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Tourism Culture: Nexus, Characteristics, Context and Sustainability

Abstract

This article makes the case for tourism culture; the new cultural expressions, practises and identities, influenced by hosts, guests and industry context, which may develop in destinations, as a useful perspective with which to draw together various conceptual narratives within the tourism studies literature. Research in three small islands finds evidence of a distinctive cultural landscape which emerges from the interaction of host and guest cultures, and the exchange, change and creativity that results. Tourism industry dynamics are found to facilitate or undermine this process, as in turn they may be influenced by. This tourism culture has implications for the continuation and evolution of indigenous culture, as it does for the absorption of elements of tourist cultures. The emergent fusion may be symptomatic of a richer cultural landscape and might be considered as an indicator of more sustainable communities and forms of tourism development.

Keywords
Tourism Culture; Sustainable Tourism; Host-Guest Relationships; Resident Involvement; Qualitative Research; Small Island Tourism; Host Culture; Guest Culture

1.0 Introduction

Explored in this research article is the occurrence or not of tourism culture, how this can be defined, and what implications can be drawn from in relation to sustainability (see Figure 1). Tourism culture can be seen as a product of the melange of host and guest cultures that occurs in a destination, resulting in a new and distinctive emergent culture, in turn shaped by
and shaping the local tourism context. The aim of this paper is to present an overview of host-guest interactions and the outputs to emerge from these, using tourism culture as a lens to do so. It is proposed that this alternative perspective might synthesise and complement various conceptual narratives within the tourism literature, and can be used to encourage a more holistic, nuanced and potentially positive evaluation of tourism outputs.

It appears that both hosts and guests are mutually affected by their tourism involvements. Tourism is widely associated with cultural influence upon and at times fusion with host cultures (i.e. Tapper, 2001; Picard, 2008). Likewise guests themselves can be influenced and altered by their travel experiences (i.e. Richards, 2014). And many tourists do choose to a greater or lesser extent to acculturate and become closely involved with host cultures (Rasmi et al., 2014). Exchange, change and creativity outputs may arise from this process of mutual interaction. These potentially lead in turn to the development of new and distinctive cultural landscapes: a tourism culture. (NB. In the literature the term ‘tourist’ rather than ‘tourism’ culture has been used by those exploring the topic (i.e. Smith, 1989; Sindiga, 1996). The latter is adopted here in recognition of the equal status of hosts as well as guests (tourists) and influence of industry dynamics.)

Tourism culture is affected by the culture and actions of visitors themselves (Wilson, 1997), their hosts (Smith, 2009), and influenced by the unique requirements and processes of hosting tourism (Cooper, 1995). For example, tourism culture may be facilitated or disrupted by dynamics of tourism development and decline (Butcher, 2003). At the same time tourism culture may shape this local tourism context and the host-guest relationships situated within, potentially in a more sustainable manner. Its presence has for instance been associated with many positive impacts such as mutual learning, cultural revival and multiculturalism (Stronza and Gordillo, 2008), proximity between hosts and guests and local stakeholder involvement in the industry (Sindga, 1996). With these recognised as factors in more sustainable forms of
tourism development (i.e. Almeyda et al., 2010; Reimer and Walter, 2013), tourism culture may be a potential antecedent and precedent of this.

What contributes to and constitutes tourism culture is something which merits further investigation therefore. We broadly understand how tourism can affect tourists, how it can affect local stakeholders and communities, and how such outcomes may influence measurement and management of sustainability. Less present is a wider perspective exploring or articulating the dialectical interplay between hosts and guests and what may emerge from this. The participation of hosts may be especially overlooked, risking patronising or overly-negative assessments of what are in fact more dynamic, nuanced and varied experiences (Scheyvens and Momsen, 2008). The process of interaction between visitors and residents on islands specifically has remained largely unexplored (Moyle et al., 2010), whilst cold-water and secondary destination islands are under-researched in general (Ritchie and Inkari, 2006; Baldacchino, 2010).

This paper therefore explores tourism culture in the setting of three such islands at varied stages of tourism development. In doing so a particular perspective on tourism outputs is revived and refined, one which may be more flexible and perhaps accurate in accommodating the various nuances within. Theoretical benefits as a result include complementing, extending and drawing together various conceptual narratives within the tourism studies literature.
2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Tourism Culture Nexus

Tourism culture may best be seen as a nexus between host culture and guest culture (see Figure 3). On the one hand host culture is that which is indigenous to a locale: its particular arts and crafts, language, traditional roles, festivals, and ways of doing things (Tsartas, 1992; Simpson, 1993; Tapper, 2001; Smith, 2009). In the case of small islands, these often host unusually rich and distinctive cultures due to their relative isolation. This must be adapted to
creatively and often disjoints from wider social, cultural, political and economic changes felt in mainland areas (Royle, 2003; 2008; Berry, 2009). Small islands are known to be far from homogenous, with even proximate neighbours having often very distinct economic, social, cultural and natural landscapes (Milne, 1992). At the same time, broad similarities between islands are shared, informed as they are by the challenges of peripherality resident community’s face, and the often resilient and creative adaptations to those (Boissevain, 1979; Andriotis, 2005; McElroy, 2006; Chaperon and Bramwell, 2013).

On the other hand is guest culture. This may be influenced by the originating cultures of guests who act on holiday in ways influenced by their cultural background (Wilson, 1997; Carr, 2002), or perhaps in reaction against this (Hughes, 2002). Particular temporary tourist culture exists also for those on holiday. Noted are the temporary cultures that tourists may enter into (Jafari, 1987) or create (Sorensen, 2003) whilst on holiday. These may have identifiable social structures, norms and values, such as that amongst backpackers (Sorensen, 2003), and are typically less restrained and more hedonic (Carr, 2002; Kim and McKerchner, 2011). Tourists are frequently informed by common bonds of exploration, escapism and hedonism expressed through certain typical pursuits and behaviours (Fodness, 1994; Urry, 2002).

