CULTURAL HERITAGE AND TOURISM EVOLUTION

Claude Moulin

Introduction
This paper focuses on cultural heritage and the evolution of tourism. Several definitions will be presented to show that the new trend in cultural heritage and tourism is interactive tourism. It will be asserted that mass tourism may be evolving into a 'cultural tourism rush'.

The importance of cultural resources will be emphasized through a process of identification and evaluation. We will also focus on the advantages and disadvantages of tourism, heritage as a commodity, as well as new marketing strategies. Finally, we contend that the encounter between heritage and tourism can be described as a passion of either love or money.

History and evolution
Travel has always held a fascination for mankind. Dubos (1974), a well known biologist, describes mankind as torn between settling down and on the move. On the one hand, we have a strong desire to establish roots and develop a sense of place. On the other hand, we want to discover, through our own eyes, the beauty of the world and the different experiences it offers.

The socio-cultural content of tourism makes it different from any other type of movement or migration. With technological advances, higher standards of living and better communication, tourism takes on another dimension. Egypt was a tourist destination as early as 3000 BC. The built heritage was the motive for the visit. The nobility also sailed down the Nile on small boats or felouk for other purposes. In ancient Greece travel and the exchange of ideas were an important way to improve society. An impressive network of roads was developed and extensively used by traders, officials, soldiers, students and philosophers such as Pythagoras, Plato, Thales and Aristotle, who travelled for pleasure. Travelling became difficult after the fall of the Roman Empire as it was dangerous to use the roads. Travelling for pleasure did not exist in the medieval period. The Renaissance was an age of exploration of the land as well as the mind. Tourism took on an education role in the sixteenth century when young British aristocrats travelled to Europe to widen their knowledge. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many writers commented that travel provided new insights and perspectives on life. In 1770 Montaigne defined travel as the desire 'to report on the temperament of nations and their ways of life'. He identified travel with greater self-awareness and viewed it as the opportunity to expand our minds through contact with others. Travelling throughout the world produced a marvellous clarity of mind. This great world was a mirror where we had to see ourselves in order to know ourselves.

In the nineteenth century tourism for aristocrats developed rapidly. Many resorts were built to accommodate the wealthy who did not mix with local residents. The growing bourgeoisie attempted to retain their status by spending ostentatiously in order to compensate for their loss of power (Boyer 1981).

The twentieth century, like the nineteenth century, has witnessed the triumph of rights for leisure and tourism, such as paid holidays. Mass tourism was born when the bourgeoisie democratized places, monuments and sites, once only frequented by aristocrats.

When the economies of European countries were ruined by World War II there was a realization that their scenery as well as cultural, archaeological and historic heritage had great tourism potential. This led to the creation of the European Travel Commission (ETC) in the immediate post war period.

Mass tourism is now a social and cultural reality strongly anchored at all levels of industrialized countries. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) estimates that one billion individuals travel each year. This phenomenal growth poses an important question. Should we be frightened or excited by this evolution? We could be pleased and enthusiastic or extremely concerned. If economic factors were the only criterion for tourism development we might be justified in fearing its growth.

In 1980 The Manila Declaration on Tourism was adopted by the WTO conference in Manila, which was represented by 107 countries and 57 organizations. This Declaration stated that there were social and cultural as well as economic implications in tourism. Furthermore, it contended that tourism had a spiritual and educational role as well as being a complex global, human and cultural phenomenon.

Definitions
Cultural tourism is now a common phrase. Friedman claims that it 'is a way to discover another wisdom', allowing the individual to discover the heritage of other human beings through their day-to-day reality. It is a way to appreciate the 'universal civilization' and help achieve some kind of human unity.
The 1969 International Committee on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS Congress in Oxford, England declared that 'cultural tourism, by creating the conditions for a new humanism, must be one of the fundamental means, on a universal level, of insuring man’s equilibrium and the enrichment of his personality'.

