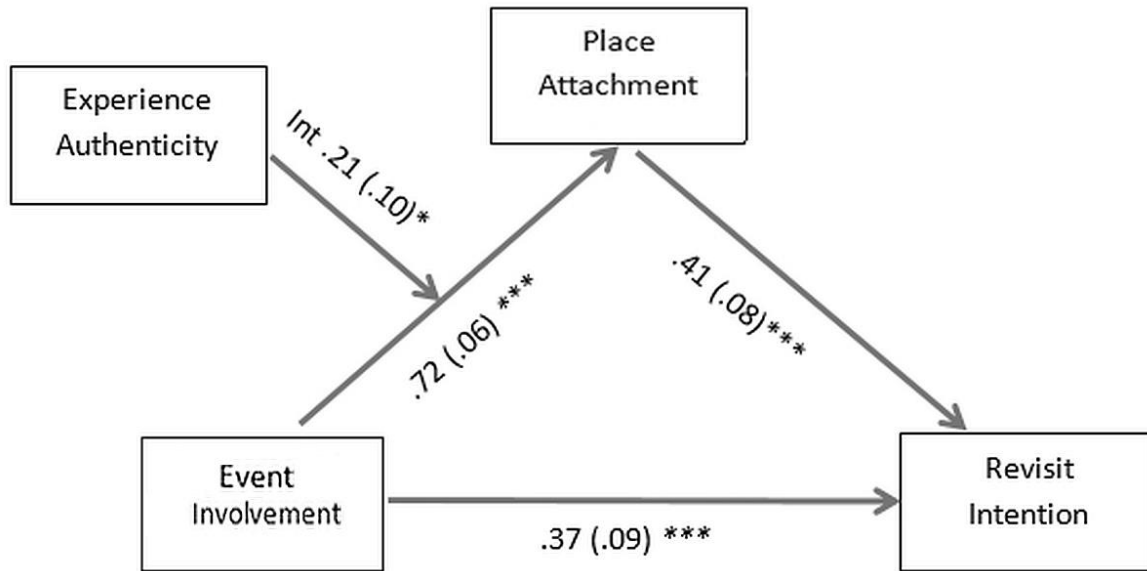
565 **4.2. Full model estimation**

566 Factor analyses on the scales were performed (extraction method Maximum Likelihood, Oblimin  
567 rotation) confirming the hypothesized factorial structure, with high factor loadings on separate  
568 factors (loadings  $>.5$ ; eigenvalues  $\geq 1$ ), in line with the original studies employing the scales.  
569 Cronbach's alpha was .94 for revisit intention, .94 for event involvement, .91 for experience  
570 authenticity, and .93 for place attachment. Questionnaire items, means, and standard deviations  
571 are reported in Table 7 in the Appendix.

572 A moderated mediation analysis was run using the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes,  
573 2013) to estimate the direct and indirect effects of event involvement on revisit intention through  
574 place attachment as moderated by experience authenticity (Hayes, 2013; Model 7). The  
575 significance of the direct and indirect effects was evaluated by means of 5,000 bootstrap samples  
576 to create bias-corrected confidence intervals (CIs; 95%). Eight questionnaires of the 350 were  
577 automatically deleted by the software due to missing data in estimating the full model. Evidence  
578 from the estimation of the model on the remaining 342 questionnaires suggests (1) place  
579 attachment as a mediator of the relationship between event involvement and revisit intention  
580 (Mediator Index = .086,  $se = .044$ , LLCI = .014, ULCI = .193), (2) a significant direct effect of  
581 event involvement on revisit intention ( $B = .72$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and (3) a significant indirect effect via  
582 place attachment ( $B = .41$ ;  $p < .001$ ). This is to say that while event involvement leads *per se* to  
583 higher revisit intention, it also helps increase a person's place attachment, which in turn leads to  
584 higher revisit intention. Furthermore, place attachment is as effective as event involvement in  
585 building revisit intention (.41 vs. .37). As expected, experience authenticity significantly  
586 moderates the effect of event involvement on place attachment such that for low experience  
587 authenticity, the relationship between event involvement and place attachment is reduced ( $B =$

588 .21,  $p = .032$ ). Given that place attachment leads to revisit intention but that low experience  
 589 authenticity buffers place attachment, the highest levels of revisit intention were observed for  
 590 individuals who developed place attachment by attending events with high experience  
 591 authenticity.