It is the interplay between these two cultures which could be seen as the creation, negotiation and evolution of a new tourism culture informed by both. An example of such a complex dialogue is Maltese handicrafts, with some products and styles originally intended for external audiences being appropriated into local culture (Markwick, 2001). Tourism has in many places become an integral part of culture, and interaction with tourists is frequently a central component in the definition of ethnic identity and authenticity (Picard, 1997; 2008). Tourism potentially becomes over time a part of everyday life (Sindiga, 1996), an authentic demonstration (Cohen, 1988) and integral part of local landscapes and identity (Lim and
Cooper, 2009). Host cultures may evolve alongside and adapt to the presence of guest cultures, co-opting many aspects of cultural meaning and expression into local tradition, practise and identity (Cohen, 1988), as per the Bai Chinese indigenous community where: “Tourism has become central to the Bai in the ancient town of Dali. It is now part of their culture and part of their ethnic identity” (Zhihong, 2007: 256). Even those cultures that may react to or reject tourist hosting (i.e. Sanchez and Adams, 2008), through the processes of cultural reflexivity, resistance or ritual stimulated (see Boissevain, 1996), inevitably find themselves still shaped by the host-guest nexus.

It is evident cultures, host communities and ecosystems are not static, but rather affected by, susceptible to and capable of change over time (Brown, 1998; Pennington-Gray et al., 2005). The encounters and interactions between hosts and guests are one influential source of this.

2.2 Tourism Culture Characteristics

Impacts and outputs of tourism therefore form something of an on-going dialogue between hosts and guests. This dialogue may produce a number of interrelated economic, environmental, social and cultural outputs. Although diverse and setting-specific these may be broadly classed in terms of the exchanges between host and guest cultures (Pennington-Gray et al., 2005), the changes in values, attitudes, behaviours, consumption patterns and ways of life this may engender (Yasothornsrikul and Bowen, 2015), and the creativity to arise from (Richards, 2011).

Social, cultural and economic exchange is a characteristic of the service intensive tourism industry which essentially engenders large scale interactions of people (Dieke, 2003). Although the superficiality and positivity of these interactions varies widely (Moyle et al., 2010), more meaningful and constructive exchanges are possible. Reciprocal bilingualism
(Evans, 1975, cited in Smith, 1976) for example, defines the potential for tourism stimulated
interactions to enrich the knowledge of hosts and guests about each other. Outputs such as
higher levels of economic entrepreneurship may be stimulated as a result (see Boissevain,
1979; Brown, 1998; Brown and Hall, 2000).

Subsequent changes in attitudes, behaviours, values and ways of doing things may
occur as a result of hosting tourism. The demonstration effect, used within tourism studies to
identify cultural impacts of tourism, usually upon hosts, applies the principle that observing
tourists leads indigenous residents to change their own attitudes, values, behaviour and
consumption patterns as they emulate (Yasothornsrikul and Bowen, 2015). Similarly, hosting
tourism can provoke reflexivity in terms of questioning of and concern for defining local
identity (Pedregal and Boissevain, 1996; Wood, 1997; Picard, 2008). For example, Michaud
(1997) describes in a Thai Hmong community how cultural tourism has had a salutary impact
in the form of a catalyst for questioning implicit cultural limitations, and also what aspects of
that culture need to be preserved in light of wider social changes.

Although tourism induced change has been frequently framed negatively in terms of
the erosion of indigenous cultures (i.e. Royle, 2003), examples from the sustainable tourism
literature credit an expansion of conservation ethos and resource re-evaluation amongst many
indigenous communities, to the financial and social inputs brought by tourism interest and
example (i.e. Rodriguez et al., 2008; Reimer and Walter, 2013). The same could be said of
tourists who may reappraise own and community attitudes, values and perceptions as a result
of travel experiences (i.e. Yu and Lee, 2014).

Lastly, the potential of tourism to revitalise, reinterpret, recreate and create meaning is
raised. Alongside a demonstration effect, what could be described as an ‘attention effect’ may
be stimulated, whereby indigenous communities are motivated by outsider interest to explore,
revive and reinterpret traditional aspects of local identity (i.e. Stronza and Gordillo, 2008).
Similarly, commercial creativity might be driven by the impetus in both economic and cultural spheres for the rediscovery, reinvention, importing and creation of cultural products for tourists’ entertainment and consumption (Boissevain, 1996). Over time these may become integral parts of, fusions with, and expressions of culture for residents also. ‘Coping creativity’, whereby the wider changes brought by the industry influence creative adaptation and coping strategies in response, such as resisting, avoiding or hiding (see Boissevain, 1996), can likewise see new cultural practises and identities emerge as a result (i.e. Rodriguez et al., 2008; Smith, 2009). Cohen’s (1988) discussions of emergent authenticity, new meanings and play illustrate how communities may react to tourism.

Tourists themselves input into this process through their presence and expectations influencing and stimulating hosts, but also through their desire for cultural exploration, participation and co-creation of products and experiences (Cruz, 2014; Richards, 2014). Tourists can contribute creatively to cultures; spontaneously establishing attractions for instance (Lovelock, 2004). The increasingly active participation of tourists in local way of life and creative collaboration in developing tourism practises by both consumers and producers is noted (Richards, 2011). Likewise the co-creation of hosts and guests in terms of developing tourism products and experiences, adding atmosphere, valorising cultural assets and revitalising existing products (Richards, 2014). Such co-creativity can reinvigorate local culture for both residents and tourists (i.e. Crespi Vallbona and Richards; 2007). It is thus linked to added value for both the visitor and visited at the same time as contributing to the uniqueness and authenticity of a destination (Binkhorst and Den Dekker, 2009). Tourism can henceforth be generative in that it leads to the creation and recreation of new meanings for cultural objects and practises (Mathieson and Wall, 1992; Simpson, 1993).
2.3 Tourism Culture Context

These host-guest interactions take place in and informed by the economic, social and environmental landscapes of a locale; landscapes shaped by dynamics of the tourism industry itself. To illustrate, tourist destinations tend to have a specific economic, social and environmental make up. This is shaped by input from new migrants attracted by tourism, who will inevitably influence the local economic and social landscape (Damer, 2000). Demand for certain infrastructure, facilities, services, attractions and forms of cultural presentation also influence (i.e. social consequences of tourist footpath use amongst local residents; Mundet and Coenders, 2010). In addition, cycles of seasonality linked with tourism may alter local socio-cultural landscapes. For example, adjusted familial routines and altered traditional calendars may characterise as individuals try to exploit the peak season (Andriotis, 2005). The presence of tourists moreover, causes a society to adjust routines in order to accommodate them, take on elements of presentation of itself for visitor consumption, and to analyse itself through appreciation of what incomers report back (Simpson, 1993; Tapper, 2001; Pennington-Gray et al., 2005). Hence social roles, events and routines all evolve with tourism development over time, as do local facilities, infrastructure, natural and cultural landscapes and even sense of local identity (Cooper, 1995; Hampton and Christensen, 2007; Canavan, 2013a).

