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# CONCEPTUALISING ON-SCREEN TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

This paper integrates cultural theory and marketing strategy to examine the complex relationship between on-screen popular culture and tourism destination place-making. Its review of the literature results in the development of an inter-disciplinary conceptual framework (termed 'on-screen dollying') that provides a culturally-grounded and contextually-driven theorisation of the means by which on-screen popular culture place-making can foster destination development. In developing the conceptual framework, the paper classifies the characteristics of on-screen tourism affecting destination development and identifies six strategies for leveraging on-screen tourism. Based on our inter-disciplinary analysis, we propose a research agenda that integrates on-screen tourism and destination place-making and which has implications for policy and theory.

**Keywords:** On-screen tourism, film tourism, popular culture, marketing, place-making

## INTRODUCTION

With one in five overseas UK visitors claiming that films or television shows wholly or partially motivated their travel (Steele, 2008) and UK film tourism spending exceeding £1.8 billion (Oxford Economics, 2012), it is not surprising that destinations worldwide are increasingly seeking to leverage on-screen tourism. Moreover, there are now numerous examples of destination image transformations in the wake of on-screen associations - from New Zealand (*Lord of the Rings*) to Ireland (*Game of Thrones*). Such on-screen associations primarily result in two forms of tourism – business tourism during film or television show production and leisure tourism when enthusiasts travel to visit their favourite film or television show sets and locations. The latter is inextricably linked to the post-modern production and commodification of cultural signs marketed and consumed by a range of global audiences (Debord, 1967), which make popular culture a destination commodification apparatus. As a result, the multiple cultural meanings underpinning on-screen shows are being marketed to foster tourism-related benefits for those destinations connected with them (Kim and Long, 2012). This trend is based on the premise that being featured on-screen creates an exceptional tourism destination marketing opportunity; for example the marketing value of the *Lord of the Rings* films has been estimated to be worth NZ\$42 million for New Zealand (NFO New Zealand, 2003). Regardless of the precision of such evaluations, on-screen tourism is widely recognised to present lucrative opportunities and to drive tourism development (Connell, 2012). This in turn raises questions of how to incorporate on-screen (and wider popular culture) associations into the overall destination product and service mix and which strategies should advance on-screen and popular culture-related tourism development. To effectively answer these questions, practitioners and researchers need to understand the intersections between cultural production/consumption processes and the socio-economic and political conditions required for successful on-screen destination strategies. This in turn requires an inter-disciplinary approach to on-screen tourism research (incorporating cultural geography, psychology, marketing, and film and media and tourism studies) (Connell, 2012).

As a result, we need a comprehensive demarcation of the field; that is why the term ‘on-screen’ is adopted in this paper. It suggests an inclusive approach to the intertextuality of film, television and their media-driven co-construction of cultural signs, which can facilitate synergistic destination place-making. Film and television shows are cultural expressions regarded as popular or mass culture, which is a cultural form clearly associated with entertainment and recreation and consumed by the majority of consumers of culture (Lindgren, 2005; Strinati, 2004). It is often described as a counterpart to ‘fine culture’ (Heilbrun, 1997). The majority of research on popular culture stems from cultural studies, sociology, media studies, and anthropology (Lindgren, 2005; Traube, 1996) and when tourism researchers have approached the topic they have usually applied a

destination or a tourist perspective. Destination-oriented studies have employed concepts such as commoditisation (MacCannell, 1973) and staged performance and authenticity (Cohen, 1988; Xie et al., 2007), largely to explore the design and implementation of tourist experiences and the extent to which those experiences can be viewed as 'genuine'. Tourist-oriented research has also tended to focus on tourist experiences, for example examining the emotional ties between tourists and place stories/mythologies (Connell, 2004; Kim and Richardson, 2003), celebrity associations and destination perceptions (Lee et al., 2008; McCartney and Pinto, 2014) and travel motives and perceived value (Lundberg and Lexhagen, 2012). For example, Kim's (2012) study of South Korean audiences, shows that the more emotionally involved an audience is in a TV series, the more likely it is that they will visit a film destination. However, whichever perspective is taken, on-screen tourism is clearly more complex than traditional push-pull destination models suggest (Beeton, 2005).

The attachment of tourists to destinations associated with popular culture expressions can be attributed to the symbolic meanings that popular culture performances acquire through their function as cultural significations. In the case of films and television shows, they project signs and images laden with symbolic meanings, which although initially standardised by producers, are constantly (re)interpreted by residents and tourists, thereby rendering new meanings that foster emotional or ideological attachments. These dynamic (re)creations of meanings amongst residents of and tourists to those destinations projected by films or television shows, have been termed 'cultural intimations' (Tzanelli, 2008). The connections between the cultural intimations of different actors in the tourism industry and on-screen signs and images create polysemic webs of significance (Geertz, 1973) that afford unexplored possibilities for understanding the contribution of on-screen tourism to social (re)ordering. In other words, the symbolic meaning of on-screen signs presents opportunities for people to (re)interpret the world around them (Turner, 1974). This is a process that can be understood through the dramatological perspective (Ziakas and Costa, 2012), which reveals the meanings of those on-screen symbolic representations extracted and (re)interpreted by locals and tourists.

Although dramaturgy lies at the heart of films and television shows, which generate on-screen tourism, popular culture-induced tourism has not been systematically examined as a mode of symbolic action that exemplifies expressive and dramatic cultural dimensions that in turn shape social ordering (Schechner, 1985, 2003). Yet consideration of the cultural grounds of on-screen tourism can illuminate the interconnections between popular and expressive culture, explain the differences between popular culture tourism and other tourism forms, and identify destination place-making strategies to facilitate on-screen tourism development. This paper thus has three aims, namely to: advance on-screen tourism research by integrating cultural theory and tourism destination place-making strategy; suggest an inter-disciplinary conceptual framework, termed 'on-

screen dollyling', in order to provide culturally-grounded and contextually-driven on-screen popular culture place-making and destination development strategies; propose a research agenda that integrates on-screen tourism and destination place-making.