592 Results of the full model estimation are illustrated in Fig. 6.



593  
 594 **Fig. 6.** The model with estimates.

595  
 596 In summary, hypotheses 1 through 6 are supported. On one hand, the findings for place  
 597 attachment are consistent with previous research that explored its relationship with revisit  
 598 intention without addressing event involvement. Similarly, the findings for event involvement  
 599 are consistent with previous research that explored its relationship with revisit intention without  
 600 exploring place attachment. On the other hand, the present analysis puts the addressed  
 601 relationships into clearer context. Although new, these findings positively compare with previous  
 602 studies suggesting that revisit intention for heritage marketing is built by both location-related  
 603 and event-related factors (Gross & Brown, 2008; Lee & Shen, 2013).

604 Furthermore, the findings from the full model support the role of experience authenticity  
 605 as moderator rather than as a direct predictor of event involvement, place attachment, or revisit  
 606 intention. Results are summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

607

608 **Table 1.** Full model: moderated mediation analysis

	coeff	se	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Event involvement on place attachment	0.719	0.058	12.367	0.000	0.604	0.833
Moderation of experience authenticity	0.210	0.098	2.147	0.032	0.018	0.402
Place attachment on revisit intention	0.408	0.077	5.302	0.000	0.257	0.560
Event involvement on revisit intention	0.372	0.089	4.187	0.000	0.197	0.546
Direct effect	0.372	0.089	4.187	0.000	0.197	0.546

609 Note. LLCI = lower limit confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.

610

611 **Table 2.** Full model: moderator analysis, Conditional indirect effect of X on Y at values of the  
 612 moderator

	Moderator: Experience authenticity	<i>Effect</i>	se	LLCI	ULCI
Place attachment	0	0.294	0.059	0.186	0.417
Place attachment	1	0.379	0.080	0.234	0.548

613 Note. Values for the moderator are the mean and plus/minus one SD from mean; LLCI = lower  
 614 limit confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.

615

### 616 **4.3. Split model for distance**

617 Through a median split of the distance participants traveled to reach the event, we compare the  
 618 findings for near and far visitors. Specifically, the data show that for respondents coming from  
 619 nearby (< 100 km), revisit intention is driven more by place attachment ( $B = .402, p < .001$ ) than



620 by event involvement ( $B = .292, p = .011$ ), and experience authenticity moderates the  
 621 relationship between place attachment and event involvement ( $B = .256, p = .048$ ). This finding  
 622 is consistent with the idea that the behavioral intentions of individuals who are close to and  
 623 emotionally attached to the place hosting the event are driven more by their connection to the  
 624 place than by a once-a-year event lasting a few days, although they appreciate it when the event  
 625 respects the history and traditions of the place.

626 For visitors coming from greater distances, however, the data show that—overall—event  
 627 involvement has a key role both in building place attachment ( $B = .867, p < .001$ ) and in  
 628 contributing to revisit intention ( $B = .526, p < .001$ ), more than place attachment does ( $B = .356,$   
 629  $p = .002$ ), and that experience authenticity is no longer relevant ( $p = .13$ ). This finding is  
 630 consistent with the idea that, for those visitors who are far from the place hosting the event, the  
 631 key is the event, and its historical experience authenticity is secondary to spectacularization.

632 Results are summarized in Tables 3 and 4.

633

634 **Table 3.** Split model for distance: moderated mediation analysis

	Group	coeff	Se	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Event involvement on place attachment	<i>close</i>	0.635	0.072	8.777	0.000	0.492	0.778
	<i>distant</i>	0.867	0.097	8.968	0.000	0.675	1.058
Moderation of experience authenticity	<i>close</i>	0.256	0.129	1.989	0.048	0.002	0.509
	<i>distant</i>	0.083	0.151	0.551	0.582	-0.216	0.382
Place attachment on revisit intention	<i>close</i>	0.402	0.104	3.856	0.000	0.197	0.608
	<i>distant</i>	0.356	0.115	3.089	0.002	0.128	0.583
Event involvement on revisit intention	<i>close</i>	0.292	0.114	2.551	0.011	0.066	0.518
	<i>distant</i>	0.526	0.140	3.759	0.000	0.249	0.802
Direct effect	<i>close</i>	0.292	0.114	2.551	0.011	0.066	0.518
	<i>distant</i>	0.526	0.140	3.759	0.000	0.249	0.802

