Tourism trends: The convergence of culture and tourism

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INTRODUCTION

The development of mass tourism through the 1970s and 1980s proceeded via a fordist production system, with standardised mass production of package holidays. In the 1990s market maturity and slowing demand growth encouraged the developed of new models of postfordist, customised production (Poon, 1989; Ritzer and Liska, 1997) in response to diversification of consumer taste and demand.

The mass market began to fragment into a variety of niches, of which cultural tourism became one of the most important. Cultural tourism has now become a major segment in most tourism destinations, arguably accounting for around 40% of international tourism flows (UNWTO, 2004). Much of this growth has been centered on the consumption of cultural sites and attractions, particularly in major cities around the world (Richards, 2001).

In recent years, however, attention has shifted from the purely quantitative growth of cultural tourism demand, towards qualitative changes in the nature of that demand. For example, research has highlighted the development of different segments of cultural tourism demand (McKercher and du Cros, 2002), the increasing search for cultural 'experiences' (Prentice, 2001) and the growing integration of cultural tourism with other tourism sectors, such as religious tourism, gastronomic tourism and literary tourism (Smith, 2009). More recently there has been growing discussion of a 'creative turn' in cultural tourism, driving a shift towards less tangible tourism assets and more actively involved forms of tourism consumption (Richards and Wilson 2006, 2007; Richards and Marques, 2012). As a recent OECD report (2014) underlines, this shift is producing a radical realignment of the relationship between the creative industries and tourism, and producing important changes in the way in which 'cultural tourism' is produced for, and consumed by, tourists.

Such changes have significant implications for the many destinations that have begun to develop their cultural resources for tourism (OECD, 2009), as well as for emerging styles of tourism consumption. In the light of these changes, this paper considers how cultural tourism has been transformed in the recent past, and uses an analysis of major cultural tourism drivers to consider the trends that might be

important in the future. It first considers some of the major trends affecting the growth of cultural tourism in the past, before moving on to consider how changes in these drivers are likely to affect the future development of the cultural tourism market.

CULTURAL TOURISM TRENDS

Cultural tourism essentially involves visits to cultural attractions and events by culturally motivated people. Taking the World Tourism Organisation definition of tourism as its basis, the Association for Tourism and Leisure Research (ATLAS) definition of cultural tourism is:

> 'The movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs'. (Richards, 1996)

This definition is inevitably not very precise, because of the vast range of cultural attractions and events and the different cultural motivations that people may have. This is also one of the major challenges in measuring the extent of cultural tourism. So many studies have relied not on motivation, but rather on cultural consumption as the basis for defining cultural tourism. For example, the World Tourism Organisation (2004) estimated that the proportion of international trips accounted for by cultural tourists was 40% in 2004, based on the proportion of international tourists undertaking some kind of cultural activity. If we extrapolate this estimate, by 2013 there should have been over 430 million cultural trips out of the total flow of 1087 million international tourist trips (UNWTO, 2014).

The growth of cultural tourism can be linked to both supply and demand related drivers.

Supply side drivers of cultural tourism

Not surprisingly therefore, cultural tourism is also seen as a desirable market by many countries and regions because it is seen as a high volume market comprising generally high spending, highly educated individuals who stimulate cultural activity in the destination.

Local residents also seem to appreciate the potential benefits of cultural tourism. When asked what forms of tourism they would like to see developed in future, over 90% of Barcelona residents indicated that they would prefer to develop cultural tourism. They also saw benefits from cultural tourism, such as increased local incomes and support for local cultural institutions (Richards, 2006). The OECD report on *The Impact of Culture on Tourism* (2009) indicated that the main drivers for developing culture and tourism policies are:

- Valorising and preserving heritage
- Economic development and employment
- Physical and economic regeneration
- Strengthening and/or diversifying tourism
- Retaining population
- Developing cultural understanding

The growth of cultural tourism demand has also stimulated the development of many new cultural attractions and cultural tourism marketing strategies, as different countries and regions compete for a share of this lucrative market. For example, it is estimated that the number of museums in Spain grew by 100% between 1980 and 2012 (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2013). Barcelona, one of the leading city break destinations in Europe in recent years, has targeted cultural tourism as a major growth area, and saw attendance at cultural attractions rise from 4 million a year in 1994 to almost 20 million in 2013 as a result (Barcelona Tourism, 2014). Tourists now account for over 70% of all visitor admissions at cultural attractions in the city. In order to succeed in this market, therefore,

regions not only need to have a good supply of cultural attractions and events, but they also need to be able to meet stiff international competition through effective marketing. This is turn requires a clear understanding of the structure and needs of the cultural tourism market, as well as developing cultural products that can satisfy market demand.