As more and more tourists indulged in cultural tourism in the 1970s, many sites and monuments became overcrowded and consequently the tourism experience suffered. The ICOMOS International Committee on Cultural Tourism, under the leadership of Haulot (the Belgium Minister for Tourism for many years), issued a Charter on Cultural Tourism that was endorsed by a number of tourism, cultural and heritage organizations.

This charter read in part as follows:

Tourism is an irreversible social, human, economic and cultural fact. Its influence in the sphere of monuments and sites is particularly important and can but increase. Looked at in the perspective of the next twenty-five years, in the context of the phenomena of expansion which may have heavy consequences and which confront the human race, tourism appears to be one of the phenomena likely to exert a most significant influence on Man’s environment in general and on monuments and sites in particular. In order to remain bearable this influence must be carefully studied, and at all levels be the object of a concerted and effective policy.

Cultural tourism is that form of tourism whose object is, among other aims, the discovery of monuments and sites. It exerts on these last a very positive effect in so far as it contributes – to satisfy its own ends – to their maintenance and protection ... It calls for the respect of the world cultural and natural heritage.

The charter outlined the following courses of action:

• integration of cultural assets into the social and economic objectives which are part of planning of resources;
• cooperation to implement policies in order to protect mankind against the effects of tourism’s anarchical growth;
• measures to facilitate information and training of travellers;
• education of school-aged children and adolescents to understand and respect monuments, sites and cultural heritage;
• struggle against the destruction of heritage.

This charter defined cultural tourism within the concept of ‘monuments and sites’. It mentions the positive effects of this type of tourism to protect and maintain sites and monuments. It referred to negative effects of pollution and degradation as a result of the large number of tourists. The Charter was very successful in Europe as well as in Quebec, Canada, because of the dynamism of the international committee members.

The evolution of the tourism phenomenon coupled with the impressive development of heritage conservation and cultural resource management have led us to reflect on the functional definition of cultural tourism and undertake research on the role of cultural heritage in tourist attractions. The Charter is innovative in the way it deals with the integration of ‘cultural assets into the social and economic objectives which are part of planning of the resources of the states, regions, and local communities’. The concept of educating the public, including young children in schools, ‘to understand and respect the monuments and sites and the cultural heritage’ was a novel concept. It is only recently that school programmes are incorporating elements about our heritage. To my knowledge enriching the individual’s experience of monuments and sites has never been carried out within a tourism-orientated framework.

Cultural tourism in the 1980s is no longer tourism for ‘cultivated’ individuals. All definitions now emphasize a global and holistic approach. MacIntosh (1980) states that cultural tourism covers all aspects of travel so that people can learn about each other’s ways of life. It is an important means of promoting the development of cultural attractions and resources.

In 1980, the Province of Quebec prepared a statement on cultural tourism to be incorporated in the Manila Declaration on Tourism at the WTO conference. It stated that the importance of cultural tourism is associated with the knowledge and preservation of the natural and cultural heritage. The fundamental values of tourism are too often destroyed by tourism development itself. There needs to be a more active and conscious attitude toward the organization of the cultural components, functions and impact of a trip. Cultural tourism covers all aspects of human activity and should be approached from social, cultural as well as political points of view.

The 1980s have signalled an explosion of culture phenomena. We tend to depersonalise or create gaps or walls between people. We need to find communication tools to reduce these obstacles. Creativity must be encouraged at all levels of society. Castarede and Sur (1983), claim that only that which allows human beings to communicate better should be called culture. They refer to sensitivity, participation, communication, and authenticity.

Historic Environment VII 3 & 4 (1990)
From ‘cultivated’ cultural tourism, we have evolved towards ‘communi-culture’. Cultural tourism helps us to cultivate our talents, abilities, and curiosities. It is only through an enriched definition of cultural tourism that important values and creativity can be nurtured.