## **CULTURE AND ON-SCREEN TOURISM PLACE-MAKING**

Extant tourism research on popular culture has largely concentrated on films or television shows and has evolved from work focused on recognising and estimating tourist flows (Riley and Van Doren, 1992; Tooke and Baker, 1996; Riley et al., 1998) to studies of tourists' travel motives (Beeton, 2005; Riley and Van Doren, 1992; Roesch, 2009) and destination management/impacts (Mordue, 1999; 2001; Leotta, 2011), whilst some recent research adopts a post-modern approach to explore authenticity and hyper-realism (Beeton, 2010). Much of this research has focused on specific destinations such as the British Isles (e.g. Bolan, 2008; Brereton, 2006; Iwashita, 2006; Meaney and Robb, 2006; Mordue, 2001; Sargent, 1998; Tooke and Baker, 1996; Young and Young, 2008) or Australia (Beeton, 2004; Frost, 2006; Frost, 2010; Ward and O'Reagan, 2009) or on specific films or television series, such as *The Lord of the Rings* (Buchmann, 2010; Buchmann, Moore and Fisher, 2010; Jones and Smith, 2005; Piggot et al., 2004; Tzanelli, 2004). Very few studies have focused on destination strategies for on-screen tourism, with some exceptions, including *The Lord of the Rings* tourism within a New Zealand national image strategy (Croy, 2010) and *Dracula* tourism within the social development and national identity transformation of Romania (Light, 2007; Reijnders, 2011; Shandley et al., 2006; Tănăsescu, 2006). By comparing tourism development in the wake of the same popular culture tourism phenomenon (such as the *Twilight Saga* series) at different destinations around the world, it is evident that contextual destination factors, such as the economic situation, competing types of tourism, cultural differences, trade conditions, and cultural heritage have significant impact on on-screen place-making strategies (Larson et al., 2013; Lexhagen et al., 2013; Lundberg and Lexhagen, 2012; Lundberg et al., 2012). As the intersections between culture and on-screen tourism place-making are deeply layered and have various effects for destinations, it is essential to examine this emerging phenomenon from a cultural theory perspective.

This paper argues that on-screen tourism is a dynamic phenomenon that ties on-screen signs to places, thereby giving locals opportunities to (re)make their own interpretations of on-screen productions, to cultivate new meanings and to transform a place, thereby (re)positioning it and its relationships with the world. Therefore on-screen place-making is both an effective destination marketing device and a socio-cultural mechanism, which needs to be strategically planned and implemented. This argument is based on a dramatological perspective that views popular on-screen tourism as part of expressive culture, bearing polysemic structures such as symbols, narratives, and genres. These projected signs convey symbolic representations that constitute texts of a larger social

order and are constantly reinterpreted, expressing meta-commentaries in the public discourse about the nature and conditions of the social world (Goffman, 1959; Turner, 1974). For example, the compelling storyline of the globally popular television series *Breaking Bad* (2008-2013) about a high school teacher who becomes a drug producer to pay for his cancer treatment, coupled with the distinctive New Mexican landscape portrayed in the series, has attracted large numbers of fans to a darker image of Albuquerque as a drug production/consumption capital (Tzanelli and Yar, 2014). Another case is the village of Júzcar in Spain with a population of just 250, which was chosen by the production company Sony's advertising agency as the setting for the release of *The Smurfs* movie (2011). The selection was based on the village's close associations with mushrooms (it hosts an annual Mycological Conference) and its picturesque scenery. Its residents agreed to paint all its houses and church blue to brand it as the Smurf Village. This resulted in an influx of between 1000 and 3000 visitors a day and after the completion of the marketing campaign, the villagers declined Sony's offer to repaint the houses white in favour of keeping the blue Smurf colour (Euroscreen, 2013).

A controversial example is the so-called 'Braveheart statue', carved by native sculptor Tom Church as a result of the highly successful film featuring Mel Gibson as the Scottish freedom-fighter William Wallace. In 1997, the statue was erected at the Wallace National Monument visitor centre in Stirling. Despite its popularity with tourists, the local community expressed discontent with its clear resemblance to the Australian actor by regularly vandalising it until Stirling Council returned it to its sculptor in 2008. The statue has been described as Scottish culture's most notorious symbol in recent times (BBC, 2009). In contrast, a film-inspired statue that has received a positive reception from both locals and tourists is the Rocky Balboa statue located at the bottom of what became known as the 'Rocky Steps': the 72 stone steps outside of the Philadelphia Museum of Art featured in the film *Rocky* and its four sequels. The statue and the steps are one of Philadelphia's most important tourist attractions and for those who visit this cultural symbol to re-enact the iconic scene when actor Sylvester Stallone, who plays Rocky, climbs the stairs, it is a symbol of determination and perseverance (The Washington Post, 2006).

Embedded within on-screen productions are narrative undercurrents, which delineate and voice many of the fears, desires and needs of everyday culture (Ryan and Kellner, 1990). As such, the interpretive function of popular cultural films and television shows is to provide conduits for consumers and residents to become symbol creators of ideas and consumption practices, enhancing the informal cultural production in everyday life (Tzanelli, 2008). This is realised as the global projection of on-screen images and symbols takes cultural specificity out of its commercial context and engenders culturally productive local responses (Foster, 1991; Ray, 2002). Consequently, on-screen and tourist industries are bound together through the circulation of the same signs, which

due to their dynamic and polysemic nature, can be constantly interpreted by both fans and residents faced with the commodification of their histories, identities and environments (Tzanelli, 2008). In analysing this multi-level process, Tzanelli (2008) introduced the term 'cultural intimations' to denote the strategic deployment of ideal types (stereotypes, regulations, representations of culture and nostalgic culture) by those who aspire to present a coherent image of their culture to others. This conception draws upon social poetics to describe local attempts to project an image of social intimacy that presents ideal versions of social order. Thus, cultural intimations are manifestations of cultural hybridisation that relate to the active reshaping of culture by its everyday users, a process that can be analysed through the lens of dramaturgy.

