

# ‘Locating’ or ‘dislocating’ heritage and cultural tourism within the humanities

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## Abstract

Heritage and cultural tourism (HCT) is currently one of the fastest growing fields in the tourism domain. Tourism as a composite field of study has traditionally been located within the economic and business management sector. However, due to the range of social, political and ethical issues pertaining to heritage and cultural tourism, it can be argued that it should be also located within a humanities context. After elucidating certain key concepts, the paper will consider the interdisciplinary nature of tourism with specific reference to the groundbreaking work of the leading international tourism theorist John Tribe. The relevance of tourism and its relationship with the humanities cluster of established disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, art, literature, history and heritage will be discussed. It will become apparent that heritage and cultural tourism is also locating itself within the domain of the humanities, despite efforts to dislocate it.

**Key words:** heritage and cultural tourism (HCT), economic and business management, humanities, multidisciplinary field, interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary research

**Disciplines:** anthropology, archaeology, art, business economics, geography, heritage, history, literature, film, sociology

## Introduction

Heritage and cultural tourism (HCT) is currently one of the fastest growing fields in the tourism domain.<sup>2</sup> Cultural tourism specialist M.K. Smith describes it as “a composite discipline, hence one that necessitates an in-depth analysis of many relevant and contemporary social, political and ethical issues”.<sup>3</sup> Taking this as a given, the objective of this article is to consider whether or not tourism, which has traditionally mainly formed part of the economic and business management sector, can be located in and thus studied within a humanities context. To comprehend tourism and its knowledge creation within this context, it is essential to first elucidate certain key concepts. The interdisciplinary nature of tourism

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<sup>2</sup> G. Busby and J. Klug, “Movie-induced tourism: The challenge of measurement and other issues”, *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 7(4), 2001-06-05, p. 316.

<sup>3</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, (Routledge, London, 2003), p. 1.

will be analyzed, before discussing the relationship of heritage and cultural tourism to the various disciplines in the humanities.

### Concept definition

“Heritage” is generally defined as something that is handed down from one generation to another. It is a concept that is very closely related to notions of history and the past. While “the past” is concerned with “all that has ever happened”, “history” is the “attempt to make sense of and explain these past events”.<sup>4</sup> Historian John Tosh expands this definition of history and claims that historians function as the “guardians” of cultural heritage.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, history is regarded as being solidly located as a cultural subject and thus forms part of the humanities. Heritage, in turn, can be described as the current usage of the past through interpreting or representing it tangibly through the construction of heritage sites, the commemoration of events and places and the placement of images in media or intangibly through performance. Some claim that through this representation it has been commercialized and commoditized, which has led to the emergence of the burgeoning heritage industry.<sup>6</sup> This heritage has two components: “nature” and “culture”. The latter is of increasing importance within the field of humanities and can be defined at its most basic level as the way of life of a group of people.<sup>7</sup> Culture is said to encapsulate a community’s or identifiable society’s customs and beliefs, as well as aspects of their social organization, and is thus the complex reflection of a particular lifestyle.<sup>8</sup> It can amongst others be expressed by means of arts and crafts, music, film and dance, literature and language, history and architecture, religion, cuisine and festivals.<sup>9</sup>

Not unlike the concepts heritage and culture, “tourism” is not easily defined as it can be described as both a business and an activity. According to Richards, the conceptual definition states that tourism is a “temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places they normally live and work, and activities during their stay at these destinations”.<sup>10</sup> It can also be identified as an industry since one is able to determine and quantify tourism’s economic impact.<sup>11</sup> For example, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), “the business volume of tourism equals or even surpasses that of oil exports, food products or automobiles”.<sup>12</sup> To substantiate this it is important to

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<sup>4</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> J. Tosh and S. Lang, *The Pursuit of History*, (Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, 2006), p. 51.

<sup>6</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> M. Ivanovic, *Cultural Tourism*, (Juta & Company, Ltd., Cape Town, 2008), p. 10.

<sup>8</sup> G. Richards (ed.), *Cultural Tourism in Europe*, (CAB International, Oxon, 1996), p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> M. Ivanovic, *Cultural Tourism*, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> G. Richards (ed.), *Cultural Tourism in Europe*, p. 20.

<sup>11</sup> B.A. Lubbe (ed.), *Tourism Management in Southern Africa*, (Pearson Education South Africa, Cape Town, 2003), p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), ‘About UNWTO: Why Tourism?’, <<http://www.unwto.org/>>, 2010-10-24. Access: 2010-10-24.

note the extent of the networks involved in the travel industry, including transportation, accommodation, food and entertainment establishments, as well as the attractions and services provided to tourists. Within this wide business spectrum, one can distinguish between the supply aspect (tourism-receiving area) and demand aspect (tourism-generating area). Tourism can therefore be described as a system dependent on an interrelated network of factors.<sup>13</sup> This indicates that the tourism industry, and its success, as such is dependent on a variety of aspects, which are not solely located within the business economics, but relate to a multitude of services and disciplines to provide for a fulfilling leisure experience.