Culture is communication. As we know, the process of communication is not an easy task. It is important to learn how to communicate effectively and to acknowledge it as part of human development. Cultural tourism which respects cultural resources as well as human beings, can be a tool to enhance the quality of our lives to provide a creative conservation of our past and of our cultural characteristics. It has been suggested that human development is self creation to the extent that our choices condition our adaptive responses (Dubos 1979). The great changes that have occurred throughout history are the result of our ability to communicate and to perceive the world in global terms as well as to develop reasoning in a more systemic way. The conservation of our built or intangible heritage has been a preoccupation for many people. It became important in North America when economists realized that it was often cheaper to save an old building and give it another use, usually with a tourism-orientation, rather than to demolish it and to construct a new one.

There have been a number of conferences in the early 1980s which focused on our heritage and how it could meet the demands of the tourism industry without being compromised. UNESCO sponsored a conference in Mexico in 1982 which focused on cultural development and its importance in the development of nations and individuals. Pacific Area Tourism Association (PATA) in cooperation with several American firms, sponsored workshops on heritage and tourism.

In 1985 the WTO proposed a broader definition of cultural tourism:

Cultural tourism can be defined in broad and in narrow terms. In the narrow sense, it includes movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts, and cultural tours, travel to festivals, visits to sites and monuments, folklore, pilgrimages . . . In the broad sense, all movements of persons might be included in the definition because they satisfy the human need for diversity, tending to raise the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge, experience and encounters.

Cultural tourism was no longer tourism enjoyed by a few cultivated people. It had become a qualitative mass tourism concept. At the same time, education documents were issued to make tourists aware of appropriate behaviour and develop an ethic regarding the cultures and resources they would encounter while travelling. This approach was taken to improve the quality of travel for both tourists and the people in the community they were visiting.

As a result of a growing diversity of cultural practices, there is an increasing demand for richer experiences.

The demand for experience is insatiable, because the purchase of an experience does not necessarily lead to an accumulation of possessions. The only apparent limits lie in our imagination (Ogilvy 1986).

We have become further and further removed from the classical concepts of culture and heritage. At one time these classical concepts did coincide. The democratization process in society and the development of transport and communications have modified the picture and provided new opportunities which will benefit tourism and heritage.

Touring is the best way to familiarize ourselves with the world in which we live. Tourism is characterized by escapism – a departure from the ordinary, routine environment into an extraordinary phase of fantasy, freedom, and novelty.

We are dealing with interaction if we analyze tourism in terms of a social phenomenon. It is like opening a large living book. One can suffer from cultural overload in attempting an appearance of an eclectic assimilation of objects (Schmidt 1980). Thus, a kind of cultural shorthand has appeared.

Museums are a good example of this eclectic assimilation of objects and cultural shorthand. All one needs to do is observe the number of visitors at a museum and it will be obvious that most of them are searching for a seat, the cafeteria or the shop.

One new way they present a quick but enriching synthesis is to exhibit the work of a specific topic such as a painter or sculptor. The exhibition, supported by interpretation services condenses knowledge, and gives a certain status to the visitor. In recent years we have seen an ‘art rush’. Many large cities have seen their tourism revenue and reputation flourish when they attract numerous visitors to well-known travelling exhibits. This was achieved in Holland with the opening of an exhibition on the work of Van Gogh. All the publicity, promotion, and marketing campaigns are in place in order to make 1990, the centenary of the painter’s death, a cultural tourism event. Tourism provided the opportunity to catch up on people and places we did not have time to study in school. It is also the opportunity to acquire knowledge and experience. Thus, the Van Gogh centenary functions as a cultural shorthand which leads to an eclectic assimilation of a variety of Dutch cultural objects.
The new wave of tourists want an opportunity to read more comprehensive information. Tourists think in terms of a heritage identity and want to see things in the context of place, space, time, and human dynamism. Monuments and sites have always been part of the tourism experience. Traditionally, museums have played a major role as collectors of artifacts of high culture. Today, however, they are rapidly changing to adjust to the demands and attitude of tourists to heritage, interpretation and culture.