In turn tourism culture contributes to the on-going evolution of the surrounding tourism context. As a consequence of the exchange, change and creativity stimulated by the host-guest nexus, many tourist destinations have a unique cultural flavour of their own. Tourist destinations have been described as more entrepreneurial and more liberal (Chaperon and Bramwell, 2013). The nature of tourist hosting, involving social interactions and cultural exchanges, means destinations may be particularly multicultural, culturally experienced and sophisticated, and by association open-minded and tolerant (Brown, 1998; Hampton, 1998;
Tapper, 2001; Shunnaq et al., 2008). To illustrate, due to the nature of industry employment, its support for small scale entrepreneurship and demand for diverse cultural inputs, vulnerable, minority and disenfranchised groups may be able to use tourism to promote their identity and culture, thus gaining wider recognition, public acceptance and political support (Wilson, 1997; Hughes, 2002; Smith, 2009).

2.4 Tourism Culture Sustainability

Commentators have suggested that tourism culture may contribute to more sustainable contexts (i.e. Sindiga, 1996), as its emergence may be disrupted by those which are less so (Butcher, 2003). Henceforth tourism culture could be regarded as a precedent and antecedent of more sustainable tourism development.

In its simplest form sustainability refers to the long-term conservation and enhancement of cultural and natural resources (Fennell, 2008). Culturally speaking, finding new outlets for sharing (Stronza and Gordillo, 2008), motivation to reappraise (Tapper, 2001) and sources of inputs for creativity (Richards, 2014), suggest such a process of continuation and evolution in action. The stagnation of cultures meanwhile, linked to socioeconomic limitations and subsequent processes of out-migration and eventual abandonment, might be avoided (Marjavaara, 2007; Royle, 2008; Berry, 2009). Thus tourism has been linked to indigenous cultural continuation, revival, and diversification, both within and without communities (Ireland, 2003; Saarinen, 2006).

Moreover, the establishment of tourism culture, mutual dialogue that it is, suggests a high degree of integration of hosts and guests. As has been widely appreciated in the literature, higher levels of stakeholder involvement and integration are associated with community resilience and adaptability which may help to control, exploit and shape tourism developments for the better (Campling and Rosalie, 2006; Chaperon and Bramwell, 2013).
Hence Rothman (1978) proposes that communities with long experience of tourism are able to develop mechanisms to accommodate inconveniences. Similarly Smith (1989: 16) outlines: “If a group can survive the transition from incipient to full blown mass tourism, then it may ultimately achieve what is termed ‘tourist culture’, or a process of full accommodation so that tourists are part of the ‘regional scenery’”.

Ideally this evolution would be a balanced situation, with both host and guest cultures able to inform, exchange, and negotiate in a way acceptable and enhancing to both. As is widely appreciated however, alongside diverse benefits many negative impacts can be caused or worsened by tourism development. Rather than processes of exchange, change and creativity, industry dynamics may contribute to those of cultural displacement, homogenisation and consumption, as may be threatened by the intrusive nature and commercial orientation of the industry (Tsartas, 1992; Simpson, 1993; Andriotis, 2005; Pennington-Gray et al., 2005). Royle (2003: 27) for instance argues tourist positioning of Irish islands has driven: “a process that has rendered the island into little more than a living, interactive museum of itself with islanders as actors”. Rather than a mutually enriched culture, such situations symbolise the destruction of cultural diversity, with ultimately unsustainable consequences for hosts and guests (Mihalic, 2000).

3.0 Methodology

This article is based upon extensive fieldwork in three small island case studies. Cases were repeat visited between June 2010 and September 2012. In the Isle of Man fieldwork was considerably enriched by periods of semi-residence on the island during, before and after this period. Amongst the restrictions of this study is the significant variation in time spent on individual islands. However, whilst it is accepted that this approach will have limitations in
terms of its representativeness, for exploratory inquiry in an under-researched topic pragmatic
advantages were felt to outweigh (as per Casey, 2009).

Fieldwork involved field trips to tourist attractions, attending events, participant
observation of and with island tourists, reviews of government statistical data, local news,
media and literature. These were used to immerse within local culture and to build a broad
understanding of local tourism and the surrounding context. This process fostered an
immersion in the case studies important to both data collection, building rapport with
interviewees (McGivern, 2006), and data analysis, helping to understand, interpret and
contextualise results (Connell, 2005).

Subsequently, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with tourism
stakeholders (an approach chosen to capture findings both within local context and
participants own words: Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The aim here was to recruit a
wide sample of tourism stakeholders in order to obtain a range of perspectives on and
descriptions of impacts of island tourism. Also in order to represent communities within the
islands, likely as they are to be fragmented into various cultural groups and sub-groups
(Pedregal and Boissevain, 1996) (see summary in Appendix A). For example, sought was a
mixture of permanent, temporary or part-time residents, those born on or immigrants to
islands; groups recognised as of particularly frequent and significant cultural contrast in
island societies (Damer, 2000; Royle, 2003; Marjavaara, 2007).

Purposive sampling was used therefore to access a range of tourism planners,
managers, employees, local politicians and special interest groups members (as with Adu-
Ampong, 2014). Organisations such as government departments, conservation charities,
hotels and attractions, were contacted via phone, email or in person, in order to request
interviews with representatives. Also targeted were island residents who experience more
general contact with tourists through geographic proximity (as with Aas et al, 2005).
Snowball and network sampling occurred to an extent due to the nature of building contacts within small island tourism networks. Drawbacks of this approach are noted (Creswell, 2003), albeit Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) do suggest theoretical sampling is opportunistic.

A total of 46 interviews lasting for an average of 30 minutes were conducted (25 Isle of Man, 11 Lewis & Harris, 10 Belle Ile). These interviews were live recorded and then transcribed within 72 hours by the researcher. Emergent patterns were categorised and analysed using NVIVO software and traditional colour coding/copy and paste techniques.