Dramaturgy employs Goffman's (1959) theatrical paradigm to explain social action and behaviour. Goffman contended that the nature of social life is inherently dramatic and that people in all their social interactions play particular roles and reproduce performative conventions through the rehearsal of and familiarity with social scripts. Turner (1969; 1974) extended Goffman's notion of dramaturgy to theorise public performances as collective forms of rituals and social dramas conveying a multiplicity of meanings expressing the human need to construct and interpret the conditions that constitute their lives. Likewise, on-screen productions can be understood as intimations of culture that, through their dramaturgical narratives and symbols and reinterpretation by fans and residents, invoke the fundamental characteristics of a host destination. This is illustrated by the *Twilight Saga* books and films' associations with the Italian destination of Volterra. Important symbols and characters portrayed in the stories have been reinterpreted to merge the town's cultural heritage with tourist consumption; thus the iconic red apple symbolising the series is crafted from locally mined alabaster and sold at local stores and the vampire royal family Volturi featured in the stories is linked to the region's Etruscan heritage (Lundberg, Lexhagen and Mattsson, 2012). From a dramatological perspective, on-screen productions can therefore be analysed as texts conveying messages that project and/or explain the culture of a destination and its attractive characteristics to outsiders. In this regard, on-screen signs tied to a place constitute versions and interpretations of a community's fabric and may reinforce intended meanings via the strategic use of polysemic structures.

Dramaturgy can also elucidate the construction process of tourism places and their identity formation as, by employing the metaphors of performance and performativity (Ziakas and Costa, 2012), tourism activity can be analysed as a series of performances within places that are continuously created by the performances of tourists and hosts (Giovanardi et al., 2014). As such, the making of an on-screen destination is the outcome of projected signs and their interactions with stakeholders emanating from the contextual environment of a place (human, social, cultural, physical, etc.). Hence, an orchestrated use of on-screen polysemic signs can foster cultural

performance manifestations that seek to negotiate and (re)create the symbolic meanings and conditions that make up a community's socio-cultural fabric by enabling metaphoric discourse between fans, tourists and natives about issues of social concern or discord. From this standpoint, the challenge is how the symbolic meanings of on-screen productions can be leveraged by a place to build a strong connection without forfeiting its authentic representation. In this vein, the notion of authenticity related to filmed cultures (simulated or real) raises questions about the making of place identity and its representation, while the role of local heritage in this process and who might construct it (Hollinshead, 1998, 1999) needs to be clarified.

Destination managers who intend to capitalise on on-screen tourism need to develop a comprehensive strategy, which appreciates the cultural logic that drives the global human need for identification and expression through cinema or television shows. If managers can understand on-screen tourism as dynamic cultural significations of the social fabric stemming from stakeholders' interpretations, interactions and performances, they can better appreciate the layers of social order that underpin the intersection between on-screen popular culture and tourism industries and their consumption practices. In doing so, on-screen tourism strategies should provide opportunities for the expression and performance of different versions of social reality that constantly re-shape these destinations as dynamic cultural constructs. Accordingly, the roles of projected signs and symbols can be incorporated into the overall tourism product mix so that meanings and destination assets are synergised and reinforced. Consequently, tourism destination strategies can be implemented in collaboration with those seeking to develop on-screen tourism to everyone's mutual benefit. A strategic inside-out mind-set that aims to address pertinent community issues (Ziakas and Costa, 2010) can increase such strategies' effectiveness (Ziakas and Boukas, 2013). This requires a holistic destination development approach, which leverages culture, heritage, events, popular culture and other destination capitals (Boukas et al., 2012; Chhabra et al., 2003; Sharpley, 2009). As such, cultural assets and on-screen shows need to be holistically and strategically harnessed, thereby providing the opportunity to (re)invent culture and heritage, which can in turn renew and strengthen destination reputation (Morgan et al., 2011). To do so the range of major contextual factors that drive on-screen tourism development, need to be identified.

## **DRIVERS AND CHALLENGES OF ON-SCREEN TOURISM FOR DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

On-screen and popular culture tourism is primarily demand-driven and often exhibits a rapid initial growth that surprises destination stakeholders, sometimes causing capacity problems at destinations unprepared for increased tourism demand. At other times the on-screen representation of a destination and its subsequent interpretation by tourists and fans can leave locals unsure as to how they should respond to the on-screen projection of their community. This can be exacerbated by



reactive rather than proactive strategies, a lack of inter-agency collaboration (Bolan, Boy and Bell, 2011; Long and Morpeth, 2016; Lundberg et al., 2012; Müller, 2006) and the ad-hoc commodification of symbols and signs for consumption practice. If they are forced to employ a reactive strategy, destination stakeholders may not understand visitors' reinterpreted meaning of the place (Larson et al., 2013; Lundberg et al., 2012). This lack of national or regional strategy or policy development can be seen, for example, in South Korea where the popular Hallyu phenomenon (also known as the Korean/new wave) has only recently been addressed with a mid- and long-term tourism policy by the Korean government (Kim and Nam, 2016) despite its documented effect on the industry (Kim, Agrusa, Lee and Chon, 2007). Therefore, whilst destinations may gain significant (although often short-term) exposure, at the same time they become objects of worldwide public discourses, which are largely beyond their control.