Many interpretation centres have opened recently and many more are in the planning stages. In southern Alberta, in Canada, a World Heritage site with the curious name of Buffalo-Head-Smashed-Jump, has become an interpretation centre. It is an ancient Indian sacred site where buffaloes were encouraged to stampede so that they would be killed when they fell over the top of the cliff. The meat was then cut up to be eaten. This site was, and still is, a place for a ritual and celebration. It has been developed so that tourists can learn about the rich Indian culture as well as provide the native people with the opportunity to retain their own traditions, beliefs and sacred places. Another site on the outskirts of Saskatoon, in Canada, will become an interpretation centre focusing on archaeology. Any item of heritage value is now left in situ.

Museums have also undergone a revolutionary process. This new museology, called Eco-museum has already greatly influenced the museum scene. It is a French concept created by George-Henri Riviere in 1970. This new concept is simple to understand. The museum is the territory in which a community lives. The curators are the local people who need to know themselves first before they can develop such an eco-museum. The process is sharing knowledge about the past, developing a sense of place, an identity and using all cultural resources in order to reanimate the region and enhance the quality of life. The challenge is to make an assessment of all of the cultural resources. Creating short term strategies, such as mounting exhibits, undertaking renovations as well as involving different interest groups, is coupled with long term strategies, such as community awareness and education programs. The cultural traits of the micro-region are identified and those which could facilitate tourism are developed.

**Cultural identity**

Tourism development in Canada appears to have evolved towards the enhancement of a community sense of place, which needs to be ‘manufactured’ in order to sell better. The distinctive nature of cultural identity sells very well. In a rootless society tourists look for places which express visions of the past as well as harmony, beauty and tranquility. It is often external agents who want to promote and defend the identity of a particular community. It is essential to maintain the cultural identity of a place. However, when it comes to tourism development, contradictions emerge.

On the one hand, we want to protect cultures in order to promote authentic tourism. On the other hand, we transform to some extent, the areas in which these cultures survive into living museums. When cultural identity becomes part of the tourism product, there is increasing manipulation of a place’s heritage to make it economically viable. This so-called product or tourist attraction is perpetuated and artificially maintained. What will happen if we encourage communities to search for their identities and roots in order to become tourist destinations, if at the same time they want to engage in a modernizing process? In seeking to preserve the history of a place we run the risk of retarding its normal dynamic process of evolution. Traditional societies will have to create new identities for themselves. For example, the number of sites and monuments in Britain make it a leader in the international heritage tourism ‘craze’. However, fears have been expressed that such a focus on the country’s heritage may affect its image to a point where its ability to make and sell modern products is reduced (Holloway 1986).

The eco-museum movement and heritage partnership are part of the search for quality, continuity and development. To develop an eco-museum, the first stage is to take an inventory of the community’s cultural resources. The second stage is to package and market these resources. The third stage is that any modification can be part of the process of evolution towards a new identity and culture-mix as tourist flows into the community. Ultimately, any cultural tourism development imposed on a community will be beneficial. Its members will become more open minded and dynamic with the opportunity to self actualize and gain new perspectives.

**Culture rush**

The interest in heritage and culture has increased steadily over the years, particularly in recent times. Some futurists tell us that this quest for culture is only just beginning. Obviously we need to be prepared if we really want to protect and conserve our heritage. Tourism development can be damaging. Quantity transforms quality and the sheer number of tourists can change the experience. Venice limits its tourist capacity to 40,000 people each summer. Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and Canterbury Cathedral in England, both World Heritage sites, are suffering from an influx of visitors.

We could face the destruction of the heritage and cultural resources we cherish if their use is not controlled. Tourists en masse will destroy the very
sites to which they are attracted (Cohen 1978). It is not merely the physical destruction of a monument or site. It is also the erosion of the experience everyone is seeking, which is the main motive for the visit. A new, unprecedented type of invasion is occurring. It is the ‘cultural tourism invasion’.