Tourism culture arose during the analysis phase as an interesting concept for categorising and interpreting data. Being an emergent concept supported researcher neutrality and openness by allowing results to arise organically from the cases (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Patterns which arose during analysis were related back to concepts of exchange, change and creativity discussed in the literature. Due to the exploratory nature of the project, limited past precedent and study origins, research was an inductive process based upon pragmatic use of principles of social constructivism to explain how data is created (see Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

A constructivist approach to grounded theory was used to interpret data and build conclusions (see Mills et al, 2006; Thornberg, 2012). The technique, allowing for a back and forth approach to data construction, and emergence of concepts through data analysis, rather than a testing of preconceived hypothesis (as per Glaser, 1992; Thornberg, 2012), was felt to be valuable in this research context.

### 3.1 The Case Studies

Cases were selected for pragmatic considerations, such as accessibility and language barriers (the author(s) being able to speak English and French). Also for theoretical considerations, including sizeable permanent populations from which it may be assumed an indigenous
culture may emerge. Islands with large transient populations or proximate to larger population centres were not considered in light of the loss of indigenous island culture these have been associated with (Marjavaara, 2007; Royle, 2008). All of the islands also host significant tourism industries. This was important in order to explore the interactions with and impacts of guest culture on host culture. At the same time, different stages of tourism development were sought in order to investigate how industry dynamics could affect tourism culture. Cases are briefly outlined below with further details provided in Appendix A.

Lewis & Harris is the largest and most northerly island in the Outer Hebrides archipelago located off the coast of northwest Scotland, British Isles. The island, historically though not geographically divided between Lewis to the north and Harris to the south, is characterised by dramatic and largely inaccessible landscapes. Mountains dominate the south, becoming expanses of peat moorland further north. There are numerous sea lochs, lakes, and tarns throughout the island. Expansive sandy beaches dot the often challenging to access coastline. It is not hyperbole to describe the islands as feeling at times like a moonscape. Rare flora and fauna present include golden and sea eagles. The resident population is concentrated in the port of Stornoway, the economic, commercial and administrative hub. Located throughout the island are small townships usually following a distinctive pattern of ribbon development alongside the islands’ few roads. Economically the Outer Hebrides lag behind other Scottish islands and regions. The public sector in 2001 accounted for nearly 32% of jobs and GDP per head is 66% of the UK average (http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk). Evidence of economic migration is present in the many empty properties throughout the island. Tourism is a focus for development. Sites are well signposted and presented, with a range of modernised facilities and tourist enterprises, albeit the isolation and limited infrastructure of the island curtail.
Belle Ile is the largest and most populous of the French Atlantic islands, situated off the southern coast of the Breton peninsula. The economy is dominated by tourism with some 23,000 guest bed spaces and around 450,000 visitors per annum. Upwards of two thirds of employment is tourism related and around four fifths of local property used as second homes (insee.fr). The industry, primarily serving domestic French tourists, is very seasonal. Large crowds, busy atmosphere, and variety of tourist enterprises, infrastructure, and services, characterise the island during summer. Arriving ferries queue up to debark and collect passengers. The roads are busy with competing car hire niches. The atmosphere is almost one of a floating theme park. Tourism infrastructure centres on the largest town and port, La Palais. This is the location of the Vauban Citadel, the island’s main attraction besides its mild climate and attractive coastal scenery. Belle Ile has a long history of hosting tourists, with artists such as Claude Monet helping to popularise the island during the late 1800’s. A somewhat exclusive image has been retained. Yachts and villas for the Parisian bourgeoisie are prominent. At the same time, camping, holiday villages and many ‘ordinary’ day trippers, are prevalent.

The Isle of Man is a self-governing crown dependency, with the locally elected Tynwald parliament (reputed to be the world’s oldest in continuous operation), having power to pass legislation which affects the island. A unique culture shaped by Celtic, Norse and English influences reflects the island’s geographic position located in the centre of the Irish Sea. The island is likewise characterised by a diversity of natural habitats, from high moorland to wooded glens, coastal heath, cliffs and dunes. From the 1890’s to the 1960’s the Isle of Man was a significant British tourism destination thanks to its distinctive cultural identity, rich natural landscape diversity, range of historic sites, and sense of otherness supported by a marine access barrier (Rawcliffe, 2009). Vestiges of this past remain in the impressive promenades of the capital, Douglas, still functioning steam and electric tram
railways, and the once tended pleasure gardens now largely run wild. Since then however, visitor numbers have fallen to around one third of past levels, with tourism today creating around 5% of GDP and 14% of jobs (Isle of Man Digest 2010). As elsewhere in Northern Europe, cheaper and more exotic foreign competition has superseded (Walton, 2000).

Nevertheless, the annual TT motorbike festival remains a large scale tourist event attracting upwards of 40,000 visitors.

**Figure 2: Case Studies Geographic Location**

![Image of geographic location of case studies]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>Lewis &amp; Harris</th>
<th>Belle Ile</th>
<th>Isle of Man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population*</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic size (km²)</td>
<td>2187</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Numbers*</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>287,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment at least somewhat dependent on tourism (%)</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TALC Stage</td>
<td>Expansion</td>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>Late Decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Industry*</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Peron, 2004; insee.fr; Isle of Man Digest, 2010; cne-siar.gov.uk
4.0 Research Findings and Discussion

This section reviews the findings of research. Briefly speaking research identified existence of tourism culture in each case. This was judged to exist in the unique festivals, tourism facing entrepreneurial activity, reinterpretation of traditional arts and crafts at least part stimulated, revived, reinterpreted or created through the interactions of host and guest cultures (i.e. Markwick, 2001), as well as the integration of touristic values and symbols into local identity (i.e. Zhihong, 2007). Observations and interviewee descriptions were of exchange, change and creativity which arise from the interactions between hosts and guests. These shape and could be seen to exemplify a tourism culture which is a fusion of both host and guest elements into something unique (see also Lovelock, 2004; Richards, 2014).