A further challenge for on-screen tourism development is the lack of tourism and creative industries partnerships. Notable exceptions include Disneyland and Disneyworld (Marling, 1997), Hobbiton in New Zealand (Buchmann, 2010; Buchmann et al., 2010), and Harry Potter's Warner Bros. Studio Tour London and The Wizarding World in the UK and USA. This lack of partnership can be explained by the different industry conditions pertaining in the creative and tourism industries. For example, the creative industries focus on developing and protecting intellectual property exhibiting limited, if any, interest in the reinterpretation of cultural meanings for tourists. As a result, the tourism industry is unable to create symbols for consumption practices and transformations of place (Larson et al., 2013). Instead, it follows later to embrace, adapt or reject the on-screen representation of a destination based on its perceived congruence with the culture, values and heritage of a destination. Such reactions depend on tenable beliefs about the identity and self-image of a destination, which need to be reconfirmed, renewed or reinvented. Thus the task for destination managers, becomes to render pertinent on-screen meanings with significance and dynamism by cultivating metaphoric discourse about their local relevance and amplifying the symbolic associations between an on-screen production and the projected destination. This is both influenced by, and in turn influences, locals' esoteric understanding of their place (and all that it entails) and its relationship to the outside world.

There are two different types of on-screen destinations. Firstly, there are settings (Riley et al., 1998), which are places where the storyline of a film or television-series is set, such as *Seinfeld* and *Sex in the City's* New York. Secondly, there are locations (Tooke and Baker, 1996), which are where on-screen productions are filmed, such as *Lord of the Rings'* in New Zealand. When tourists visit a setting, but expect to experience the places they have seen on-screen, location dissonance may arise (Beeton, 2005; Frost, 2009). This impacts tourists' experience of authenticity and their reinterpretation of a place's meanings. For example, fans visiting Volterra, Italy, have expressed their

disappointment at not being able to recreate iconic scenes from the *Twilight Saga* since the movie was actually shot in the neighbouring town of Montepulciano (Lundberg et al., 2012). Thus, destination stakeholders may face challenges in producing and commodifying cultural signs as a result of location dissonance and subsequent reinterpretation of a place's authenticity. In essence, authenticity is constructed as being the outcome of interactions between hosts and guests (Cohen, 1988). MacCannell (1973; 1976) introduced the concept of staged authenticity in tourism in which he referred to the commodification of touristic experiences, whilst Wang (1999) differentiated between the authenticity of tourists' experiences and the toured objects. The former refers to existential activity-related authenticity, which can be experienced when tourists participate in activities. The latter relates to objective or constructed authenticity. Objective authenticity deals with the authenticity of originals while constructive authenticity refers to tourists' subjective projections of authenticity on these objects (e.g. through beliefs or imagery).

In the context of on-screen tourism, displacement theory (Bolan, Boy and Bell, 2011), or the closely related concept of locational dissonance (Frost, 2009), are central to perceptions of authenticity (O'Connor and Kim, 2013). These concepts describe situations where movies or TV shows are filmed in one place but represent somewhere else. The result may be that the visiting audience experiences significant dissonance when visiting the film location, as it may be hugely different from the on-screen representation. Further, as multiple interests, values and meanings are met within on-screen tourism settings, thereby creating a cultural signification mosaic, the danger of conflict and/or exploitation exists. This raises the critical need for safeguarding perceptions of authenticity so that processes of commodification, modernisation and cultural politics do not distort a destination's cultural fabric. Instead, it is essential that authenticity is rendered through enabling the impartial representation of symbolic existential elements that underpin a community's social order.

Central to any discussion of the commodification and consumption of space, is sense of place, which can be defined from the perspective of locals and visitors (Derrett, 2003). The former's sense of place consists of an emotional attachment to the place, its identity and community, whilst the latter refers to the visitors' experience and consumption of a place's characteristics. For example, according to Hendry (2009), Tokyo Disneyland designs an experience targeted towards its Asian visitors that meet their to explore a 'taste of' or fantasy trip to America compared to their American or European counterparts who seek exciting rides during their visits. Consequently, it may vary from one person to another, across different cultures and over time, where real as well as imaginary characteristics of a place such as heritage, values, and reinterpretations of cultural symbols create new meanings (Derrett, 2003). The consumption of an on-screen destination's characteristics has been explored in a number of studies attempting to develop tourist typologies or travel motivation

categories. An example of the former is Macionis' (2004) presentation of three types of on-screen tourists. The first group is the serendipitous, media-related tourist who 'accidentally' visits an on-screen destination. The second consists of tourists who are not specifically attracted by the on-screen related aspects of the place, but who engage in tourism activities at the destination. The third and final group are made up of visitors who make an active choice to visit an on-screen destination as a result of their interest in something they have seen on-screen and who are driven by motivations such as nostalgia, novelty, and celebrity associations (Macionis, 2004; O'Connor and Kim, 2013). On-screen tourists' travel motivations were also investigated by Lundberg and Lexhagen (2012), who support Macionis's (2004) argument that there are on-screen tourists attracted by the destination characteristics while there are others who are primarily driven by their interest in a specific on-screen phenomenon. Their study also identified a number of on-screen travel motivations and perceived value groupings; the former labelled as Atmosphere and Fun-Seeking Fans, Traditional Tourists and Community-Seeking Fans. The perceived value groupings were identified as: Sensible Experience Seekers, Social Success Seekers, and Trendy Price Conscious Escapists. For these groups, the most important perceived values were social approval/impression and enjoyment.