635 Note. LLCI = lower limit confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.

636

637 **Table 4.** Split model for distance: moderator analysis, Conditional indirect effect of X on Y at

638 values of the moderator

	Moderator: Experience authenticity	Group	Effect	se	LLCI	ULCI
Place attachment	0	<i>close</i>	0.256	0.073	0.127	0.416
		<i>distant</i>	0.308	0.105	0.113	0.525
Place attachment	1	<i>close</i>	0.358	0.105	0.167	0.582
		<i>distant</i>	0.338	0.118	0.123	0.592

639 Note. Values for the moderator are the mean and plus/minus one SD from mean; LLCI = lower

640 limit confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.

641

#### 642 4.4. Split model for age

643 Visitors of different ages differ in their approaches to the event. Specifically, for younger

644 consumers (based on the median split), event involvement drives revisit intention ( $B = .411, p =$

645  $.002$ ) more than place attachment ( $B = .296, p = .010$ ), and experience authenticity no longer

646 matters (Moderation  $B = .127, p = .341$ ). In other words, younger tourists care more about the

647 event than about its location, want to get involved in the event, and do not care about the

648 historical experience authenticity of the experience being re-enacted.

649 For older visitors, however, place rather than event is key. Specifically, place attachment

650 leads to revisit intention ( $B = .600, p < .001$ ) more than event involvement does ( $B = .362, p =$

651  $.003$ ); experience authenticity is nonetheless helpful in further increasing place attachment

652 (Moderation  $B = .340, p = .032$ ).

653 Results are summarized in Tables 5 and 6.

654

655 **Table 5.** Split model for age: moderated mediation analysis

	Group	Coeff	se	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Event involvement on place attachment	<i>younger</i>	0.784	0.089	8.831	0.000	0.609	0.96
	<i>older</i>	0.533	0.078	6.850	0.000	0.380	0.687
Moderation of experience authenticity	<i>younger</i>	0.127	0.133	0.956	0.341	-0.136	0.391
	<i>older</i>	0.340	0.157	2.165	0.032	0.030	0.650
Place attachment on revisit intention	<i>younger</i>	0.296	0.113	2.615	0.010	0.072	0.519
	<i>older</i>	0.600	0.111	5.396	0.000	0.381	0.819
Event involvement on revisit intention	<i>younger</i>	0.411	0.133	3.102	0.002	0.149	0.673
	<i>older</i>	0.362	0.119	3.038	0.003	0.127	0.597
Direct effect	<i>younger</i>	0.411	0.133	3.102	0.002	0.149	0.673
	<i>older</i>	0.362	0.119	3.038	0.003	0.127	0.597

656 Note. LLCI = lower limit confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.

657

658 **Table 6.** Split model on age: moderator analysis, conditional indirect effect of X on Y at values

659 of the moderator

	Moderator: Experience authenticity	Group	<i>Effect</i>	se	LLCI	ULCI
Place attachment	0	<i>younger</i>	0.232	0.095	0.055	0.426
		<i>older</i>	0.320	0.080	0.190	0.511
Place attachment	1	<i>younger</i>	0.269	0.117	0.060	0.524
		<i>older</i>	0.524	0.130	0.310	0.828

660 Note. Values for the moderator are the mean and plus/minus one SD from mean; LLCI = lower

661 limit confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.

662

663 **4.5. Motivation analysis**

664 Finally, the motivations that respondents provided were classified by two independent

665 judges as event-related, place-related, or mixed/others. Ratings between the two judges show

666 substantial agreement (Pearson  $r^2 = .90$ ).