Demand side drivers of cultural tourism

A number of key demand-related drivers of cultural tourism have been identified by the ATLAS research (Richards, 2007):

· Increased number of 'cultural holidays'
· Rising education, income and status levels in the market
· More use of new media for information gathering, booking and cultural consumption
· More visits to cultural events and festivals, driven by increased supply and a desire for co-presence

Most of these drivers can in turn be related to socio-economic macro trends. For example, increased disposable incomes have stimulation both more investment in education and more tourism consumption. The growing pool of highly educated tourists tends to lead to more cultural tourism, as de Haan (1997) has indicated, if nothing else because there are more tourists around.
However, the ATLAS research has also identified a number of qualitative changes in demand which are also important to consider. In general terms, there seems to have been a general shift towards new areas of culture, particularly popular and intangible forms of culture. There is also more evidence of 'omnivorous' patterns of cultural consumption, as people combine both 'high' and 'popular' cultural forms in their leisure time (Richards and van der Ark, 2012).

Popular culture is therefore emerging as an important market for cultural tourism alongside the more traditional high culture and historic attractions. For example, tourism associated with the Beatles is estimated to account for 600,000 visits to Liverpool a year, with these visitors generating an economic impact of some £70 million in the city (UK Music, 2014).

Arts and creative activities are also becoming more visible in the cultural tourism market. Major arts exhibitions are now an important source of tourist flows in many cities, and the organisation of 'blockbuster exhibitions' has become an important part of the cultural tourism strategies of many museums. The performing arts are also becoming more orientated towards tourist audiences, as music and theatre performances are used to draw residents and visitors to new performing arts venues, and programming is increasingly geared to tourist tastes (such as the growth in musicals in major cultural tourism destinations such as London).

Creativity is also becoming linked to cultural tourism, as people utilise their increasingly scarce leisure time to develop their own skills and experience local culture at the same time. There has been a veritable explosion of courses in areas such as languages, gastronomy, art and photography in recent years, driven not only by high demand for creative skills, but also by a growing number of creative producers who have started to service this market (OECD, 2014).

The main qualitative drivers of cultural tourism might therefore be summarised as:

- Growing interest in popular culture, or the 'everyday culture' of the destination.
- Growing consumption of intangible heritage alongside museums and monuments.
- Growing role for the arts in cultural tourism.
- Increased linkage between tourism and creativity, and the growth of 'creative tourism'.
- Growing omnivorousness of cultural consumption.

EMERGING SEGMENTS OF CULTURAL TOURISM DEMAND

The broadening cultural field created by the growth of popular cultural consumption and increasingly omnivorous cultural behavior is also leading to the development of a number of discrete market segments in cultural tourism.

In broad terms, the main segments tend to relate to people who have either a general interest in culture, and who see culture as just one aspect of the destination, and those with a specific interest in culture, for who culture is the main reason for travelling to the destination. Paschinger (2007) combines the ATLAS distinction between 'specific' and 'general' cultural tourism with the work of McKercher and Du Cros (2002) to explain the cultural tourism market:

> "The purposeful cultural tourist, comparable to the "specific" cultural tourist introduced by Richards (1996, p. 34), is entirely motivated by culture in visiting a certain destination or cultural attraction, and engages in a deep experience.
>
> The sightseeing cultural tourist is chiefly motivated for cultural reasons; too, however this experience remains more shallow.
>
> The serendipitous cultural tourist does not plan to travel for cultural motives, but after participating still ends up having a deep cultural experience.
>
> The casual cultural tourist offers only a weak motive for visiting a certain cultural attraction or destination, and as a result, this experience remains shallow.
>
> Finally, the incidental cultural tourist does not travel for cultural tourism reasons at all, and when they find themselves engaged in some sort of cultural activities, those typically remain shallow."

The implication is that not all attractions can appeal to all cultural tourists, and that many visitors will have only a tangential interest in the specific cultural offering. This is important in marketing terms, since it means that attractions need to think about the specific and general appeal that they may have for tourists.

Among the most important of these new market niches are:

- Religious tourism (Griffin and Raj, 2012)
- Gastronomic tourism (Hjalager and Richards, 2002, OECD, 2012)
- Language travel (Correia, 2011)
- Wellness and spa tourism (Smith, 2009)
- Spiritual and holistic tourism (Norman, 2012)
- Volunteer tourism (Wearing, 2001)
- Creative tourism (Richards and Wilson, 2006)
- Educational tourism (Abubakar et al., 2014)

All of these emerging niches are related to a greater or lesser extent to the increasing experiential content of tourism products and services. For example, Richards and Wilson (2006) have suggested that in some cases cultural tourism is developing into 'creative tourism', which is defined as:

> "Tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday

destination where they are undertaken."