It is, however, not the intention of this article to focus on the conventional business industry aspect of tourism, but rather to consider its humanities dimension, one which is emerging as a highly interdisciplinary sector.<sup>14</sup> It is generally agreed that the field of tourism is very diverse. In more recent times it has been subdivided into various special-interest subsections or niches due to the increased demand for individuality. Contrary to mass tourism which occurs in a world of “increasing sameness”, niche tourism implies that travel activities are more sophisticated.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, special-interest tourism presents an opportunity to diversify and differentiate target markets and tourism offerings. In fact, this increasing demand for individuality gave rise to tourism typologies, as became evident in “tourism consumption patterns”. This clearly reflects “the continuously increasing diversity of leisure interests of the late-modern leisure society”.<sup>16</sup> As a result, new forms of tourism began emerging, which were able to meet the changing specialized needs of travellers.<sup>17</sup> By adapting to this new demand by offering specialized products and experiences to increasingly differentiated and diversified markets, a variety of destinations began to gain competitive advantage. As a result, the travel industry has become increasingly segmented to cope with and cater for new and emerging forms of tourism.<sup>18</sup> In this way, tourism has become a more sustainable activity and industry. It is also better able to protect sensitive natural and cultural environments and generate high-spending visitors.

The concept of a “niche” is, however, in itself contested since it is a borrowed term. In ecology, it refers to an optimal location which provides the necessary resources to support an organism despite its competitors. In marketing, the notion of a niche is an interrelated concept of the “place in the market for a product” and “an audience for this product”.<sup>19</sup> Thus produce can be tailor-made to meet the needs of a specific target market. Although the concept “niche” as applied to tourism is directly borrowed from the business terminology of a

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<sup>13</sup> B.A. Lubbe (ed.), *Tourism Management in Southern Africa*, pp. 3-10.

<sup>14</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, pp. 653-655.

<sup>15</sup> M. Novelli, *Niche Tourism: Contemporary issues, trends and cases*, (Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 2005), p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> B. Trauer, “Conceptualizing special interest tourism – frameworks for analysis”, *Tourism Management* 27(2), 2006, p. 183.

<sup>17</sup> B. Trauer, “Conceptualizing special interest tourism – frameworks for analysis”, *Tourism Management* 27(2), 2006, p. 186.

<sup>18</sup> P. Robinson, S. Heitmann and P.U.C. Dieke (eds.), *Research Themes for Tourism*, (CAB International, Oxfordshire, 2011), p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> M. Novelli, *Niche Tourism: Contemporary issues, trends and cases*, p. 4.

marketing niche, “niche tourism” as such refers to a specific theme or particular sector that encompasses the range of tourist related elements of the niche tourist markets. In general, tourism can thus be subdivided to generate special-interest travel options.<sup>20</sup> Hereby, the tourism activities are planned around a hub or key element which is of interest in a particular region, destination or cultural sector. Special-interest or niche tourism is thus the “active involvement of travellers in the cultural and/or physical environment they are visiting”.<sup>21</sup> Hereby, one needs to distinguish between macro- and micro-niches in tourism. The former denotes the broader categories, while the latter focuses on more specific sub-categories specifically developed for the specialist.

Heritage and cultural tourism (HCT) is one such macro-niche and as a broad umbrella term it is currently still one of the fastest growing and most popular tourism macro-niches.<sup>22</sup> It encompasses a range of different activities and attractions which emphasize cultural heritage. HCT incorporates not only history, but also contemporary and living culture and tourism related to all manifestations of cultural heritage. It refers to the movements of people to diverse cultural attractions outside of their usual environment, frequently also with the intention to “gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs”.<sup>23</sup> Cultural tourism often focuses specifically on the experiences visitors can gain by engaging in a range of cultural activities. As a result, when people engage in travel for purposes of exploring a specific aspect of heritage and cultural tourism in more detail, this macro-niche can be further segmented into specific niches such as literary tourism, film-induced tourism, ethnic tourism and arts tourism. Accordingly, it is clear that the category of a macro-niche can generally be subdivided into various special-interest fields or micro-niches which are “very precise small markets [or fields] that would be difficult to split further”.<sup>24</sup> Other special-interest sectors include cycling tourism, gastronomic tourism, health and wellness tourism, dark/Thana tourism and film-induced tourism.<sup>25</sup> The size of niche travel (be it macro or micro) is indeterminable, but it is evident that it is increasingly popular in both international and particularly Western domestic travel. Thus niche tourism, as opposed to mass tourism, can be regarded as a growing tourism segment, which means that more attention needs to be paid to the study of individual travel niches, especially within the context of the humanities.<sup>26</sup>