667 Motivations were later recoded as  $-1$ ,  $+1$ , and  $0$ , respectively, based on the judges'  
668 classification. Of 350 respondents, 52 did not answer the question about motivations and were  
669 therefore excluded from this analysis (40% females, 48% coming from far, 46% younger  
670 consumers). Next, we computed a score for each respondent, taking into account (a) the total  
671 number of motivations provided by each respondent, (b) the number of motivations that were  
672 place-related, and (c) the number of labels that were event-related, where (b) + (c) does not  
673 necessarily equal (a) due to mixed motivations. Specifically, the score is expressed as the  
674 average between the two judges of the sum of the proportion of place-related (b/a) and event-  
675 related motivation (c/a) out of the total number of motivations. This procedure yields a  
676 continuous score ranging from  $-1$  (all event-related motivations) to  $+1$  (all place-related  
677 motivations).

678 Consistent with the results from the model, we find a multivariate effect of age (Wilks  
679  $\lambda = .937$ ,  $F = 9.753$ ,  $df = 2$ ; 288,  $p < .001$ ) and distance (Wilks  $\lambda = .968$ ,  $F = 4.720$ ,  $df = 2$ ; 288,  
680  $p = .010$ ) on motivation type and number, but no effect of gender (Wilks  $\lambda = .983$ ,  $F = 2.454$ ,  
681  $df = 2$ ; 288,  $p = .090$ ). Follow-up univariate analyses of variance yield significant differences  
682 between the motivation scores of older ( $M_{\text{older}} = .136$ ) and younger ( $M_{\text{younger}} = -.070$ ) consumers,  
683 and between close ( $M_{\text{close}} = .109$ ) and distant ( $M_{\text{distant}} = -.043$ ) consumers. In other words,  
684 younger consumers and consumers from distal locations tend to be driven more by event-related  
685 than by place-related motivations, whereas older and closer consumers tend to be driven more by  
686 place-related than by event-related motivations. A significant interaction emerges between age  
687 and distance (Wilks  $\lambda = .976$ ,  $F = 3.758$ ,  $df = 2$ ; 288,  $p = .029$ ). Specifically, older consumers  
688 provide more place-related motivations when they come from closer locations ( $M_{\text{older\_close}} = .157$   
689 vs.  $M_{\text{older\_distant}} = .114$ ), and younger consumers provide more event-related motivations when

690 they come from more distant locations ( $M_{\text{younger\_close}} = .060$  vs.  $M_{\text{younger\_distant}} = -.200$ ). No  
691 differences emerge, however, in the average number of motivations respondents provided  
692 ( $M_{\text{younger}} = 3.17$ ,  $M_{\text{older}} = 3.01$ ,  $F = .904$ ,  $p = .343$ ;  $df = 1;289$ ;  $M_{\text{close}} = 3.12$ ,  $M_{\text{far}} = 3.07$ ,  $F = .177$ ,  
693  $p = .762$ ;  $df = 1;289$ ;  $M_{\text{male}} = 3.07$ ,  $M_{\text{female}} = 3.11$ ,  $F = .008$ ,  $p = .930$ ;  $df = 1;289$ ).

694 Overall, the findings from the motivation analysis corroborate those from the moderated  
695 mediation split models and suggest that while the place hosting the event is important, so is place  
696 attachment itself, and the relative weight of place- and event-related issues varies across different  
697 consumer segments.

698

## 699 **5. Discussion**

700 The present research tested a model focused on a few constructs that the tourism literature  
701 considers key but about whose exact relationships there is some ambiguity (and sometimes even  
702 some contradictions). We used a consumer-based approach to examine event involvement and  
703 place attachment as drivers of revisit intention. Specifically, we investigated place attachment as  
704 a mediator of the relationship between event involvement and revisit intention, and we posited  
705 experience authenticity as a moderator of the mediation. Accordingly, we ran a moderated  
706 mediation model. Furthermore, we analyzed the motivation freely elicited by those attending the  
707 event, strengthening the ecological validity of the findings from the moderated mediation model.