Distinct host and guest cultures were observed, highlighting how tourism is neither so markedly creative nor destructive as the literature may at times imply (Smith, 1989; Butcher, 2003). Fieldwork encountered tourists bringing their particular interests, leisure outlook and national backgrounds with them on holiday. Similarly experienced were the persistent, unique and varied indigenous cultures of the islands. These two cultures are also found to be in varying degrees of close contact, with prospects for mutually rewarding exchange, change and creativity to emerge from this interaction. These have implications for the continuation and revitalisation of traditional island cultures (Peron, 2004; Berry, 2009), as they do incorporation of new ideas, values and methods (Brown, 1998; Hall and Boyd, 2005), which together might enrich and diversify local landscapes and increase community viability and cultural continuation (Royle, 2008; Canavan, 2013b). The extent of these interactions and outputs differed between cases however, suggesting tourism culture may be influenced by tourism industry scale or development stage (as per Lim and Cooper, 2009). A number of implications for tourism sustainability are thus suggested by tourism culture evolution.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Lewis &amp; Harris</th>
<th>Belle Ile</th>
<th>Isle of Man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Host Culture</strong></td>
<td>Strong crafts heritage (i.e. Harris tweed), traditional land use patterns</td>
<td>Agriculture and fishing remain important. Breton vernacular architecture,</td>
<td>“Traa dy luosar” slower pace of life, Celtic and Norse heritage (i.e. unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i.e. peat burning), persistence of Scots Gaelic and religious observance.</td>
<td>specific religious and storytelling traditions (i.e. veneration of local</td>
<td>political tradition). Strong sense of unique local identity/nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guest Culture</strong></td>
<td>Niche visitors who inhabit created cultures (i.e. surfers, as per Sorensen, 2004).</td>
<td>Short term pleasure seeking day-trip culture (lots of eating, consumption,</td>
<td>National cultures can be seen amongst different tourist groups (i.e. English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>frivolity). Second home tourist culture may interact little with and</td>
<td>vs. German).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>antagonise locals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism Culture</strong></td>
<td>Tourism culture is relatively undeveloped due to the limited influence of</td>
<td>Tourism culture evidenced by a multicultural atmosphere with high levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>guest culture and the relative distance between that of guests and hosts.</td>
<td>of economic and cultural entrepreneurship. Hosts and guests in close</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>proximity, sharing spaces and forming many relationships. Tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>symbols and activities permeate economic, social and cultural landscapes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exchange</strong></td>
<td>Limited due to small visitor numbers. But descriptions of atmosphere brought</td>
<td>High levels of interaction and exchange between hosts and guests (i.e.</td>
<td>Atmosphere and social opportunities brought by tourists anticipated and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by tourists, positive exchanges, friendships established, etc.</td>
<td>shared atmosphere, socialising between, relationships formed). Frustration</td>
<td>enjoyed. Relationships, business, sexual and romantic partnerships made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>however that some tourist groups interact little with local people,</td>
<td>between hosts and guests. Immigrants choose to live on the island following</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>economy or culture.</td>
<td>positive holiday experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change</strong></td>
<td>Concerns expressed that tourism may change local traditions and ways of life,</td>
<td>Signs of host culture commercialisation as a result of intense tourism</td>
<td>Awareness and funding generated by tourism may lead to revivals in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>but for others these changes are sought and hoped for. Tourism may reduce</td>
<td>development. (i.e. festivals being pastiche). But also pride at the</td>
<td>traditional practices as well as reappraisals of natural and cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the influence of the church and liberalise society.</td>
<td>increased awareness of the island throughout France.</td>
<td>concepts of and civic pride in Manx identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creativity</strong></td>
<td>Evidence of arts and crafts revivals (i.e. Harris tweed retailers), and</td>
<td>Positive creativity demonstrated through the co-created festivals, arts</td>
<td>Co-created events, attractions and activities are enjoyed by both tourists</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>entrepreneurship (i.e. souvenir manufacturing) inspired by host-guest</td>
<td>and crafts observed, tourist input for the renovation of vernacular</td>
<td>and residents (i.e. domestic tourism, see Canavan, 2013a) and have</td>
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<td></td>
<td>interactions and stimulated by the outside interest tourism brings.</td>
<td>architecture, etc. Immigrants have moved to the island to start or run</td>
<td>become part of local island identity. The TT is for instance participated</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>businesses, inspired by previous holidays. Coping creativity shown</td>
<td>in, observed and managed by both. Motorbike symbols and lifestyle values</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>through resident’ adaptation and avoidance strategies.</td>
<td>are co-opted into, complement and extend local identity (i.e. Manx cats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism Context</strong></td>
<td>Relatively undeveloped tourism sector characterised by niche</td>
<td>Highly developed tourism sector, albeit strongly seasonal. Appeal</td>
<td>riding bikes, 3 legs combined with TT logos, sense of independent spirit</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>visitors. Investment in tourism signposting but some facilities</td>
<td>mainly to domestic French tourists. Generally upmarket image/clientele.</td>
<td>of the island and open road combined.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(i.e. accommodation) remain limited.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability Implications</strong></td>
<td>Narrow and traditional host culture can be restrictive for some community</td>
<td>Overly large scale tourism risks denuding indigenous cultural resources.</td>
<td>A shrinking tourism sector may threaten to undermine the positive outputs</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>members, who may wish to leave the community as a result, potentially</td>
<td>Rather than a mutual exchange and negotiation, leading to the</td>
<td>of tourism culture, potentially reducing landscape quality and attractiveness.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>undermining continuation (i.e. Marjavaara, 2007). Exchange, change and</td>
<td>evolution of a tourism culture, guest culture prevails at the expense of</td>
<td>Uniquely evolved local tourism cultural resources could be lost. A sense</td>
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<td></td>
<td>creativity brought by increased tourist presence may help to create a</td>
<td>that of hosts. Tensions between hosts and guests and damage to unique</td>
<td>of cultural interconnectedness may be replaced by one of rejection</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>a more liberal, flexible and viable community. Sensitive tourism development</td>
<td>local landscapes may occur, undermining tourism longevity (i.e. Mihalic, 2000).</td>
<td>(Canavan, 2013a). Tourism decline needs to be carefully managed so that a</td>
</tr>
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<td>respecting local traditions could be encouraged. (i.e. Royle, 2008).</td>
<td>Thus careful management of tourism including a focus on conservation and</td>
<td>more gradual transition might be enabled (see Canavan, 2014).</td>
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<td>involvement of local stakeholders is essential to pre-empt and find</td>
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<td>solutions (i.e. Fennell, 2008).</td>
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**4.1 Host Culture**

Fieldwork demonstrated the three islands had strong and distinct local identities. Island residents considered likewise. “I’m not Scottish no, I’m Hebridean” (B. Resident, Lewis & Harris). “I’m Manx as the hills” (S. Resident, Isle of Man). Experiences were of unique arts and crafts, festivals and events present in each case, and also of distinct work-life routines and social structures. A strong connection of residents to natural landscapes remains noticeable in Lewis & Harris for instance. Gaelic, Norse and Saxon influences on the three islands were persistent, emphasising the resilience of host cultures despite considerable influence of large proximate neighbours. As such, research compares with previous assessments of host cultures continuing alongside and often relatively unaffected by presence of tourism (i.e. Cohen, 1988; Smith, 1989), as it does research highlighting the cultural resilience of small islands (Scheyvens and Momsen, 2008).