In the field of creative tourism the emphasis shifts from tangible to intangible culture, and the basic experience consists of an exchange of knowledge and skills between host and guest. This produces a more locally-driven, equitable and arguably more 'authentic' form of cultural tourism. The development of creative tourism is evident in rural areas (where creativity is needed to combat a lack of economic alternatives) and in cities, which are viewed as the engines of the creative economy. Rural creative tourism is being developed in many rural areas of the UK, Scandinavia and France. In major cities such as Barcelona, Paris and Rome creative tourism is now being developed as an alternative to 'mass' cultural tourism (www.creativetourismnetwork.org).

There has also been a significant growth in religious tourism in recent years, particularly with a resurgence of pilgrimage to important shrines and a growth in more general spiritual tourism. It is estimated that there are over 250 million pilgrims undertaking tourism trips each year. A study by ATLAS indicated that about 50% of visitors to sites along the Camino de Santiago in Spain had a religious motive. This figure is much lower for lesser known shrines in Northern Portugal, where a the main motive is meeting local people (Richards and Fernandes, 2007).The religious motive often means that pilgrims travel along specific routes to visit a number of shrines or even to complete lengthy itineraries. Increasingly, purely religious motives are becoming mixed with more secular forms of religious tourism, which often centre around specific religious sites.

Volunteer tourism has been another major growth market in recent years, again often fuelled by a desire to get to know other cultures. Tourism Research and Marketing (2007) estimated that there are up to 600,000 volunteer placements offered worldwide each year. This segment of tourists is particularly significant because of the long length of stay in the destination. Many volunteer tourism projects are also based on the conservation or restoration of heritage. The cultural routes have a strong potential link to volunteer tourism through heritage and through the desire to have intensive experiences with local people.

Travelling to learn a language is an increasingly important market in many countries, particularly those that can offer one of the major global languages. It is estimated that there is a potential global market of 375 million people wanting to travel to learn languages, and language travel to the most popular 8 English speaking destinations alone accounted for expenditure of more than $11.5 billion in 2012 (Study Travel Magazine, 2013). Very often language courses are combined with cultural activities, offering the possibility to package language and local culture.

As Smith (2009) notes, the journey within is also an area of cultural tourism growth, as tourists seek to develop their own spirituality or discover the spirituality of others. This is also linked to holistic approaches to wellness. One example of how this is now driving growth in cultural tourism is the development of the Temple Stay network in South Korea, which enables visitors to spend a period of time at a Buddhist monastery. This has become a popular option for many tourists and ex-pats in South Korea (OECD, 2009).

The growth of these different niche markets not only point to a fragmentation of cultural tourism, but also to an important shift in the basis of the production and consumption of cultural experiences for and by tourists.

PRODUCING AND CONSUMING CULTURAL TOURISM EXPERIENCES

The development of these different cultural tourism niches can also be linked to the rise of the 'experience economy' (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), in which the individual consumption of themed and holistic experiences comes to the fore. Not only is the cultural tourism field increasingly marked by experience production, but the desire for self-actualisation and creative expression on the part of

consumers is also leading to more ‘co-creation’ of these experiences between consumers and producers.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) argue that the basis of value production has shifted from extraction of raw materials to production of good and then services, each producing increasing added value. However services can be easily copied, and intensifying competition leads suppliers to develop complete experiences as an added value compared with services. In the experience economy, they argue, producers no longer charge for goods or services, but for the experience. This is the basic business model of Disney or Starbucks, who extract premium prices through theming and other elements of staging and narrative.

This trend is clearly observable in tourism, where services are being enhanced through the development of scripts and performance, such as the development of themed attractions, cultural itineraries and staged events. Specific attractions now market themselves as experiences, such as the Dunbrody Famine Ship and Irish Emigrant Experience, http://postcardexperience.com/, https://www.thelondonbridgeexperience.com/, Scotch Whisky Experience, the Rotterdam Port Experience….. The explosion of experiences in tourism has also arguably led to a form of 'serial reproduction', in which destinations around the world are busy developing similar experiences (Richards and Wilson, 2006). As a result, Pine and Gilmore have suggested that the next phase of value creation will be in the area of 'transformations', or experiences which actually change the person having the experience.

A similar progression is captured in the work of Rolf Jensen (2001) on the dream society. He suggests that modern society has inverted Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs so that self-actualisation is now the greatest need. The desire to develop the self through dreams and imagination has produced a shift from need-driven information to story-driven imagination. Story-telling will become one of the major drivers of the dream economy in the future. Stories engage people and add value to experiences – this is the basic business model used by Hollywood for generations, and it is now extending to other areas of the economy.