708 First, we found support for a partial mediation of place attachment, showing that both  
709 place-related and event-related factors are key in building revisit intention, and that they exert  
710 roughly the same impact on revisit intention. Based on these results, we can say that event  
711 involvement leads to revisit intention but also contributes to the development of place  
712 attachment, which in turn leads to higher revisit intention. Second, in line with our predictions,

713 we found that experience authenticity moderates the mediation, as the impact of event  
714 involvement on place attachment is higher (lower) when experience authenticity is high (low).  
715 Our research contributes to the literature by explicitly addressing mediation and moderation  
716 effects, overcoming limitations of previous studies that were not methodologically able to  
717 address mediators, or that addressed mediation and moderation in isolation rather than in a  
718 single, consistent model of moderated mediation. By means of the adopted procedure, we  
719 disentangled the effects of event involvement, place attachment, and experience authenticity, to  
720 assess the relative relationships between these constructs and to compare their impact on revisit  
721 intention.

722         Second, by splitting the model for the comparison of younger and older consumers, and  
723 for the comparison of close and distant tourists, we tested in different consumer segments the  
724 strength of the relationships we found in the full model. We found a reversal of the relative  
725 strength of place attachment and event involvement on revisit intention due to distance and to  
726 age. Specifically, for neighbor tourists, revisit intention is driven more by place attachment than  
727 by event involvement, and experience authenticity moderates the relationship. For non-neighbor  
728 tourists, however, event involvement contributes more than place attachment, and experience  
729 authenticity no longer matters. Furthermore, we found that the relationship between the  
730 considered constructs varies with age: younger consumers are more interested in the ability of  
731 the event to involve them, and older consumers are driven more by their attachment to the place.  
732 Overall, the findings for the split models positively relate to findings and suggestions in  
733 environmental psychology, but they translate its underlying assumptions to the domain of  
734 tourism.

735           Finally, we analyzed the motivations that respondents provided for participating in the  
736 event. We found significant differences between the motivations of younger and older  
737 consumers, and between close and distant consumers. Consistent with the evidence from the split  
738 moderated mediation models, younger consumers and distant consumers were driven more by  
739 event-related than by place-related motivations, whereas the opposite pattern emerged for older  
740 and close consumers. A significant interaction between age and distance further showed that  
741 younger consumers are even more event-driven when they come from distant locations, whereas  
742 older consumers are even more place-driven when they come from nearby. Methodologically, we  
743 also provide a simple yet efficient way to compute a continuous score of place-versus-event  
744 relatedness for motivations that is intuitive because it is symmetrically centered on zero and  
745 could be easily employed in further analyses to provide a more colorful picture and increase the  
746 external validity of SEM-based results.

747           From a theoretical perspective, our research provides a consistent and robust model that  
748 disambiguates the relationship between event involvement, place attachment, experience  
749 authenticity, and revisit intention, showing a partial mediation of place attachment, moderated by  
750 experience authenticity. Furthermore, translating to the domain of tourism management  
751 considerations from environmental psychology on the relationship between place attachment and  
752 event involvement, we address and find relevant differences in the model patterns due to  
753 consumers' age and their geographical distance.

754           From a methodological perspective, we implemented a moderated mediation model that  
755 is a novelty (at least relatively) compared with prior studies in the extant literature in tourism  
756 management. Furthermore, we provided an efficient and relatively easy way to compute a

757 motivational score, which allows for the inclusion of more qualitative data in the analyses, thus  
758 increasing their robustness and ecological validity.

759 Our study is not meant to be conclusive; nevertheless, we believe our results can be  
760 relevant for practitioners and can stimulate future research that could include a broader set of  
761 constructs, address further mediators and moderators, and use our computation score to include  
762 qualitative data next to the quantitative analyses. Furthermore, place attachment is associated  
763 with emotional connections of place (Smith, Siderelis, & Moore, 2010), and recent studies set in  
764 the context of archeological sites have shown that emotional responses are reliable predictors of  
765 attitude and behavior (Prayag, Hosany, Muskat, & Del Chiappa, 2017). Future research should  
766 measure tourists' emotions and link them to tourists' perceptions of and reactions to a  
767 destination, for instance building on the work by Prayag, Hosany, and Odeh (2013) to  
768 simultaneously examine the relationship between emotional responses, destination image,  
769 satisfaction and behavioral outcomes. Finally, future research could investigate the role of  
770 consumers' motivations to (re)visit a location or an event, deepening the understanding of the  
771 link between motivations, destination image and behavioral loyalty, for instance building on the  
772 motivation classification by Beerli and León-Ledesma (2012), Crompton (1979), and Gil,  
773 Palacio, and Ledesma (2017).