Thus heritage and cultural tourism is fast emerging and establishing itself as a dynamic field of study. By its very nature, it has moved beyond the conventional domain of the economic sector to the interdisciplinary realm of the humanities, critically addressing what has been described as the essential element of human activity.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> M. Novelli, *Niche Tourism: Contemporary issues, trends and cases*, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> B. Weiler and C.M. Hall (eds.), *Special Interest Tourism*, (Belhaven Press, London, 1992), p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> D.J. Timothy, *Cultural Heritage and Tourism: An Introduction*, (Channel View Publications, Bristol, 2011), p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> M. Novelli, *Niche Tourism: Contemporary issues, trends and cases*, p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> M. Novelli, *Niche Tourism: Contemporary issues, trends and cases*, pp. 1-6.

<sup>26</sup> B. Weiler and C.M. Hall (eds.), *Special Interest Tourism*, p. 6.

<sup>27</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, pp. 653-655.

## Origins of tourism as an interdisciplinary field of study

In the past, academics have conventionally and conservatively described tourism either as a discipline, a multidisciplinary field or research domain employing scientific methods of study.<sup>28</sup> British tourism theorist John Tribe offers a new and innovative model for understanding the epistemology of tourism which breaches the existing barriers of a field limited to the domain of pure economics. His research focuses on what tourism knowledge comprises of and sets out to demarcate the expanding boundaries of this field of study. It purports that the concept of tourism is identified as a difficult and exceedingly complex notion since it can be seen in a threefold way: as a phenomenon, a field of study or as an educational subject. In order to understand the concept, Tribe thus employs an encompassing definition of tourism: It is “the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction in generating and host regions, of tourists, business suppliers, governments, communities, and environments”.<sup>29</sup>

After describing the key dimensions of tourism, it now is important to understand the interrelationship between the phenomenon of tourism and tourism as a field of academic enquiry. Tribe maintains that the study of tourism is in essence an attempt of humans to explain and analyze this phenomenon. Within the academic enquiry in this field Tribe argues that researchers have tended to describe “the development of tourism studies as an evolution towards disciplinary status”.<sup>30</sup> In fact, F. Darbellay and M. Stock have identified that different scientific approaches towards the study of tourism have occurred over time. The first theoretical observations of tourism in the 1940s referred to it as a system “relating to the various dimensions of human societies”.<sup>31</sup> This interpretation viewed tourism as a whole, denoting that it was not “reducible to disciplinary approaches”.<sup>32</sup> A second approach refers to the paradigmatic treatment of tourism as a scientific object, employing disciplinary logic for enquiries. This is consistent with theoretical discussions whether or not tourism is a discipline from the 1950s to the 1970s.<sup>33</sup>

In answer to the question as to whether or not tourism is a discipline, Tribe responds in the negative. He claims that tourism does not comply with the characteristics identified for any given traditional discipline. Distinct forms of knowledge need to each have interrelated concepts that are particular to that discipline. In addition, these concepts need to make up a network to provide the discipline with a distinctive logical structure. Furthermore, “each

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<sup>28</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 638.

<sup>29</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 641.

<sup>30</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 642.

<sup>31</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 448.

<sup>32</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 449.

<sup>33</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 449-450.

form has expressions or statements which are in some way testable against experience using criteria which are particular to that form".<sup>34</sup> Disciplines are defined as being irreducible, providing the most basic building blocks of that form of knowledge. As a result, he concludes that tourism cannot be classified as a discipline since it has adapted concepts from other fields of academic enquiry. These "borrowed notions" and "models" used in tourism do not make up a distinctive network and do not link together in a logical way to easily analyze and describe the phenomenon of tourism. Thirdly, the expressions and statements used in tourism are not "testable against experience using criteria which are particular to tourism studies".<sup>35</sup> This means that the empirical examination of results as performed in the natural sciences or deductive reasoning by mathematicians is neither possible nor ideally suited for the social sciences. Instead, external criteria from other disciplines are utilized and adapted for the analysis, but are not yet intrinsic to tourism itself. In addition to these "missing" criteria, in terms of the definition of a discipline, the study of tourism is in its "infancy stage".<sup>36</sup> C.M. Echtner and T.B. Jamal support this statement by claiming that the shortage of major intrinsic theories, which is still apparent in tourism, is characteristic of an early developing study area, rather than that of an established discipline.<sup>37</sup> Its academic community (faculties or departments of tourism and more particularly heritage and cultural tourism) is still relatively weak, somewhat atomized and cannot yet be regarded as a discipline in its own right. In addition, its "network of communications" with regard to professional associations, conferences, books and journals has only recently begun to emerge, albeit at a rapid pace. There are a variety of journals available, but these only have superficially similar titles and do not seem to follow a homogenous trend. On top of this, the "tradition" or a "particular set of values and beliefs" applicable to tourism studies is not yet clearly defined. This is however more understandable given that the majority of studies only commenced in the 1970s and 1980s, thus tourism research is an emerging field and has as yet not established a unified tradition.<sup>38</sup>