In the same vein, value creation in tourism is increasingly about the stories and narratives that tourism carries, creates and facilitates. In order to stand out in the contemporary marketplace, destinations need to have a clear narrative about who they are. For tourists, Paris is not just a city, but also a dream of romance. Selling dreams has long been a preoccupation of the tourism industry, but the difference now is that those dreams are not necessarily pre-packaged, but co-created with the tourist. Because the tourists are in search of their own dreams, they are far more knowledgeable than the producers – so the producers have to work with the tourists to make their dreams a reality. Dreams are also far more complex than hotel beds or restaurants or amusement arcades. They require the collaboration of a large number of different producers, coordinated by what Jensen would call ‘dream makers’ - the new cultural intermediaries for the 21st century.

At the same time there has been a shift from a purely production focus (mass tourism) and a primarily consumption focus (experiences) to the integration of production and consumption (co-creation) (Boswijk et al., 2005). In a system of co-creation, the links between actors and organizations become vital, as these facilitate the co-creation process. These linkages depend not just on the form of information flows, but also on the content of the information. Although changes in the form of communication, such as the advent of Internet and smartphones, has revolutionized the way we communicate and the way we travel, the information also has to be shaped to provide the specific content that people want. In other words, the story-telling that makes a particular place attractive to visit, or information on the specific benefits that are being sought from the destination. This means a shift from the simple provision of information and services towards the creative co-creation of experiences, narratives and dreams. These dreams are also being increasingly supported and delivered via new technology.

The changing landscape of cultural tourism

In the field of cultural tourism we can therefore see a shift away from static museums and monuments towards more interactive and intangible experiences and the creative development of narrative. For example, Frey (2009) outlines how cultural tourism and creativity are becoming integrated. He sees cultural tourism not as a passive activity, but as a means of creating places:

> The cultural capital and creative resources of places are a resource for…cultural tourists (who) are considered cultural pioneers who (can) re-evaluate "doubtful" places and have a decisive influence on them (revitalisation).

Cultural tourists can therefore help to forge new creative or 'trusting spaces' (Richards and Palmer, 2010) and play an active role in place-making. Certain groups of cultural tourists (or creative tourists) can read and understand the "languages of creative places", the "spatial complexity of structural, social, economic and cognitive factors (that) are seen as a specific local identity."

Because of these creative skills, cultural tourists seek out the local and the defining elements of the atmosphere of places. This enables them not only to see or experience a place, but to live and dwell in the culture itself.

Frey argues that the "resource of place" has four dimensions:

- the physical-material constitution of the place and the consequent possible forms of utilisation,
- a cultural symbolism of the place which uses and thus contributes to creating an identity. This atmosphere of local identity marks the "habitus of the place"
- the neighbourhood environment of the place, which by its utilisation and activation structures the socio-spatial habitat of the place and
- infrastructural features and the connection of the quarter to city structures.

The amalgamation of these different narratives effectively constitutes the "genus loci" of a place. Successful places are arguably those that manage to coordinate all of these cultural-creative resources to make themselves more attractive as places to live, work, enjoy leisure and invest in, thereby increasing the quality of life. In the network society (Castells, 2009), the vital function that enables places to achieve this is the ability to link different networks into 'regimes' (Stone, 2005) that can manage the internal (space of places) and external (space of flows) resources effectively.

In line with general network theory, Frey argues that successful creative places are those that can generate 'weak ties' which enable them to generate bridging social capital (to link to the space of flows and to other communities) and bonding social capital (to link people locally) (Putnam, 2000). The essential quality of such places is fluidity, which enables different people to meet, so that 'there are unexpected situations, spontaneous actions, as well as heterogeneous and varied lifeworlds and that in this way points of view besides usual paths and routines may develop.' (Frey, 2009)

This process is difficult to manage: Frey (2009) argues that it must be determined which kinds of support for creative processes are suitable for facilitating the self-management of those open structures that 'creative people' need for their work and leisure. Thus, apart from focusing on the place as a creativity-developing resource, there must be consideration of the 'producers of creativity' and their ability to meet and co-create new knowledge and innovations. In this context the functions of

trust, solidarity and context-bound, implicit knowledge in 'creative milieus' (Meusburger et al., 2009). are of particular importance. The meetings and moments of co-presence established through networks also create opportunities for risk-taking and surprise, which are vital to the creative process.

Paradoxically, the development of creativity also presupposes the establishment of routine, of sedimented practice which establishes the contours of normality or the everyday. Without these structures, there is no difference, no resistance, and no possibility of action and re-action. Without the box, there is no potential for thinking outside the box. The same applies to cultural tourism as well. Successful cultural tourism experiences are often those which provide a link to the culture of the tourist, as well as a confrontation with the new. The beaten path is necessary in order for people to deviate from it, and to recognize that there are new ways to act. In this way, there is a dialectic relationship between the development of established tourism products, and the development of new, creative concepts. Only once something becomes 'normal' can it be challenged and changed.