774

## 775 **6. Managerial implications**

776 Our study offers implications for the tourism industry in that it addresses both place- and event-  
777 related issues and, furthermore, investigates specific groups of tourists for a deeper  
778 understanding of what drives revisit intention. Several managerial implications emerged from  
779 our research findings:



- 780 (1) Generating interest in the touristic event is key, but so is place attachment.  
781 Event managers need to be aware that merely relying on the physical  
782 nature of location may fail to engage tourist involvement in an event.
- 783 (2) Increasing experience authenticity of the experience positively contributes  
784 to building place attachment. Accordingly, managers need to foster  
785 increasing levels of experience authenticity by selecting products, staff,  
786 presentation, atmosphere, and events consistently. Care has to be put into  
787 conveying a sense of experience authenticity in order to enhance  
788 consumers' attachment to the place.
- 789 (3) Managers need to be aware of the different drivers of revisit intention for  
790 close and far consumers and use them in accordance with their target  
791 population: for consumers traveling longer distances to see the event,  
792 event involvement contributes to revisit intention more than place  
793 attachment does, and experience authenticity no longer plays a role. For  
794 consumers coming from nearby, however, place attachment is more  
795 relevant than the event being hosted, though they appreciate that the event  
796 does not betray the history of the place. Thus, efforts to create place  
797 attachment and to respect the authenticity pay off more for close than for  
798 distant consumers, and the opposite holds for distant consumers.
- 799 (4) Younger and older visitors base their revisit intention on different  
800 elements: younger consumers are less sensitive to place attachment, want  
801 an involving event, and are not interested in experience authenticity. Older  
802 consumers, by contrast, are driven more by place attachment than by the

803 event being hosted, yet they appreciate experience authenticity. Again, this  
804 information is useful for practitioners who seek to better address their  
805 target population.

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1132 **Appendix: Questionnaire items, means, and standard deviations**

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1134 **Table 7.** Questionnaire items, means, and standard deviations

	Mean	S.D.
<b>INVOLVEMENT</b>		
1. I attach great importance to Aquileia Tempora as a leisure event	5.37	1.17
2. Aquileia Tempora is an event that leaves me totally indifferent (reverse coded)	5.27	1.26
3. Buying tickets to the Aquileia Tempora event is like buying a gift for myself	5.39	1.20
4. For me, attending Aquileia Tempora is a pleasure	5.46	1.05
5. I can tell a lot about a person by whether they are Aquileia Tempora spectators or not	5.19	1.33
6. Attending Aquileia Tempora as a spectator gives a glimpse of the type of person I am	5.39	1.12
7. When I choose which heritage event to attend it is not a big deal if I make a mistake (reverse coded)	5.13	1.26
8. It is rather complicated to choose which heritage event to go to	5.39	1.12
<b>PLACE ATTACHMENT</b>		
1. I enjoy participating in Aquileia more than any other place	5.07	1.63
2. No other place can compare with Aquileia for this event	4.72	1.59
3. Aquileia is the best place for Roman heritage events	4.68	1.66
4. I am very attached to Aquileia	4.92	1.71
5. Aquileia means a lot to me	4.82	1.45
6. I feel like Aquileia is part of me	4.81	1.43
<b>EXPERIENCE AUTHENTICITY</b>		
1. Please rate the significance of the following items about the festival:		
2. Unique Roman products	4.63	1.82
3. Local staff	5.00	1.50
4. Historical presentation	4.93	1.48
5. Unique Roman atmosphere	5.25	1.45

	Mean	S.D.
6. Unique Roman heritage festival	4.99	1.46
REVISIT INTENTION		
1. I will visit Aquileia Tempora	4.31	1.80
2. I will visit the archeological park in Aquileia	4.56	1.70
3. I will visit festivals in the Aquileia area	4.55	1.66
4. I will visit tourist attractions in Aquileia	4.45	1.52

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