The characteristics of a place and reinterpretations of its cultural symbols may engender new meanings that embody its heritage and values. The reinterpretation of popular cultural heritage thus becomes part of a transformed and co-constructed sense of place that is readily commodified, and patterned as a consumption practice. In this regard, the sense of place is redefined and validated by a wider diversity of people (both locals-insiders and -outsiders), with the potential not only to authenticate the identity, image and qualities of a destination to a broader audience but also to embed the destination into the global public sphere by explicating its relationship to the world and feeding discourse over its associations with an on-screen production. To achieve this, it is imperative that destination assets be leveraged synergistically with the cultural significations (symbols, narratives, metaphors, etc.) engendered by an on-screen production in order to amplify the redefined sense of place, since this is being reinterpreted within a co-construction process that looks at a destination's identity and renders it with meaning. Although destination assets are grounded in heritage, any new interpretations of a community's identity that may occur can negotiate and potentially transform the sense of place.

The co-construction and co-consumption of tourism spaces inspired by Ateljevic (2000) has been adapted to a popular culture tourism context in the form of the *Popcultural Placemaking Loop* (Gyimóthy et al., 2015). This is a conceptual framework, which illustrates the performative negotiation between different stakeholders, interests, and relations for the transformation of place and commodification of cultural signs; thus "tourism is a negotiated reproduction of space, and this

notion enables researchers to address contested and multi-layered place identities, cultural translation of global consumer tastes and lifestyle values or material, spatial and cultural transformations” (Gyimóthy et al., 2015, p. 17). The framework illustrates the circular stages of negotiated reproduction as well as drivers and consequences of popular culture tourism. For example, it captures identification and transformation aspects of the process related to sense of place. Furthermore, it pinpoints the process of appropriation of place, which is linked to interactions between dramaturgical performance, perceptions of authenticity and media convergence/mediatisation. Media conversion has been digitally extended as a result of the development and growth of social media so that digital platforms now allow fandoms to create and communicate (new) meanings of popular culture phenomena and their places (Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 2006). Moreover, media conversion has grown in the form of ‘serial narratives,’ on which the creative industries can capitalise and adapt the same content across multiple media platforms; for example, a book series is made into a movie series and subsequently into a game (Månsson, 2011). Finally, Gyimóthy et al.’s (2015) conceptual framework identifies popular cultural representations whose narratives are reinterpreted by audiences (e.g. tourists, entrepreneurs, fans and marketers) and can subsequently be used in destination branding (see Morgan et al. 2011).

However, this framework does not explicitly explain the centrality of heritage development for on-screen and popular culture tourism. Heritage “was agreed internationally to include tangible and intangible heritage as well as environments ... [including] oral traditions and expressions, language, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events and traditional craftsmanship” (Ahmad, 2006: 298-299). Perhaps the most significant theoretical evolution in the field of heritage studies is the recognition that heritage is fundamentally a dynamic and empowering process (Guttormsen and Fageraas, 2011). Other researchers (e.g. Cheape et al. 2009; Harvey, 2001) consider heritage development as a process of stakeholder engagement to articulate values and meaning, an “active process of re-use and re-interpretation of sites ... [whereby] traditions are not static; they modify and change through time as a result both of their internal dynamic and in response to external demands” (Harvey, 2001: 331-2). Heritage development is also closely associated with the appropriation of place contributing to a dynamic and empowering process, a concept referred to as place-making.

The concept of place-making stems from the work of Jacobs (1961) and Whyte (1980) on the design of public places. In the case of on-screen tourism, the performative negotiation of meanings attached to place identity or sense of place is complicated due to the fictitious essence of popular culture heritage (e.g. the storyline, characters, and places featured in an on-screen production). The identity or sense of place of on-screen heritage are therefore co-constructed (and thus co-performed) by fans, tourists, locals and the on-screen and tourism industries. Dramaturgy

can explain the continuous (re)construction of place-making and illuminate the meanings and intertwined performances embedded within their contextual environments and the transformation of the old heritage to the new, which may be contested, or even in some cases misconstrued, by different stakeholders. This may result in tensions between stakeholder interpretations and re-imaginings of place (e.g. Crespi-Vallbona and Richards, 2007; Gotham, 2002; Jeong and Santos, 2004). Additionally, it has implications for the interpretation of authenticity and the marketing/branding of a place, which needs to take into account the dialectical interplay of negotiated meanings, while seeking to frame the discourse about a place through the media. In this regard, mediatisation refers to the shaping and framing of the processes and discourse of communication as well as the society in which that communication takes place (Lilleker, 2008). Overall, on-screen place-making is a dynamic, multi-dimensional process operating at different levels and influenced by several factors. In order to advance understanding, the next section presents an inter-disciplinary conceptual framework, which incorporates on-screen place-making processes and the strategic levers that enable destinations to effectively harness on-screen tourism.

#### **‘ON-SCREEN DOLLYING’: AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The previous discussion highlighted the pivotal roles played by heritage and authenticity within co-constructed place-making processes. On the one hand, heritage represents a destination’s past consciousness of its values and ideals, which are renegotiated and reinterpreted in the discourses surrounding on-screen tourism and sense of place. On the other hand, perceptions of authenticity need to be validated and strengthened as new meanings may transform the established heritage of a destination, disorienting locals and other stakeholders. These interactions (re)shape the resultant sense of place for a destination, emphasising elements and qualities associated with on-screen projections. To better understand co-constructed on-screen place-making processes, this section of the paper describes an inter-disciplinary conceptual framework (figure 1) that represents the relations between on-screen tourism representations and heritage, authenticity and sense of place. The analogy of a camera dolly is to describe the proposed framework. This is a specialised piece of filmmaking and television production equipment whereby the camera operator or camera assistant rides on the dolly to operate the camera and create smooth camera movements. ‘On-screen dollying’ thus ties an on-screen production to selected destination assets, which can be levered just as a dolly is raised onto a track, to create desirable projections of a destination. This conceptualisation presents an approach designed for destinations seeking to optimise on-screen tourism benefits; specifically, destinations can incorporate the on-screen symbolisms of dramaturgy and the subsequent media discourses into their tourism marketing and place branding strategies to synergistically exploit the levers of dramaturgy, mediatisation and branding. This provides a holistic

approach to marketing strategy development, in contrast to other work on on-screen strategic marketing approaches (such as Hudson and Tung's (2010) study on how film commissions worldwide market their locations to the movie industry).