The world has witnessed diverse invasions throughout history. The Arabs invaded Spain and occupied it for 400 years. Although this invasion created difficulties and conflicts it also left a tremendously rich heritage such as the Alhambra Gardens in Granada and the Mosque in Seville. The invaders possessed what is called ‘tourist culture’.

Here are some of my own impressions gathered over the last decade. We have experienced an acceleration of the tourism process. This has resulted in a multiplicity of operations as well as the desperate imitation of other successful models. Simultaneously, artificial tourism is developing and sustaining what I see as the ‘culture rush’. Tourists are looking for unusual, unknown places. The impact of mass tourism is felt soon after a site is discovered. This process happens all over the world. The tourist culture is winning over every other culture.

Tourists have acquired the lifestyle and culture of leisure-orientated societies. As a result, we are looking at our cultural heritage through the wrong end of the binoculars. In protecting or modifying our resources to please tourists, whom we do not know, we create an artificial experience for them. We are talking about a heritage experience without necessarily knowing what it is. Is it just another gimmick developed to sell better? Are we able to verbalize our tourism experiences? Are we influenced by publicity to the point that we still react with stereotypes? Is our love for the past mere illusion? Are we so dependent on the economic benefits of tourism that we need to create regulations depriving local people of their way of life and values. If this justifiable? What are the rights of tourists?

Economic prosperity is important. However, so is the type of world we want for ourselves and our children. We need harmony between these objectives. Unfortunately, we exploit the resources of the past. If innovation and creativity remain scarce, our contribution to this world will have been less than worthy.

On the other hand, the positive aspects of cultural tourism development or ‘culture rush’ are a step towards understanding our culture, and how it can be integrated into development. We are nourished by our culture. Our creativity is renewed when we confront the past as well as the present and try to project ourselves into the future. We are now finding precise ways to manage and enhance this cultural potential. Overcrowding of sites and monuments will force us to redirect the tourism influx, to limit attendance and control accessibility. Most importantly, educating tourists about our cultural heritage will become a priority.

Has cultural heritage become a commodity?
Does cultural tourism reinforce our heritage or make it a commodity, a money-making product and part of a selling and buying system?

As we know, heritage is a non-renewable resource. Interpretation is a renewable resource. Are we attempting, through cultural tourism and its innovations, to renew a non-renewable resource? The problem is that creating new ways of looking at traditions, lifestyles and values means that history can be rewritten through interpretation.

We must ask ourselves to what extent this interest in our culture is determined by the economic advantages of tourism. North American communities are now commemorating the past by re-enacting some of its main events rather than focusing on monuments and sites. This gives the community a sense of continuity and identity as well as contributes a sense of romance to history. It focuses on the way our ancestors used to live, how they solved problems and celebrated important events of their lives. This trend could be due to a number of factors such as the development of the media, the democratization of tourism, and the demand for new experiences.

It could be a temporary trend in this complex world where we need to find refuge in a romanticised past golden age. Historicism would take over modernism in order to restore original places, to bring back the customs, traditions and costumes of the past in a new interpretation of our history. Jackson (1980) says there has to be discontinuity. It is essential from a religious and artistic point of view. He believes that ruins provide the incentive for restoration and a return to origins. There has to be (in our new concept of history) an interim of death or rejection before there can be renewal and reform.

Those of us who, individually or collectively, want to preserve aspects of our past, find pleasure and excitement in the renovation of the old, even if we are not involved in any specific project. Is this appeal strong enough, in this age of technology, to change our perceptions of heritage and the way it is presented and interpreted?

An interesting idea evolved in France, where a show, representing traditional life and events, is played during the summer with the participation of the local population. Lasers and other modern technological devices are used in the grounds of the castle, le Puy du Fou. Three nights a week, 4000 spectators come to view the spectacle. An entry fee is charged but none of the actors are paid. Instead, the money goes to the
regional committee, which in turn is able to subsidize all sorts of sports, cultural, or artistic activities for the local population. This project has been used as a model for other projects in France, and presumably it will be copied by other European countries.