However, there are other scholars that regard tourism as a distinct science and discipline in its own right, thereby dividing academic opinion "as to whether tourism should be studied as a distinct discipline or as an area of specialization within existing disciplines".<sup>39</sup> Certain problems arise when treating tourism as a scientific object that can only be studied within one scientific framework. Since the 1950s, tourism has been investigated as part of established disciplines such as anthropology, history, geography, economics and sociology. Disciplinary fragmentation and specialization occurred as each discipline has developed "its own theoretical perspectives as well as conceptual and methodological tools".<sup>40</sup> The resulting

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<sup>34</sup> J. Tribe, "The Indiscipline of Tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 643.

<sup>35</sup> J. Tribe, "The Indiscipline of Tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 643.

<sup>36</sup> J. Tribe, "The Indiscipline of Tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 644.

<sup>37</sup> C.M. Echtner and T.B. Jamal, "The Disciplinary Dilemma of Tourism Studies", *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4), 1997, p. 870.

<sup>38</sup> J. Tribe, "The Indiscipline of Tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, pp. 644-645.

<sup>39</sup> C.M. Echtner and T.B. Jamal, "The Disciplinary Dilemma of Tourism Studies", *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4), 1997, p. 869.

<sup>40</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, "Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object", *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 450.



theories sometimes tend to clash with each other to some extent, resulting in the research topic appearing as lacking in seriousness and thus meeting with much opposition and criticism.<sup>41</sup> As is apparent when attempting to define tourism, it is a complex phenomenon that cannot be adequately researched within any single traditional discipline such as economics, business, geography, history or sociology. It has been argued that each of these analyzes tourism from within the boundaries of their own specific discipline and fails to grasp the concept as a whole.

By treating tourism as a discipline in its own right, the “development of an integrated theory of tourism” will become possible, merging the distinct perspectives on tourism.<sup>42</sup> The study of tourism would thus no longer be fragmented as a solely business-orientated, geographic or sociological occurrence. By concentrating on it as a distinct discipline, the growth of its theoretical foundation would advance. Yet, while the lack of intrinsic theoretical frameworks is noted by some scholars, others are unwilling to treat tourism as a distinct discipline and support the notion of cross-disciplinary research.<sup>43</sup> In fact, R. Sharpley claims that tourism is “unlikely ever to be considered as a discipline alongside more recognized academic subjects”,<sup>44</sup> the reason for this being that most of the current terminology was only coined in the nineteenth century. Many tourism theorists have argued in the past that tourism research needs to become more structured and should remain grounded within existing disciplines.<sup>45</sup> However, according to Echtner and Jamal, the “solution lies not necessarily in forming a distinct discipline of tourism but in encouraging more cross-disciplinary research”.<sup>46</sup>

Only from the 1970s onwards did tourism studies become a “topic for discussion as a ‘field’” and for the first time recognizing certain “interrelationships with other disciplines”.<sup>47</sup> As a result, tourism has been referred to as a “field of study”. Fields of academic enquiry focus on specific phenomena or practices, while calling on the assistance of various other disciplines to analyze the particular area of interest. Tribe distinguishes between two main fields of study: tourism business studies (TF1) and non-business tourism studies (TF2). In addition, he presents a model for tourism studies as a “field”.<sup>48</sup> The business world which produces knowledge in the external world of tourism outside of tertiary educational institutions plays a central role. Tourism business studies and non-business tourism studies revolve around this.

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<sup>41</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 450.

<sup>42</sup> C.M. Echtner and T.B. Jamal, “The Disciplinary Dilemma of Tourism Studies”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4), 1997, p. 869.

<sup>43</sup> C.M. Echtner and T.B. Jamal, “The Disciplinary Dilemma of Tourism Studies”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4), 1997, p. 870.

<sup>44</sup> R. Sharpley, *The Study of Tourism: Past Trends and Future Directions*, (Routledge, Oxon, 2011), p. 65.

<sup>45</sup> C.M. Echtner and T.B. Jamal, “The Disciplinary Dilemma of Tourism Studies”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4), 1997, p. 868.

<sup>46</sup> C.M. Echtner and T.B. Jamal, “The Disciplinary Dilemma of Tourism Studies”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4), 1997, p. 870.

<sup>47</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 450.

<sup>48</sup> For more information about the model, please refer to the diagram in the article by J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 650.