Our framework was built through a conceptual analysis of induction and deduction. The aim of conceptual induction is to explain a phenomenon through the relationships observed between a system's elements. That is, the goal is not only to describe the phenomenon accurately but also to explain how it occurs (Meredith, 1993). Based on a literature review, the analysis identified the parameters of heritage, authenticity and sense of place and seeks to explain how they are interrelated and shape on-screen destination place-making. With conceptual deduction, a framework is postulated and its ramifications are detailed for comparison with reality, as well as to provide guidelines for managers (Meredith, 1993). Accordingly, the 'on-screen dolly' framework was generated and compared with examples from the industry and with the personal reflections of the authors. This analysis produced the set of strategies grounded in the conceptual (and programmatic) synergies of dramaturgy, mediatisation and branding. As such, a dramatological perspective, examining symbolic and performative elements of on-screen tourism, underpins the conceptual foundation of 'on-screen dolly', thus synthesising the epistemologies of interpretivism, hermeneutics, and discourse analysis to explain how landscapes are dialectically co-organised by stakeholders and co-consumed by audiences. Consequently, the conception of 'on-screen dolly' reflects epistemological elaborations on heritage interpretation (Uzzel, 1992), tourism 'worldmaking' processes in recreating social constructions (Hollinshead, 2009; Hollinshead et al., 2009), and cinematic tourism network hermeneutics (Tzanelli, 2007, 2013, 2015) to better understand the role of film and television in making, remaking, and unmaking places as tourist destinations. From this perspective, the co-construction of meaning in place-making epitomises its dialectical intertextuality with genres, symbols, and the media that shape cultural expressions and (re)interpretations as authenticity and heritage intermingle.

In presenting the framework, we suggest that on-screen tourism place-making involves the transformation of heritage, which if it is to become meaningful and sustainable, needs to align with perceptions of authenticity. If we view on-screen-tourism as a dynamic place-making phenomenon, we can see how destinations can capitalise on it to optimise the benefits of tourism products induced by the cultivation and consumption of on-screen signs. This requires the performative appropriation of a place to (re)shape its sense of identity since on-screen projections are symbolically interpreted and negotiated by different stakeholders. In this vein, an on-screen destination's sense of place involves a dramaturgical interaction of meanings that can be influenced by the media framing of discourse around on-screen productions from mediatisation and the scope of adopted place brand management. As such, an on-screen tourism-induced sense of place is cultivated by the mediated

projections and symbolisms enacted by the interaction effects of on-screen destination dramaturgy, mediatisation and branding. The 'on-screen dollying' conceptual framework presents a set of six strategies for on-screen destinations based on the levers of dramaturgy, mediatisation and branding, all of which can galvanise the synergistic exploitation of destination assets (i.e., on-screen cultural assets and supporting tourist services). Each is explained below in turn.

Figure 1 here

### *1 Align On-Screen Narratives with Destination Qualities*

The stories and plots of on-screen productions are connected to places conveying their own meanings and messages, which appeal to fans and audiences. A place wishing to develop on-screen tourism needs to strengthen the association between an on-screen production and its tourist attributes. In other words, the alignment of on-screen production narratives with selected destination characteristics and qualities can favourably position a destination in the minds of fans and wider audiences. At the *Twilight Saga* destination of Volterra, Italy, destination stakeholders successfully merged the story's royal vampire clan with the town's Etruscan heritage. As a result, tourism services like guided tours convey representations of both the history of the town and its popular culture legacy (Lundberg et al., 2012). Volterra is one of the 12 sixth to fourth century Etruscan power centres and hosts one of the largest collections of artefacts of that civilization. The tour takes participants through the city's gothic buildings where actors from the local theatre group, dressed as fanged vampires, surprise tourists by re-enacting scenes from the movie. In the neighbouring medieval town of Montepulciano, famed for its wine, visitors can both enjoy themed *Twilight Saga* tours and purchase (blood) red wine specifically developed for them (Lundberg et al., 2012). Such marketing and product developments exemplify a performative connection between on-screen production and destinations, thereby strengthening the latter's heritage and authenticity. As a result, the on-screen production becomes part of the destination's cultural tapestry and evokes its attractive features in a touristic place-making of the on-screen destination, levered by dramaturgy and the projection of symbolic representations.

### *2 Embed On-Screen Theming into the Destination*

In order to amplify the on-screen production meanings and their associations with a place, destinations can pursue a strategy of joint theming. This essentially embeds layered on-screen symbols into the destination with a particular focus on its tourist areas. This can be witnessed in the small towns of Senoia and Grantville, outside of Atlanta in the USA, home of the popular HBO zombie series *The Walking Dead* seasons two and three. After being featured in the show, local

entrepreneurs have opened zombie-themed retail stores, restaurants, and privately and publicly owned properties associated with the series are open for zombie tourists (CNN, 2015). Similarly in Albuquerque, New Mexico tourists can tour 13 locations featured in the television series *Breaking Bad*, whilst fans can also purchase small bags of blue candy from a local candy shop that looks like the blue crystal meth props used in the series (The Guardian, 2013). Thus the embeddedness of layered on-screen signs in the destination may 'transfer' the on-screen production to spaces, thereby boosting visitors and spending. As a consequence, dramaturgy creates an on-screen atmosphere in the destination via the use of symbolic representations that can magnify the overall appeal to fans and visitors, while enriching the destination's heritage and fostering its authenticity.