Observation and interviewee description was of local ways of doing things, vernacular, superstitions, and points of proud difference with elsewhere. For instance, a refusal amongst Isle of Man inhabitants to say the word ‘rat’ lest it brings bad luck, stemming from old sailing tradition. Persistence of religious observation on Lewis & Harris that would seem rather old-fashioned elsewhere in the UK. Or particular foods unique to Belle Ile. “We have our own way of life here... it’s more like what the UK was fifty years ago” (T. Manager, Lewis & Harris). “It’s not like anywhere else” (A. Employee, Belle Ile). Such distinctions may be subtle, but they recognisably stemmed from unique local history, geography and peculiarities of life in isolated small islands.

Also talked about was the variety of cultural events and entertainment opportunities available. “There is always something to do. Choir, Ramsey Town Band, always a concert, the Guild, art... I could go out every night” (J. Conservationist, Isle of Man). These reflected a vibrant local cultural calendar informed by indigenous heritage alongside the influence of
outsiders. “I think most ‘Manx’ culture is actually thanks to outsiders and the enthusiasm and input they bring... We are lucky to have them to draw upon” (V. Manager, Isle of Man).

This cultural and natural landscape richness was appreciated as making the islands attractive places to inhabit. Nevertheless, limitations and restrictions of local culture were voiced in each case. The islands were viewed by some or at times as isolated, cliquey, homogenous, restrictive or boring places to live, particularly the case amongst younger residents concerned about a lack of economic opportunity or social variety. Such has been noted amongst peripheral communities (Marjavaara, 2007). “There is nothing for young people to keep them here” (H. Employee, Lewis & Harris). “Out of date views and too much religion” (Z. Employee, Lewis & Harris). “There is nothing to do” (A. Employee, Belle Ile).

Fear of gossip leading to self-censorship, such as of sexuality, was also described. “You can’t do anything. Everyone know(s) your business” (S. Resident, Isle of Man). “It isn’t very easy to be (gay) here I just don’t want to be talked about... if my boyfriend comes I am careful not to do anything with him in public” (X. Academic, Isle of Man).

4.2 Guest Culture

Guest culture could be identified in those facilities, attractions and landscapes especially popular with visitors. These become obviously geared towards their service. Here the usual trappings of a visitor economy are evident and shape the atmosphere of surroundings. Other areas such as industrial zones or residential suburbs are little touched by tourism. Hence even on intensely touristic Belle Ile, a few hundred metres is all that it takes to be away from the crowded tourist streets with their busy atmosphere and commercial emphasis.

Observation found guest culture may be orientated towards specific interests such as backpacking which typically have their own cultural identifiers; in terms of dress and social codes for instance (Wilson, 1997). More generally it may orientate towards leisure and
hedonism (Fodness, 1994). Often these interests are not shared with island residents. Hence cultural differences can be a source of novelty and amusement for residents. “They make me laugh” (T. Manager, Lewis & Harris). They may also create minor frustrations at cultural and lifestyle frictions, such as with tourists slow pace getting in the way. “Bloody tourists blocking up the mountain road. Stick to the coast road if you are sightseeing!” (S. Resident, Isle of Man).

Guests additionally bring their national cultures with them. Although tourism in the three cases is primarily domestic, hence cultural differences between hosts and guests relatively reduced, inhabitants in each case can and do distinguish. As islanders’ identity is viewed as distinct from proximate neighbours, all tourists are ‘foreign’ (as per Boissevain, 1979). Noted in each case was additional enthusiasm for tourists from further afield seen by participants as bringing a heightened sense of cultural variety and excitement. Again there could be friction in such cultural difference (see Kim and McKercher, 2011). Several Belle Ile respondents expressed annoyance with French visitors characterised as rude, selfish or disrespectful towards local ways of life. “Some of them (tourists) are very rude... they think you are here to do everything for them” (D. Tourism Employee, Belle Ile). This was relatively minor however, perhaps reflecting the general cultural proximity of hosts and guests in the islands studied (although this is no guarantor of harmony (Wilson, 1997)). It may also result from the mostly successful establishment of tourism culture in the cases, and the cultural accommodation, adaptability, inclusivity and lubrication this facilitates (Sindiga, 1996; Butcher, 2003).

4.3 Tourism Culture

Research suggested evidence of a tourism culture in the three islands studied. This emerged from the interactions between host and guest cultures. Noted were cultural, social and
economic exchanges such as the formation of relationships between hosts and guests. Also identified were subsequent changes in attitudes, behaviours and lifestyles as a result of interacting with tourists. Lastly, creativity in terms of cultural outputs, such as that of music and dance societies was again linked to the fusion of host and guest inputs.

4.3.1 Exchange

Varying degrees of resident involvement with tourism were noted in the three cases. This ranged from relatively passive sharing of space and atmosphere, to potentially deep, personal and perhaps permanent connections formed (as per Moyle, Gray and Weiler, 2009). Such involvement appeared to suggest an element of social and cultural sharing between island residents and tourists. To illustrate, social exchanges were talked about in detail. Much discussed was appreciation of the atmosphere brought by tourists, associated with excitement, entertainment diversity and social opportunities. “I like the visitors. They give the place a bit of spark. I’m always so sorry when they leave.” (C. Manager, Isle of Man). “They (visiting motor-bikers) are such nice people... really quiet, gentle. I’m always sorry the day after they’ve gone” (J. Conservationist, Isle of Man). Participants additionally spoke of forming friendships, business partnerships and even marriages with tourists. Hence emphasised was the potential for occurrence of deep and mutually rewarding exchanges between residents and visitors. “My wife did it for the social side really... she was one for getting to know people... found them fascinating. They really were interesting people from all over the world” (V. Manager, Isle of Man).