However, constant tensions exist between the academic study of tourism and industry-based research conducted by tourism practitioners. In theory, the knowledge produced at academic level should support the tourism industry since practitioners need to make informed decisions to implement policies. Nevertheless, due to a prevalent gap in communication, “academic literature has little impact upon the tourism practitioner” at present.<sup>49</sup> According to C. Cooper, to resolve tensions between the academic world and the practical tourism industry, the tourism industry must “[adopt] a ‘knowledge-based’ platform upon which to make its commercial and policy decisions”.<sup>50</sup> This problem could be resolved by further developing tourism as a field of study and allowing tertiary institutions to harness academic knowledge to produce practitioners that work effectively and sustainably. In this regard, it becomes evident that tourism business studies and non-business tourism studies are significantly influenced by other disciplines or sub-disciplines and there is a discernable area of interaction between these disciplines and the fields of study.<sup>51</sup>

Tribe concludes that tourism is not a discipline, but makes up two distinct fields of study. He suggests that it is “an object of study (field) rather than a way of studying (discipline)”.<sup>52</sup> He concludes that the best way to approach the study of tourism is to apply multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, business interdisciplinary and extradisciplinary (with regard to the business world outside the domain of educational institutions) methods of inquiry. Nevertheless, educational institutions tend to focus on understanding the business world, which means that TF1 expands at the expense of TF2. The business world generally overlooks the value of heritage and cultural tourism, while the academic world tends to overlook non-academic knowledge production. At this stage, it seems justifiable for Tribe to abandon the search for tourism as an academic discipline and to rather identify it as a field of study, which may later develop into a discipline. The diversity of the phenomenon and its interdisciplinary status is apparent and should be recognized and advanced.<sup>53</sup>

Darbellay and Stock further this approach to the study of tourism. They claim that “[these] intertwining disciplinary and non-disciplinary developments around the tourism phenomenon [allow] for an approach to tourism studies as episteme”.<sup>54</sup> Hereby, scientific observation and the frameworks and methodologies of various disciplines are translated into and adapted for tourism problematisation, thereby hybridizing disciplinary knowledge for tourism studies. This results in a non-paradigmatic organization of tourism knowledge employing diverse epistemological styles to generate a cumulative approach and even juxtaposition the study of tourism. Indeed, since the 1970s international researchers have recommended that tourism best be studied in an interdisciplinary nature.<sup>55</sup> Yet, despite

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<sup>49</sup> C. Cooper (ed.), *Classic Reviews in Tourism*, (Channel View Publications, Clevedon, 2003), p. 4.

<sup>50</sup> C. Cooper (ed.), *Classic Reviews in Tourism*, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, pp. 649-653.

<sup>52</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, p. 653.

<sup>53</sup> J. Tribe, “The Indiscipline of Tourism”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(3), 1997, pp. 653-655.

<sup>54</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 450.

<sup>55</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 450-452.



ongoing calls for furthering interdisciplinary studies of tourism, it remains a reality that until now tourism has largely been studied, both internationally and locally, as a fragmented multidisciplinary field instead, thereby dislocating tourism studies. Thus, tourism research is characterized by “[multiple] dimensions and perspectives, yet juxtaposed without interaction”.<sup>56</sup> Initially, tourism research was rather generic in nature, yet recent publications address more specialized topics. This denotes an increased diversification and specialization of the tourism industry.<sup>57</sup> The trend is slowly changing, as is evident in publications and curriculum changes over the past decade. Indeed, the “field of tourism studies appears to be at a critical turning point”, whereby it has “broken out of its traditional institutional affiliation with business and management programs to take its place as a transdisciplinary field of cutting-edge scholarship”.<sup>58</sup> In this regard, tourism is emerging as a social phenomenon, whereby it should not be viewed as marginal, but rather as a “fundamental social force” and a “comprehensive analytic” through which new insights are gained, especially within the realm of the humanities.<sup>59</sup>

### **The humanities cluster and tourism**

A leading American specialist in tourism, Edward Inskeep, identifies different types of tourist attractions. He distinguishes between natural, cultural and special types of attractions. He further identifies a variety of attractions such as archaeological, historical and cultural heritage sites; distinctive cultural patterns such as religious ceremonies and ritual practices; arts and handicrafts; interesting economic activities such as tea plantations and porcelain manufacturing; unique urban areas such as townships or city centers; museums and monuments; cultural festivals such as carnivals; and the friendliness of the residents, as falling within the cultural domain.<sup>60</sup> Judging from the range of cultural manifestations acting as tourist attractions, it becomes clear that various established subjects within the humanities intersect with tourism. As indicated, tourism has evolved into an interdisciplinary field of study with highly specialized texts being regularly produced at academic institutions internationally. While generic works about planning and management aspects of tourism have dominated the field, other texts have started to emerge which cover a diverse range of more specialized topics. As stated by Sharpley, the tourism literature that emerged after the 1970s initially focused on the economics, but later expanded to “embrace the work of academics from a variety of other disciplinary backgrounds”.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 452.

<sup>57</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, (SAGE Publications Ltd., London, 2010), p. 1.