### *3 Foster On-Screen Fan Visitation*

The third strategy that destinations can pursue to optimise on-screen tourism is to target fan markets. This requires a concerted effort to foster and create opportunities for fans to visit the destination and here bundling can include on-screen activities in a variety of tourist packages. For example, fans of ITV's *Downton Abbey* are able to enjoy themed experiences in the village of Bampton in Oxfordshire and at Highclere Castle, as both offer tours and all-inclusive tour packages, with one high-end tour including dinner with the Castle's aristocratic family (Zicasso, 2015). Similarly, in Mumbai, India, visitors can enjoy a wide range of tourism offerings from short visits to 3-day long packages and corporate events, which take in the sets, studios, and locations of famous Bollywood movies. Activities include live shooting, costume gallery visits, dance shows, themed dining and accommodation, interactive post-production experiences and special effects (Bollywood Tourism, 2015). The creation of such fan visitation opportunities bolsters meanings assigned to the destination that will, in turn, contribute to its place-making. To do so, symbolic representations targeting fans need to be built into the media discourse that surrounds an on-screen production and its relationship to the destination, thereby increasing fan interest and fostering further or repeat visitation.

### *4 Frame On-Screen Destination in Media*

Fourthly, a destination needs to frame the discourse around an on-screen production in relation to the associations that exemplify its attractive qualities and thereby build a place identity that projects the destination's intended image. The importance of framing the on-screen destination in different media (in on-line and off-line platforms) is of particular importance in cases when on-screen associations are negative or differ strongly from the destination identity. An example of a destination affected negatively by an on-screen production is Rio de Janeiro Brazil, the setting for the film *City of God*, in which the main protagonist indulges in crime and cruelty. The film has reinforced negative



perceptions of the destination through its destructive plotline (Correia Loureiro and Barbosa de Araujo, 2015), although its depiction of the spectacular local scenery has simultaneously increased visitation intentions (Correia Loureiro and Barbosa de Araujo, 2015). A similar outcome has been seen with the television series *Breaking Bad* and Albuquerque, where the New Mexican landscape is now perceived by audiences as a main character of the show and attracts large numbers of fans despite the series' drug-related on-screen plotlines (Im, 2013). In all cases, mediatisation has been levered to frame the on-screen destination and build a positive place identity.

#### *5 Use On-Screen Productions in Destination Branding*

The fifth strategy is the integration of on-screen productions into a destination's branding strategy (Morgan et al., 2011). This requires a proactive and collaborative approach with relevant creative industry organisations and agencies to incorporate key destination visuals into on-screen productions and/or advertising and media releases. Media on-screen production narratives and stories can be used in production/destination cross-promotions. The destination can in turn promote on-screen activities to tourists visiting other relevant cultural assets (e.g. museums, sports stadia, parks, zoos) and promote the on-screen-related activities in its destination marketing promotion. This was very effective in the joint marketing of the *Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit* and New Zealand (Piggott et al., 2004). As a result of generous tax incentives and proactive collaboration with copyright owners and film director Peter Jackson, New Zealand was able to secure rights to use *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* in the campaign '100% Middle-Earth 100%, Pure New Zealand'. This promotion has significantly increased visitor arrivals (New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2004) by showcasing the authentic landscape of New Zealand portrayed in the movies and demonstrating to "potential travellers that the fantasy of Middle-earth is in fact the reality of New Zealand" (Tourism New Zealand, 2015). However it should be noted that it took New Zealand a number of years to develop strategic marketing material associated with The Lord of the Rings franchise. A recent study of the economic effects of Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit on New Zealand shows that The Lord of the Rings Trilogy did not have as significant an impact on the tourism economy as The Hobbit, partly due to the different implementation of promotional strategies (Li, Li, Song, Lundberg and Shen, 2017).

#### *6 Create On-Screen-Related Events*

The final strategy in building an on-screen destination brand is the strengthening of visitor connections with the destination through experiential events celebrating on-screen productions and ancillary events to complement the core experiences of fan markets. Such events can be held in between seasons of popular television shows. For example, fans of the (book and television) series

*Outlander* can participate in the Gathering and metaphorically travel back in time to experience a historic Scotland like the series' protagonist (Outlandishgatherings, 2015). Another example of on-screen-related events is the fan event for the television series *Supernatural*, which is located in Vancouver, British Columbia. The city hosts this event in between seasons, during which fans can meet with the series' actors and enjoy panel discussions and music concerts (Supernatural Official Convention, 2015). Such events build the on-screen destination brand by providing experiences tied to on-screen productions, which can lend authenticity to the destination and/or re-create its heritage, thereby facilitating destination place-making.

## 5. CONCLUSION

On-screen tourism is not a new phenomenon. It dates to the establishment of Hollywood as a world film-making hub when classic films such as *Casablanca* immortalised the eponymous Moroccan city or *Zorba the Greek* introduced the world to the then unheralded Greek islands. What is more recent is the concerted effort by destinations to leverage on-screen productions for brand-building and tourism income generation. As such, the academic study of on-screen tourism development is also in its infancy. This paper has provided an analysis of the cultural grounds that shape on-screen tourism place-making and presented six strategies that can be employed by destinations within the on-screen dollying conceptual framework. A number of tactics are already being implemented by different on-screen destinations, however, these are currently highly fragmented and vary according to each destination's contextual drivers. In contrast, on-screen dollying offers a comprehensive perspective grounded in culture, delineating a set of collaborative strategies that destinations can implement to build and strengthen their on-screen tourism identities. The implementation of such joint strategies requires the involvement and collaboration of different stakeholders in regional networks, which in turn requires the bridging of the gap between the creative industries and the tourism sector.