De Cauther (2009) argues that the development of modern society produced a rush of sensations and experiences which made the extraordinary 'normal' and produced a dulling of the senses which generated a desire for more and more extreme experiences. Modern journeys were therefore often aimed at the different, the exotic. In the past, therefore, the cultural tourist sought culture as something external – the products of other cultures encapsulated in the museums and monuments that represent the 'commanding heights' of national and local culture. As cultural tourism has developed, however, many tourists have voraciously consumed these cultural symbols until a certain level of saturation is produced, and phenomena such as monument fatigue arise; the feeling of 'been there, seen it, done it', which generates a desire for new experiences. Arguably these new experiences are to be found within, rather than outside the tourist. GDI (2006) sees a trend "away from adrenaline kick to endorphin kick. Instead of a high and ecstasy, people want meditative tranquility and spiritual experiences."

We also need our grounding in tourism as an everyday experience in order to be able to appreciate the differences offered by the host culture. This applies to all aspects of the culture, not just the commanding heights. As J. B. Priestly remarked: "A good holiday is one spent among people whose notions of time are vaguer than yours" – in other words it is the practice of everyday life that makes a culture different and attractive to many cultural tourists, not just specific tourist attractions.

Tourism itself has developed in a similar way. In the early days of tourism, travel itself was novel, and only over time did mass travel become an accepted, sedimented practice, which participants began to take for granted as part of their everyday world. However, the very fact of travel becoming normal has created new possibilities. The practice of travel equips tourists with skills for travelling, and eventually these skills are used to 'travel outside the box' and to create new possibilities for tourism. This is evident in the range of new travel experiences which are now offered via the Internet and depend to a large extent on the consumption skills and trust developed through tourism. Examples include couchsurfing, home swapping and 'guided by locals' schemes (Richards, 2014).

The important point for the future is to see cultural tourism as more than just tourists being attracted by culture. Tourism itself is a creative force. Tourists do not just consume culture, they can also make culture. In some cases this can be negative, as in the commodification of local culture. But in other case it leads to creation of new and positive phenomena, including new creative activities and organizations, new insights and new forms of intercultural dialogue. The point is to use the creative potential of tourism to create new possibilities not just for the tourists, but also for local communities.

ROUTES TOWARDS THE NEW CULTURAL TOURISM

Having reviewed the drivers currently acting on cultural tourism and likely to influence its development

in the near future, we can begin to trace out potential routes towards the future of cultural tourism. It is clear that the content and context of cultural experiences will change in the coming decades, and the shadow of a growing dichotomy between small-scale individualized experiences and mass-scale collective experiences is already evident. Even though many of the key sites of modern culture are already overcrowded, the pulling power of these places is unlikely to diminish. Some tourists will seek escape from the crowds through more small scale and solitary cultural consumption, but there will also be a need to find solutions to the physical crush of tourists at cultural meccas. As well as driving the creation of new cultural tourism destinations and attractions, this is also likely to involve the utilization of new technologies to support new forms of consumption at cultural destinations already overrun.

Virtual cultural tourism

Given the crowding and wear and tear that affects many important cultural sites, the ability to replicate cultural destinations in the virtual world presents a range of interesting possibilities. As Tavakoli and Mura (2015) point out, there are already seven 'Eifel Towers' in Second Life, and such virtual destinations provide new tourism possibilities for groups whose travel opportunities are limited, as in the case of Muslim women.

As Mascho and Singh (2014) report, there is a growing range of experiences available in Second Life (SL), and destinations are actively involved in the creation of new virtual attractions:

> The city of Amsterdam in SL offers a wide array of products such as flower stands, coffee shops, bicycles, boat rides, and information booths with links to travel deals, the Amsterdam tourism board, and maps for visitors. Dublin Virtually Live hosts an average of 35 community events per week. Special events such as concerts and lectures are key to attracting avatars to virtually participate and interact (…..). Dublin also offers real-life shops that have recreated themselves on SL. Real-life shops like the partnership because they can reach a new demographic of people and it is extremely affordable. New Berlin offers German language classes, events, and some shops. However, the owners of new Berlin found the shops to be unsuccessful. It was challenging and time consuming to convince real-life shop owners to invest in such a new technology. Mascho, E. and Singh, N. (2014: 142).

These developments offer the possibility of consuming a virtual version of the destination without having to travel. However, for most people it seems that physical contact is still the most desired aspect of the cultural experience, and therefore much technology is aimed at supporting the travel experience.