<sup>58</sup> C. Minca and T. Oakes (eds.), *Real Tourism: Practice, care, and politics in contemporary travel culture*, (Routledge, Oxon, 2012), p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> C. Minca and T. Oakes (eds.), *Real Tourism: Practice, care, and politics in contemporary travel culture*, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> E. Inskeep, *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*, (Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1991), pp. 76-85.

<sup>61</sup> R. Sharpley, *The Study of Tourism: Past Trends and Future Directions*, p. 1.

By means of a more practical and recent example, in 2012 B. Weiler, B. Moyle and C. McLennan performed research on “disciplines that influence tourism doctoral research” within the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.<sup>62</sup> It seems as though there has occurred a steady increase in the quantity of overall tourism knowledge production since 1951 and a notable increase in multidisciplinary research informing tourism especially over the past decade.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, it is evident that in recent years there is a global trend for tourism studies to move away from their traditional confines within business economics and management studies, and instead to encompass and draw information from a multitude of disciplines, many of which are firmly located in the humanities. This indicates an increasing depth in the maturity of tourism as a field of study, whereby the synthesis of two or more disciplines allows for the emergence of a new discipline. Therefore, this indicates that “multidisciplinary research [is] the future of social science research, including tourism”.<sup>64</sup> In the light of this, the relationship between the broader domain of heritage and cultural tourism with a selection of fields of study in the humanities cluster will be considered in more detail.

### Anthropology

It is evident, and now recognized, that culture and society play an important role in each travel niche and more specifically within the broader umbrella of heritage and cultural tourism. Therefore, the anthropology of tourism becomes a significant field of study within the social sciences of humanities. It is “concerned with the social and cultural nature of tourism and the behaviour of tourists”.<sup>65</sup> When tourism started occurring in the places where anthropologists had previously carried out their fieldwork, the interaction between hosts and guests opened up new fields of enquiry such as the analysis of tourism impacts on the environment and the lives of the locals and their traditions. Indigenous population groups in foreign destinations have a particular popular appeal to international tourists visiting “other” destinations. By encountering the “exotic other”, tourists come into contact with the host culture and environment of a particular region. This form of tourism might involve activities such as exploring “native homes and villages and the observation of, or participation in, traditional activities, such as rituals, ceremonies or dances”.<sup>66</sup> Hereby, the main focus is on ethnic or first peoples in their innate surroundings. The resulting cultural contact in an often remote environment has consequences on both the host population and the visiting guests. Such aspects need to be analyzed in an anthropological context. Therefore, rural tourism development, community-involvement in tourism initiatives and the cultural representation and commoditization of the native communities needs to be carefully analyzed and studied within the domain of anthropology as a key discipline of the humanities.

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<sup>62</sup> B. Weiler, B. Moyle and C. McLennan, “Disciplines that Influence Tourism Doctoral Research: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(3), 2012, p. 1425.

<sup>63</sup> B. Weiler, B. Moyle and C. McLennan, “Disciplines that Influence Tourism Doctoral Research: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(3), 2012, pp. 1433, 1437, 1442.

<sup>64</sup> B. Weiler, B. Moyle and C. McLennan, “Disciplines that Influence Tourism Doctoral Research: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(3), 2012, pp. 1426.

<sup>65</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 5.

<sup>66</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, pp. 117-118.

Past anthropological enquiry has mainly dealt with negative aspects of tourism, especially with the advent of mass tourism. This stems from the fact that anthropologists were mainly interested in analyzing the effects of cross-cultural contact between so-called dominant and subordinate societies. The resulting changes in the host society were predominantly focused upon in anthropological research along with an analysis of the authenticity of what was being displayed to the tourist.<sup>67</sup> Recently, however, anthropologists have “started to shift their focus from largely negative ethnographic critiques of the cultural impacts of tourism to a more balanced discussion of travel and tourism as a social and cultural phenomenon”.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, aspects such as identity, sense of place, acculturation, commoditization and the motivations, attitudes and reactions of tourists play an important role within the anthropology of tourism. It therefore places tourism well within the scope of the humanities.

### Sociology

Many of the above-mentioned elements regarding anthropological studies also feature prominently in sociology. Sociology within a tourism context deals with, amongst others, aspects such as the quality of the travel experience.<sup>69</sup> Also similar to anthropology, the sociology of tourism studies its impact on both the host and the guest. However, while anthropology focuses on the “individual level of perceptions and aspirations”, the sociology of tourism stresses the “level of social community analysis”.<sup>70</sup> In a very elementary manner, sociology makes use of individual observations about tourism to produce generalizations. Thus, it seems to work with generalizations to come to a conclusion.<sup>71</sup> By regarding tourism as a social phenomenon, the impacts of tourist visitation are also analyzed. The nature of the tourists themselves is also a subject of analysis considering their roles, attitudes, motivations and behaviour. In this way, diverse types of travellers can be identified.<sup>72</sup> Based on this, the relationship between the visitors and the host societies can be assessed. Another focal point of the sociology of tourism is the functioning and structuring of the tourism system as such.<sup>73</sup>

### The Arts

Art tourism as a special-interest niche is classified as a subcategory of heritage and cultural tourism. Art as a form of cultural expression has been a prominent, if not an indispensable, factor in travel motivation since the Grand Tour of the sixteenth century. Key draw cards in

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<sup>67</sup> V.L. Smith (ed.), *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1989), p. 267.