On-screen dollying not only offers a structure to destinations seeking to foster links and networks in order to create the conditions for sustainable on-screen tourism development. It also establishes a framework for further research and a number of research questions are suggested in table 1. These are grouped under eight thematic areas: co-creation; collaboration and partnership; place-making; heritage; authenticity; dramaturgy; mediatisation; branding. Each area includes two key questions, although these are not mutually exclusive nor do they constitute the limit of possibilities for on-screen tourism researchers. As was noted above, perhaps the most exciting possibilities lie in fostering a more radically inter-disciplinary approach to on-screen tourism research, one which incorporates cultural geography, history, literature, psychology, and film and media and heritage studies, with tourism, marketing, economics and management studies.

Table 1 here

In this paper we have sought to advance this inter-disciplinary agenda by integrating cultural theory and marketing strategy in our exploration of the complex relationship between on-screen popular culture and tourism destination place-making. In particular, our development of the conceptual framework, which theorises on-screen popular culture place-making and destination development, is grounded in an inter-disciplinary analysis of on-screen popular culture through the lens of expressive culture. At the same time, the on-screen dollying framework has practical value as it offers a comprehensive perspective and presents a set of six collaborative strategies that destinations can implement to build and strengthen their on-screen tourism identities. Just as the theoretical advancement of on-screen tourism requires an inter-disciplinary approach, which crosses fields and departments, so the practical implementation of such joint strategies requires stakeholder collaboration, and a bridging of the gap between the creative industries and the tourism sector. As such, it seems that partnerships across and within theory and practice hold the key to the successful management of on-screen tourism development and its study.

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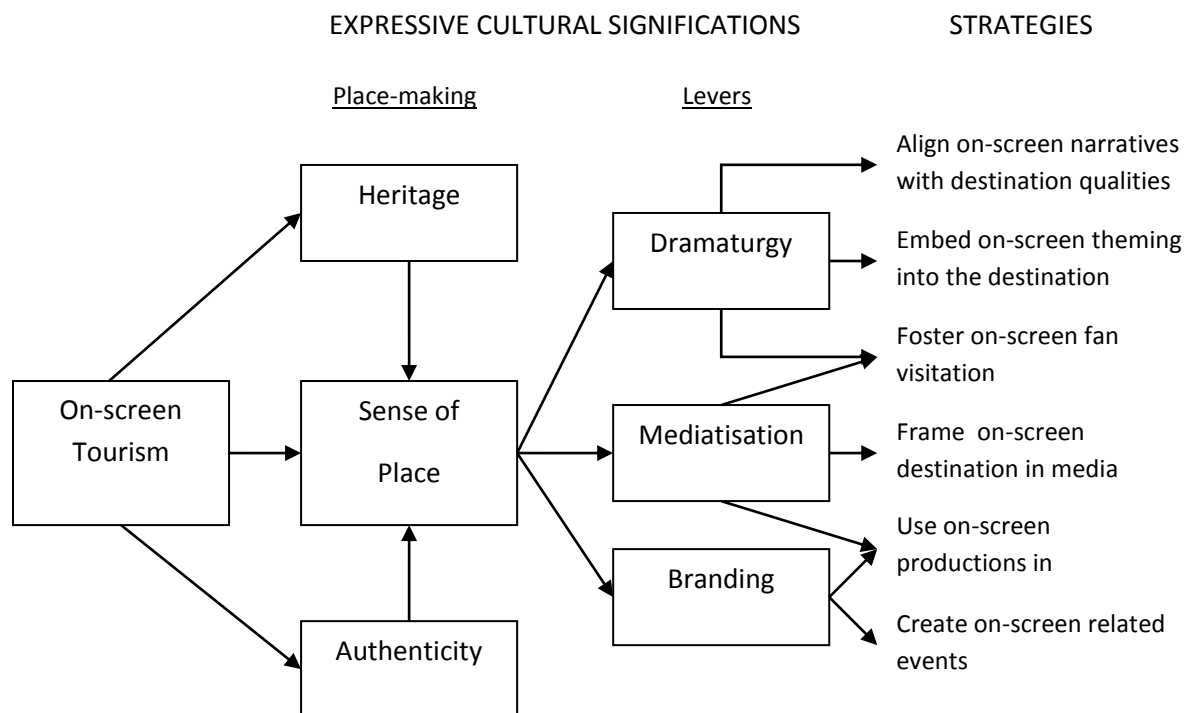
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**Figure 1: 'On-screen Dollying' for Destination Development**





**Table 1. Research Agenda for On-Screen Tourism Development**

Thematic areas	Core research questions
Co-construction	What conditions facilitate the performative negotiation between different stakeholders, interests, and relations that transform a place into an on-screen destination? How does the commodification of cultural signs drive or constrain co-construction?
Collaboration & partnership	What are the means by which destinations can build partnerships and foster collaboration between the creative and tourism industries? How can stakeholder networks be developed to encompass on-screen production and destination entities/actors?
Place-making	What are the conditions that facilitate the appropriation of place as an on-screen destination? How do the interaction effects of on-screen place-making representations impact upon a destination's tourism development?
Heritage	How do on-screen productions transform a destination's heritage? What are the on-screen production characteristics that shape the (re)creation of a destination's heritage and how they can be levered for on-screen tourism development?
Authenticity	How can on-screen productions render destination authenticity whilst representing the values and worldviews of different stakeholders? How can on-screen elements be incorporated into a place's promotion without overshadowing its tradition, culture and identity?
Dramaturgy	What factors enable the construction and extraction of on-screen dramaturgical meanings tied to a destination? How can assigned on-screen meanings be used to build a destination's identity?
Mediatisation	How can an on-screen destination best be framed in media? To what extent can polysemic structures be used effectively in different media platforms to frame discourse about an on-screen destination that optimally projects its attractive qualities?
Branding	How do on-screen significations and place representations enhance a destination's image? What are the means for repositioning a place as an on-screen destination?