It seems, as Frey suggests, that place is one of the most important aspects of the cultural tourism experience. The likelihood is that consumers will become less concerned with the specific cultural content they consume, and more involved in the contexts in which they are consuming it. This links strongly to the ideas of Nicolas Bourriard about the importance of 'relational aesthetics' (Bourriard et al., 2002).

Smartphones and other portable devices can also augment or transform the experience of those who do physically visit cultural sites (Garau and Ilardi, 2014).The need for contextual information is driving a flood of apps for portable devices. These can give location-specific destination information, and in many cases replace the traditional guide or signage systems.

Augmented reality is a technology that allows digital content to be overlaid on our view of the real world using the camera of a smart phone or a tablet. The user can view the real world enhanced with additional 3D graphics superimposed on their field of vision. This opens up a wide range of cultural tourism applications, including reconstructing monuments to their original state and animating the experience of historical sites.

This trend is likely to increase if visual technology such as Google Glass becomes widespread. We will consume the site visually through the frame of the glasses, and take pictures of what we see whenever we want. What will the experience of the same site be like for those who are not wearing Google Glass?

Google Glass also marks a shift from using hardware provided by the cultural site itself to the accessing of content by users with their own devices. This may further individualise the experience, as different tourists may access different content, not only in terms of different languages, but also different viewpoint supplied by different intermediaries. If, as Hui (2014) suggests our mobilities are currently shaped by guidebooks, then in the future our mobilities will be shaped by the devices we carry (or occasionally don't carry). If in the past the competition to attract cultural tourists has often been played out on the pages of guidebooks, in the future it will be determined by which content providers gain the most access to the new platforms providing tourism information. Google is likely to be one of the biggest players in the cultural tourism market in the near future.

As Neuhofer (2014:90) explains, such "Technology enhanced experiences are characterised by the factors of instantaneousness and real time , constant social interconnectedness , consumer independence and control , a sense of experimentation and playfulness , information intensity , territorial discovery and serendipity at the same time."

Creativity

The freedom afforded to cultural tourists by new technology also places more emphasis on the role of creativity in cultural tourism. A number of other forces, including the declining role of cultural institutions as 'factories of meaning', the growing importance of individual skill development and the need for personal expression are driving cultural tourism in the direction of creativity (Richards, 2011). The past 15 years have already seen a steady growth in different forms of 'creative tourism', and this shift is likely to continue in future. As with augmented reality, creative tourism does not replace traditional modes of cultural tourism, but is rather an adjunct to them.

In future, creative modes of tourism are likely to increase the range of cultural experiences available in destinations, for example through the application of technology, the integration of the creative industries and tourism and the rise of the 'creative' or 'tactical' tourist (Wolfram and Burnill-Maier, 2012). The recent OECD report on the *Creative Economy and Tourism* (2014) also speculates that the creative economy and tourism will increasingly converge as tourism becomes more experience-centered and intangible, relying more on the creative industries to develop the 'content' of cultural tourism and to link this to consumers through storytelling.

Creative techniques such as storytelling will be increasingly employed in cultural tourism in the future to provide a link between tourists and places they are visiting**.** The growing complexity of the cultural audience and the communities and cultures being presented to tourists also mean that a single story is no longer sufficient. Communities will need to tell multiple stories about their history and identity, and tourists will also want to make their own creative interpretations of these stories that relate to their own history and identity. Such diversity of stories is also likely to be supported by new technologies that allow tourists to choose from a wide range of different interpretations.

Relationality

The growth of creative tourism is also closely linked to the rise of relationality as a driver of tourism demand (Richards, 2014a). The development of relational capital becomes more important as traditional means of distinction become less important in the network society. In a networked world, the people we are connected to say a lot about who we are, and have a growing influence on our

behavior. Because of this, people are finding new ways to link to others in the destinations that they visit.

The desire of tourists to form relationships with 'locals' is driving new styles of tourism, such as the use of Couchsurfing, Airbnb and other new forms of accommodation. These offer a direct link to culture as mediated by the local 'host'. This is placing significant parts of the cultural experience of the destination outside the control of the tourist 'industry'. As Richards (2014a) has noted,

> One important effect of the growing mobility of both tourists and locals is likely to be a growing role for the 'ex-pat' as cultural intermediary. Because the tourist is usually by definition an outsider, the concept of what is local also becomes relative. Anybody who is able to assemble a coherent storyline about 'local' culture therefore becomes a marker of local authenticity. This is evident in the growing number of cultural intermediaries who are 'ex-pats' or 'para-locals'. These people gain importance because they are able to communicate with the tourists in their own language, and frame local culture in terms of the other, and can therefore interpret local culture in a way that the tourists will appreciate and enjoy.