In addition, the building of like-minded social networks with resulting exchanges of contacts and ideas was shown to lead to stakeholders involved with arts and crafts incorporating new ideas and finding new outlets for their expression (see Simpson, 1993;
499 Tapper, 2001). “Yeah we’ve made a lot of contacts through (tourism) and that gives you a
500 platform for a lot of exchanges and so on” (G. Arts and Crafts, Isle of Man).
501
502 **4.3.2 Change**
503 In turn, research suggested that the exchanges between hosts and guests led to changes in
504 attitudes, values and ways of doing things. For example, social exchanges resulting from
505 tourism were linked to sexual relationships by young residents in each case. “There were two
506 of them (tourists) in the pub... Took him home with me (laughs). The next night went back and
507 got his friend!” (R. Resident, Isle of Man). This was something made possible as a result of
508 the added social opportunities and anonymity the presence of unknown people brought, but
509 additionally the sense of social permissiveness they introduced (see Canavan, 2013b). Such a
510 finding is potentially evidence of guest culture rubbing off on that of hosts and introducing a
511 more liberal atmosphere (i.e. Wilson, 1997; Shunnaq *et al.*, 2008). And just as guest culture is
512 associated with hedonism, perhaps this can be translated to hosts also. This might be
513 particularly welcomed in traditional societies which can feel restrictive (Brown and Hall,
514 2000). Interestingly, in Lewis & Harris where tourism is least developed, description of the
515 need for such cultural liberalisation was most marked. “There is too much religion and
516 narrow minded opinion” (G. Resident, Lewis & Harris).
517 Change as a result of host guest interactions was also noted in the case of domestic
518 tourism. In all islands inhabitants discussed using tourist orientated facilities for their own
519 entertainment. Widespread description was of touristic trips and activity such as visiting
520 attractions, camping, romantic breaks and family distractions. Inspiration for domestic
521 tourism came in part from the presence of visitors. Guest culture in the three islands being
522 orientated towards enjoyment, exploration and learning about local landscapes was for many
523 residents a source of re-appreciation of island landscapes and motivation to explore likewise
“I think that if you live and work here then maybe you, you stop looking at your surroundings if you know what I mean. You start to see it the same way and you don’t get out there and enjoy it” (N. Employee, Isle of Man).

Recognised was a stimulated sense of civic pride amongst inhabitants reminded of the value of their locale (as per Pennington-Gray et al., 2005; Stonza and Gordillo, 2008), “It really reminds you that where you live is somewhere beautiful, worth visiting” (KA. Resident, Isle of Man). Moreover, a spreading of conservation ethos as a result of tourism generated funding, awareness and resource reappraisal (i.e. Rodriguez et al., 2008; Reimer and Walter, 2013). Special interest group members in each case spoke about the awareness generated by tourists of local environments and their conservation value. “Yeah and also awareness, that’s also the key. If people don’t know there is anything there to look after then why the hell would they look after it?” (K. Conservationist, Isle of Man). These were further evidence of the changes that host-guest interactions might engender.

4.3.3 Creativity

Research indicated host guest interactions stimulated commercial creativity. Observed was entrepreneurial activity associated with the sector, such as supplementary seasonal employment, informal retail or letting out spare bedrooms. Much of this entrepreneurship was rooted in traditional cultures such as new festivals based upon local landscape qualities, or production of souvenirs drawing from traditional arts, crafts and culinary heritage. The artisan bakeries and art galleries of Belle Ile exemplify. Such entrepreneurship was motivated by tourism demand, and inspired by interactions with (as per Mathieson and Wall, 1992, Simpson, 1993, Markwick, 2001). Interviewees discussed the income generated for traditional products and industries as encouraging new entrepreneurs and artisans. “There wouldn’t be any of that if it wasn’t for (the tourists)... it keeps things alive” (T. Manager,
Also talked about were business partnerships formed with and ideas stimulated as a result of interacting with or observing tourists. “Everyone was coming in and asking ‘where can I get an ice-cream’ and there wasn’t. So I thought why not I do it like? That’s where the idea came from in the first place” (E. Manager, Lewis & Harris). “It gives you something to think about; that yeah we should be building on this” (X. Academic, Isle of Man).

This co-creation also extended into the cultural sphere and appeared to have influenced local identity. This could be particularly seen in the way both host and guest influences and inputs were involved in co-creation of various festivals, traditions and events. For instance, the TT Festival on the Isle of Man originates from outside enthusiasts who founded (the name refers to the Tourist Trophy after all). This event is still popular with tourists who shape the atmosphere and dynamics of the event and indeed the wider island for the fortnight they are present in large numbers. Over time however, the TT and motorbikes have become internalised by Manx residents as an important component and signifier of local culture. “The best thing about (the Isle of Man) is the TT... It is what we are all about” (L. Resident, Isle of Man). Many residents observe, manage and even participate in the races. They often wear branded T-shirts and other merchandise (themselves designed by both islanders and outsiders). This TT branding in turn frequently incorporates the Manx three legs; a national identifier since early medieval period with older Celtic roots, tailless cats, loaghtan sheep, and other local symbols. Thus the TT is an example of the co-creative output of and on-going dialogue between cultures in a tourism destination (Marwick, 2001; Richards, 2013; Lovelock, 2014), as it is of the potential for such creation to become an authentic and integral part of local identity over time (Cohen, 1988; Lim and Cooper, 2009).

In Belle Ile research additionally identified coping creativity, whereby host culture adapts when confronted by wider change (Boissevain, 1992; 1996). Here coping strategies
were ways islanders avoided some of the adverse impacts of tourism. “It is difficult sometimes. If you just want to go shopping there are so many people... you adjust your routine... go out earlier and later when they (tourists) have gone” (B. Resident, Belle Ile).

Moreover, leisure activities of residents often took place in spaces less well known to or used by holidaymakers. “The (tourists) don’t come up here, they don’t know about. That is where we go if we want peace” (C. Employee, Isle of Man). As such local lifestyles, routines and work-leisure patterns evolve alongside, and sometimes in reaction to, impacts of the industry (Boissevain, 1996; Butcher, 2003).

4.4 Tourism Culture and Tourism Context

A number of differences in tourism culture were noted between cases. Such findings were largely as expected in light of the notions of time and balance being important to tourist culture evolution (Smith, 1989; Cooper, 1995; Sindiga, 1996).