Shows which use light and sound have been very successful in renewing an interest in heritage buildings and monuments. Parliament Hill in Ottawa is now lit during the summer with illuminated messages in French or English at certain times. This approach increases the symbolism of the place for the viewer.

Our concept of heritage is becoming more dynamic because of our pedagogical, utilitarian, economic and conservationist expectations. Culture is the acquisitions of the past, the contribution of the present and the ferment of the future. It both shapes and is nourished by the future (Haulot 1983).

This new approach is related to the use of information rather than things. We are switching from productive, functional information, which tends to destroy and exploit the environment, to what Raffestin (1988) refers to as 'the economy of contemplation' or the ability to weave a network of new relations. Through this, we create our identities. The relationships are enriching because they are self-contained. He says that we need to create very elaborate information structures in order to avoid a superficial contemplation of things. We must integrate historical and artistic information to show heritage from another angle.

Cultural heritage and tourism: a love story or a tacit alliance?
The recent relationship between cultural heritage and tourism has developed into a real passion. Every government agency, tour operator as well as every city or region, relies on its heritage to attract more tourists, as well as entice them to stay longer and spend more money. This has resulted in the creation of new products, events and historic districts with a heritage flavour, as well as museums focusing on cultural tourism such as the eco-museum and econo-museum (Simard 1990).

This passion for culture is constructive if it is motivated by a desire to preserve, enhance and create new dimensions in our lives. If it is exploiting heritage for economic gain alone, it is destructive.

Heritage resources and tourism are inextricably linked. Their relationship has been through many different phases. In the 1970s tourism and culture were alienated from one another. In the 1980s they developed ties based on mutual appreciation. In 1985 there was a realization that their union could make for a very productive and economically sound marriage. They fell in love and married! This union was going very well at the beginning of the 1990s. Heritage and culture have learned a great deal about tourism, such as marketing strategies and product development. In some regions of the world, it has taken some time for conservation specialists entering the tourism field to realize that much could be done in their own area of expertise to ensure sustainable heritage and tourism development.

There must be education and an integrative approach at all levels to establish collaboration between tourism and conservation. The lines of communication must be kept open. The characteristics of this 'new tourism' should be spelled out clearly so that the 'new tourist' is understood. Tourism should not exploit heritage. Tourism development is the cooperative management of appropriate changes at their optimal level. Tourism and heritage agencies need to join forces and use their talents to develop our environment. This underlines the immediate importance of a partnership in heritage management as a necessary ingredient in cultural tourism development.

Conclusion
Cultural tourism is far more than the discovery of monuments and sites. It is everything that this discovery creates in terms of the process; the spatial and time experiences, as well as the psycho-cognitive aspects through which human beings might reach a more open and universal way of thinking. This form of tourism is part of the preservation movement as well as the process of renewing cultural values. It gives us a new perspective of our future projects.

Tourism enhances and protects cultural resources without prohibiting their sensitive economic development. Furthermore, it takes into account other emotional, spiritual, psychological, social and philosophical dimensions of these precious resources. Cultural heritage is a human resource and cultural tourism is the instrument and process of cultural exploitation. The integration of tourism within the social and cultural environment and the promotion of an 'adult tourist' more interested in cultural values, will lead to a climate in which the cultural content of tourism will increase (WTO 1985).

Cultural tourism can be the key to a more humanistic and integrated form of touristic development at all levels. This process can bring diversity and richness. It is a tremendous opportunity to integrate, in all aspects of our lives, the cultural dimensions expressed throughout human creativity and ingenuity.
References


Editor’s note: References in papers generally conform to the conventions set out in the AGPS Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers, 4th ed. (1988). Referencing methods are the author’s choice.