<sup>68</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 5.

<sup>69</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, pp. 5-8.

<sup>70</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 5.

<sup>71</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 157.

<sup>72</sup> For more information about tourist motivation, social interaction between indigenous communities and tourists, types of tourists and their motivations, please consult the book by P. Pearce, *The Social Psychology of Tourist Behaviour*, (Pergamon Press Inc., New York, 1982).

<sup>73</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, pp. 156-157.

this regard include the performing and visual arts, especially visits to art galleries or museums, opera houses, theatre, ballet, classical music and arts festivals. Lately, contemporary or popular music festivals, ethnic art and other forms of popular entertainment have also been included in this tourism niche. In line with this, the buildings that performances were presented in or art was exhibited in, in other words the related sites, have traditionally been as much an attraction as the arts themselves.<sup>74</sup>

The relationship between tourism and the arts tends to be complex. To attract greater numbers of visitors and to maximize the income, the “artistic integrity or authenticity of performances or events” is frequently compromised as artists adapt their work to serve a broader audience.<sup>75</sup> By means of popularizing performances, their international appeal might increase, but the authenticity of the performing cultural tourism product becomes questionable. Furthermore, the enhanced visitation of festivals and events could also generate friction between local communities and tourists. These aspects need to be analyzed within a humanities context.

### History and Heritage Studies

Historical tourism, also often referred to as heritage tourism, has been defined as travel for purposes of visiting “historic attractions, buildings and objects, as well as intangible forms of culture such as the traditions and lifestyles of communities”.<sup>76</sup> To comprehend this form of tourism, one needs to distinguish between the past: that is everything that has previously happened; and history: the act of interpreting selected aspects of the past; and heritage: which through representation uses the past in a contemporary context. By “commercializing” the past, the “heritage industry” was said to have been able to develop.<sup>77</sup> As such this tourism niche, which is located within the broader realm of cultural and historical studies, is very encompassing. Some of the vast ranges of attractions include “built heritage attractions” such as historical sites and buildings, architecture, monuments and archaeological sites, as well as “religious heritage attractions” such as the visitation of houses of worship and pilgrimages. “Industrial heritage attractions” such as mines and factories are just as significant within the context of history, since they enable an understanding of the way of life of past and current society highlighting the more social dimensions of history.<sup>78</sup> Related to this aspect is also the visitation to places of agricultural heritage, where certain economic activities are practiced such as visits to tea or coffee plantations.<sup>79</sup> Traditional festivals, cultural events and historic

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<sup>74</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 9.

<sup>75</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, pp. 173-174.

<sup>76</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 93.

<sup>77</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, p. 82.

<sup>78</sup> M.K. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*, pp. 95-96.

<sup>79</sup> For more information on coffee-producing destinations (such as Brazil, Columbia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Hawaii, Ethiopia, Kenya, Yemen, Java, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Vietnam), coffee culture destinations such as the café district in Seattle and coffee history destinations, most notably the Bramah Tea and Coffee Museum in London, please refer to the book edited by L. Jolliffe, *Coffee Culture, Destinations and Tourism*, (Channel View Publications, Bristol, 2010). Furthermore, for a more in-depth understanding of tea-producing destinations (such as China, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Malawi), tea-consuming destinations such as England, Russia, Canada and tea culture (displayed at tea houses in Hangzhou, China and Taipei, Taiwan, by means of the Japanese tea ceremony and in tea

reenactments of historical events also feature prominently in this category.<sup>80</sup> By its very nature, history is indispensable to most tourism exploits. Not only are the origins and developments integral to almost all tourist narratives, but historical skills such as the research and analysis of textual, oral, material, photographic and film sources, the detection of bias and the authentication of historical information by employing internal and external criticism are useful. In addition, the contextualization of historical data to comprehend the sources, establishing gaps in the historical record and creating public awareness through publishing relevant information and the ability to package a logically structured presentation are essential in presenting well-grounded information to the public.<sup>81</sup> In addition to this, history is one of the key aspects for any study in the humanities as every subject has a history, with its past making up the foundations upon which later research was built. As such, history is by its very nature integral to the essence of the practice of heritage and cultural tourism and tourism in general.