On the Isle of Man tourism culture was perhaps most identifiable. Here participants gave detailed descriptions of domestic tourism activity, host-guest relationships and cultural exchanges. Here also the legacy of tourism was particularly apparent throughout the islands urban and rural landscapes. Yet here concern for continuing tourism decline was widespread. This was felt to undermine the benefits brought by tourism. Mentioned in particular were facilities closures reducing social and entertainment opportunities, and damage to urban and rural landscapes due to changing patterns of development. “It isn’t like it was. There were so many facilities, so much atmosphere, and always things going on. If you could have seen it. It was wonderful” (B. Resident, Isle of Man). A sense of increased isolation from and disregard by the wider world was also discussed. “Nobody ever even knows anything about the island, where we are, anything” (L. Resident, Isle of Man). The potential for tourism decline to
undermine uniquely evolved tourism culture was henceforth highlighted (see also Cooper, 1995; Lim and Cooper, 2009; Canavan, 2014)

On Belle Ile where tourism dominates the local economy, guest culture appeared to be somewhat overwhelming host culture, suggesting that overly large scale tourism can have a damaging effect. Several interviewees dismissed cultural events, festivals, arts and crafts available on the island as pastiche, imports, and purely for the entertainment of visitors. "(Gesturing) Little paintings for those who cannot paint” (C. Employee, Belle Ile). Such conclusions have affinity with descriptions of the cultural commodification that tourism may bring (i.e. Royle, 2003). Mentioned was the loss of local distinctiveness due to the acculturating influences of large numbers of tourists, second home owners and economic migrants (i.e. Peron, 2004). The latter groups where criticised for interacting little with, having limited desire to become involved, integrate or understand local culture and ways of life. Discussion was additionally of feeling overwhelmed at times by the volume of tourists with crowding that could make day to day life difficult. “It is so busy... in the summer you cannot see the beach for bodies” (B. Resident, Belle Ile). Invasions of privacy were also recounted (as per Markwick). There was evidence that host culture had retreated to an extent, in order to shelter from this.

On Lewis & Harris meanwhile, lesser experience of tourism may have limited the evolution of a tourist culture. Some residents discussed feelings of ambivalence towards development, rooted in concern for the cultural changes this might bring. Others expressed frustration at such perspective, viewed current lifestyles as unsustainable and hoped for tourism directed change. “I think some very local people think it is all going to change and that we’ll overnight be like Ibiza or whatever” (T. Manager, Lewis & Harris).
4.5 Tourism Culture and Sustainability

Tourism culture evolution may henceforth be an uncertain and fragile process. In line with the extant literature, findings illustrate industry context may positively or negatively affect its development and continuation. Regards the former, proximity of hosts and guests and high levels of resident involvement in tourism were shown to foster the exchanges, changes and creativity that exemplify. Conversely, speed or scale of development which exceeds the capacity of local resources and communities to adapt (Campling and Rosalie, 2006; Chaperon and Bramwell, 2013), might threaten to displace or denude local culture, as signs were of in Belle Ile. Overly large scale or rapid tourism decline might similarly challenge (Canavan, 2015), as Isle of Man interviewees proposed.

Building upon past literature and research findings, Figure 3 attempts to map potential development patterns of tourism culture and offers a flexible model for doing so according to local context that could be applied to diverse tourism models and spaces. As identified, tourism context may affect levels of tourism culture in the sense that they set the conditions for host-guest interactions. There may for example be situations, akin to Lewis & Harris, where an overly dominant host culture could be unreceptive to change, and thus remain unwelcoming to tourists and perhaps stifling to many residents (i.e. Damer, 2000).

Alternately, an overly dominant guest culture could overwhelm and subsume that which is indigenous to a locale, threatening cultural degradation, homogenisation and displacement (i.e. Tsartas, 1992). Signs were of this occurring somewhat in Belle Ile. Conversely, it could be seen that a decline in tourism, might see the loss of tourism culture, as has happened in the Isle of Man. This process might serve to disrupt, and potentially ultimately destroy, that which has uniquely evolved (i.e. Hampton and Christensen, 2007; Lim and Cooper, 2009; Canavan, 2014).
5.0 Conclusion

The overall contribution of this research is to identify and describe tourism culture and subsequently relate that phenomenon to sustainable tourism debate. Tourism culture is potentially a useful concept for describing host guest interactions, in that it is a nuanced and flexible one that recognises on the one hand the persistence of originating cultures, whilst on the other appreciating the evolution and change in these as a result of wider influences including tourism. This concept may better illustrate the persistence of the mundane largely untouched by tourists or tourism (Smith, 1989; Smith, 2009), the concurrent potential of tourism to engender destructive or creative impacts in a locale (i.e. altered religious and familial values Yasothornsrikul and Bowen, 2015). And the constant cultural transformation,
both separately and informed alongside each other, of both hosts and guests (Azeredo Grunewald, 2002).

Links with sustainability are likewise accommodated. A vibrant tourism culture suggests the presence of a shared culture based upon rather than exploiting the indigenous culture of a locale. Furthermore, it appears to be symbolic of tourism which is well integrated into a locale, where local inhabitants are involved and have a subsequent sense of ownership, outsider experiences can be benefitted from, and where traditional cultural resources are both protected and diversified as a result (i.e. Smith, 1989; Sindiga, 1996; Wilson, 1997). And one moreover where self-consciousness, reflexivity and creativity promoted on behalf of both hosts and guests may contribute to more stable and rewarding relationships between (Tan et al., 2013). As such tourism culture may be both antecedent and precedent of more sustainable tourism contexts and the host-guest relationships which take place within and contribute towards.

Tourism culture may therefore be a useful tool for bringing together diverse conceptual narratives within tourism studies and for promoting a more holistic, flexible and reflexive perspective. Acknowledged also is the difficulty of separating cultural impacts of tourism from other influences such as the media (Fisher, 2004). Henceforth it can be easy to inappropriately exaggerate the sociocultural impacts of tourism (Chen, 2014). Thus care is taken not to over-emphasise what are initial findings from an exploratory study. Yet broad inferences may still be carefully drawn. Further research, ideally in other geographical contexts and places with different tourism dynamics would be welcome to test this initial concept.

References