In this sense, the 'local' has become the new referent for the authentic experience of the destination. It is no longer so important to visit the leading museums and other 'must-see' sights, because the relationships that we build with locals and 'para-locals' validate our cultural experiences.

Storytelling

The growing attractiveness of the local is also related to the need to tell stories about our experiences and ourselves. Stories help us to link discrete experiences together, providing a coherent narrative about why we consume as we do. Places and destinations also need to use stories to make themselves readable for visitors, and to validate the reasons why people travel to visit them. Storytelling techniques will therefore become increasingly important in the cultural tourism market in the future.

The shift towards storytelling in cultural tourism is well illustrated by the example of the city of Den Bosch in the Netherlands. Den Bosch originally sold itself as a 'meeting city', which did not project a very strong image or say anything about the uniqueness of the place. This is one of the reasons why Den Bosch changed course in 2006 and decided to position the city as the home of the famous medieval painter Hieronymus Bosch (Marques, 2013). By linking the city brand with a figure known all over the world for his use of fantastic imagery it was hoped that a more meaningful narrative could be created about the city, its history, identity and character. Bosch is also a good starting point for developing events, and the city is now staging a series of events and theme years around the 500th anniversary of the painter's death in 2016. The power of the Bosch narrative is evident in the relative success of the city in gathering funding for the event in an adverse economic climate. The use of the Bosch narrative has also succeeded in gathering support among the local population, over 80% of whom think that the use of Bosch to represent the city is a good idea. On the basis of the Bosch narrative the city has also been able to forge a link with other cities which have a Bosch link – in particular those which hold artworks by the painter. As these cities include London, Madrid, Vienna and Los Angeles, Den Bosch has immediately placed itself in a different league in cultural tourism terms.

Curation

A specific means of telling a story about culture is the art of curation, which is also likely to become a more important part of cultural tourism in the future. As the previous cultural tourism hierarchies based on 'must-see sites' and normative concepts of authenticity decline, there is a growing need for new ways for consumers to choose from the welter of cultural content. One emerging strategy in a number

of creative fields is curation. Curation used to be limited to the museum, but in recent decades the idea of curating different spaces has emerged. For example, the idea of curating the city through events is now becoming an established part of urban strategies around the world (Richards and Palmer, 2010).

Curation can be used to link cultural content to place, drawing on relational aesthetics, and creating stories that link places, their residents and visitors. The art of curation for places is different from that of museums, because it is based not on institutional authority, but the embedded knowledge and skills of cultural intermediaries or 'switchers'. In many cases these intermediaries gain their authority from their own artistic achievements, as is the case with the appointment of figures such as David Bowie to curate the High Line Festival in New York. Because of his cultural authority, the event itself has now emerged as a cultural reference point for New Yorkers and visitors to the Big Apple. But curation can also be a skill that is based on embedded knowledge of the destination, and which therefore can be used by a wide range of other intermediaries. For example the St Regus hotel chain provides 'curated experiences' at a number of its hotels worldwide. As the blurb recounts: "Our distinctive approach to that which interests you most. It is about private access to the world's premier collections and auctions. Tasting vintages never before available to the public. The quintessential tailored garment and those individual luxuries that identify you." In Atlanta, these luxuries include a private visit to the High Museum:

> After a romantic and graciously presented exclusive dinner for two at our signature restaurant, Astor Court, decide if you'd like to get down to the art or the heart of the matter in Atlanta. Appreciators of fine classical and contemporary art will relish a personal tour of the High Museum, the leading art museum in the Southeast featuring renowned traveling and permanent collections, and indulge their inner connoisseurs with a USD 250 credit at the stylishly mod gift shop. What's included? USD 3,000 plus taxes is based on a two-night stay in a Superior Room for two with dinner in Astor Court, a private tour of the High Museum guided by a docent and $250 credit in the museum store.

Eventfulness

The attractiveness of places depends not just on their spatial arrangement (for example the presence of museums, monuments and other 'real cultural capital'), but also on their temporal qualities (atmosphere and the rhythms of everyday life). The liveliness and atmosphere of places is increasingly dependent on a series of planned and spontaneous 'events' that create a gap between expectation and reality and present the potential for change (Richards, 2014b). Cultural events are already a major pillar in the tourism arsenal of destinations, but this is likely to increase in future as events take on a growing range of economic, cultural, social and image roles. The proliferation of theme years, exhibitions, re-enactments and pageants that have become a staple part of cultural tourism in recent years is likely to continue as more places seek to distinguish themselves in the marketplace.

However, we will also see a growth in self-organised events as consumers use new technology to encounter each other in the destination. Gatherings of visitors in destinations are already being organized through networks such as Couchsurfing, and in the future such spontaneous get-togethers are likely to be facilitated more and more through social media. Through systems such as WAYN (Where Are You Now? – "The world's largest travel & lifestyle social network") people can link up with like-minded people who also happen to be passing through a specific locality.

The increasing reliance of cultural tourism on events is underlined in the recent OECD study on Tourism and the Creative Economy, which analyses the growth of "crossover events" such as SXSW

in Austin Texas, and the use of events for 'guerilla marketing' campaigns around culture and creativity (OECD, 2014). In the future events are likely to be a more important aspect of cultural tourism for the simple reason that many experienced cultural travelers will already have visited the major fixed attractions in a destination. Events provide new reasons to re-visit cultural destinations.

The journey within

Cultural tourism is essentially about journeys. Not just because the tourists by definition travel to experience culture, but also because culture itself is a journey – a voyage of discovery and self-realisation. This is particularly evident in the fields of religious tourism and spiritual tourism. Although religious tourism is perhaps one of the oldest forms of travel, it is still growing today, fuelled by the relative ease of travel. But religious tourism is increasingly being supplemented by spiritual travel, which is "identified by the identity and meaning-making projects of individuals" (Norman, 2012: 27). The varieties of spiritual tourism identified by Norman include spiritual tourism as healing, as experiment, as quest, as retreat, and as collective.

These different forms of spiritual tourism may also be combined in the provision of spiritual experiences in the destination. For example, the South Korean Temple Stay programme (OECD, 2009) provides an experience of Korean Buddhism for Koreans, ex-pats and tourists, which allows them to immerse themselves in the lives of Buddhist monks for a period of time. This gives the visitors the flexibility to experiment, to seek their own spiritual path, or to undertake a retreat. Many similar experiences are now being provided in the field of 'New Age' travel, which Pernecky and Johnston (2006) see as fragmenting into a wide range of different niches.

The new geographies of cultural tourism

All of the trends identified above point to a shift in the geography of cultural tourism, away from a narrow concentration on sites and tangible heritage towards a broader consumption of intangible heritage, image and identity. This shift is also reducing the previous distinctions between culturally interested locals and "tourists". This is reflected in the marketing approach of organisations such Creative Austria, which aim their creative experiences at the mobile 'creative class', which consists of those residing permanently in the destination as well as ex-pats, long term visitors and passing tourists. "Cultural tourism" is therefore being consumed by a mix of locals and tourists in different locations that are often far removed from the original context of the museum or the monument. This decoupling of culture and space is producing a new geography of cultural tourism based on the co-creation of experiences between locals and tourists.

As cultural tourists become more experienced and increasingly venture out of the established enclaves into the wider cultural environment, they tend to interact more with local culture and local people. This is leading to the growth of "creative tourism" in many places, as locals and ex-pats react to the growing interest of visitors by facilitating their consumption of local culture. In addition to the growth of commercial offerings of "local experiences", destinations are also re-positioning the tourist. Both Barcelona and Paris, tourist cities par excellence, now refer to tourists as "temporary citizens". These temporary citizens are also beginning to make their mark on local culture, for example by highlighting the everyday elements of culture that are often overlooked by locals (Richards, 2011). Destinations will increasingly have to think about residents and visitors in a more integrated way, as the reality of tourism is also changing rapidly. Tourists no longer confine their stays to hotels, but are increasingly using the existing local facilities to support their travel. Hospitality exchange and sharing systems such as Airbnb and Couchsurfing are beginning to have an impact on the tourism market in many places, and underline a desire of tourists to be integrated into the local culture. They are now staying in areas that previously were the preserve of locals, consuming services that were never designed for tourists. Although this can cause frictions when the tourist load becomes too great (as

has happened recently in Barcelona, for example), it also opens up avenues for the development of new, locally based experiences that can benefit both locals and tourists.

CONCLUSION

Cultural tourism has a long history, but its recent past shows evidence of particularly rapid change and transformation. These changes potentially herald new forms of cultural tourism that may become more important in future. These include the new forms of cultural consumption driven by new technologies such as augmented reality and mobile devices. The independence of the cultural tourist is also likely to grow in future, thanks to the provision of location-related information through such technologies. This should also make it easier for the cultural tourist of the future to explore new destinations, striking out not only to distant exotic cultures, but also undertaking a re-discovery of the unknown closer to home. Cultural tourism is likely to become less of a demarcated tourist niche, and more of a generalised means of consuming everyday life. This does not pose so much of a threat to the established “must-see cites” that currently dominate the cultural tourism market, but it will become an important addition to mainstream forms of cultural tourism. These new experiences are likely to be more bottom-up, self-organised and integrated into the local social, economic and cultural systems. This will provide a major challenge to destination marketeers, who will need to find creative ways of making people aware of the cultural attractions of their localities.

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