### Literature and Film

Literature as a key component of the diverse range of languages is another component of the humanities which has a direct relationship with tourism. “Literary tourism” as a niche involves travel to sites and tourist attractions “associated with writers and their works”.<sup>82</sup> Since the late eighteenth century, tourists have frequently travelled to the places where authors were born, where they lived or still live or where they have been buried. At the same time, visitors are also attracted to the landscapes represented in the literature be they novels, dramas or poems. In other words, this tourism can be related to the “real lives of the writers [as well as] the worlds created in their novels”.<sup>83</sup> Tourism related to this form of cultural manifestation falls directly within the domain of the humanities.

Closely related to the field of literary tourism, and a more recent phenomenon, is that of “film-induced tourism”. For over a century books have been transformed into films and are often remade, as was the case with several of Jane Austen’s classic novels and more recently with the popular *Harry Potter series* by J.K. Rowling. Interestingly, these films attract tourism to the locations they were filmed in. The term movie or movie-induced tourism thus “relates to on-location tourism that follows the success of a movie made (or set) in a particular region”.<sup>84</sup> However, the term “film” is much broader than “movie” as it also includes television, another form of fictional screen-based media. Thus the notion film or film-induced tourism is the preferred term in this regard. Stefan Roesch identifies film tourism as a “specific pattern of tourism that drives visitors to see screened places during or after the production of a feature film or a television production”.<sup>85</sup> People are thus attracted to sites

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museums in amongst others London, England), please consult the book edited by L. Jolliffe, *Tea and Tourism: Tourists, Traditions and Transformations*, (Channel View Publications, Clevedon, 2007).

<sup>80</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, pp. 93-95.

<sup>81</sup> J. Tosh and S. Lang, *The Pursuit of History*, pp. 88-110.

<sup>82</sup> Y. Smith, “Literary Tourism as a Developing Genre: South Africa as a case study”, (Honors Mini-Thesis, University of Pretoria, 2006), p. 1.

<sup>83</sup> D.T. Herbert (ed.), *Heritage, Tourism and Society*, (Mansell Publishing Limited, London, 1995), p. 33.

<sup>84</sup> S. Beeton, *Film-Induced Tourism*, (Channel View Publications, Clevedon, 2005), p. 9.

<sup>85</sup> S. Roesch, *The Experiences of Film Location Tourists*, (Channel View Publications, Bristol, 2009), p. 6.



through the author, the storyline or the way in which the places were portrayed in cinematic format. This then situates tourism within the literary and art dimensions of the humanities.

### Other

A range of other disciplines located in the humanities also have the potential of attracting tourism or contributing significantly to the creation of tourism theory. One such discipline is psychology, which enhances the understanding of tourist behavior and supplements and advances various theoretical discussions in the field. Furthermore, political science and law consider policies and legislation and thus also feature prominently within tourism theory.<sup>86</sup>

Similarly, urban geography or human geography could be mentioned as a subject that sits on the periphery of the humanities.<sup>87</sup> Essentially, urban tourism can be situated within the parameters of human geography, but also within the ambit of the historical, cultural, anthropological and sociological domains of the humanities. In addition, environmental studies and urban and regional planning feature significantly in tourism research.<sup>88</sup>

### Tourism research in the humanities

Within the context of situating tourism as a field of study in the humanities, in 1990 the sociologist John Urry proposed a new theoretical model by applying the concept of the “gaze”, coined by Jaques Lacan and Michel Foucault in the 1960s, to tourism.<sup>89</sup> Urry realized the importance of the way in which tourists consume visual images of a destination, a landscape or place. They take photographs and purchase postcards when they visit a site, book window seats in airplanes and trains and ascend high buildings to appreciate a better view of a location. In fact, “sightseeing’ is synonymous with tourism and has been since its earliest days”.<sup>90</sup> However, what is of significance is not only the revelation that travellers seek out sights central to tourism studies, but also the fact that these consumed sights are “selected, constructed, stage-managed and directed by an increasingly influential tourism industry”.<sup>91</sup> It is here that the analysis goes beyond the mere business of economics of numbers, profits and trends.

As the consumption of images needs to be looked at in more detail, tourism is squarely placed within the domain of the social sciences. Especially when identifying how destinations are

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<sup>86</sup> B. Weiler, B. Moyle and C. McLennan, “Disciplines that Influence Tourism Doctoral Research: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(3), 2012, pp. 1435-1436.

<sup>87</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, pp. 178-179.

<sup>88</sup> B. Weiler, B. Moyle and C. McLennan, “Disciplines that Influence Tourism Doctoral Research: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(3), 2012, pp. 1435-1436.

<sup>89</sup> R. Scheyvens, *Tourism for Development: Empowering Communities*, (Pearson Education Limited/Prentice Hall, London, 2002), p. 38.

<sup>90</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 175.

<sup>91</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 175.



represented in marketing imagery and advertisements, this becomes significant since the notions of a destination are shaped in the tourists' minds before they have travelled there. The picturesque images – in guidebooks, holiday brochures, Internet websites and television programmes – are usually biased as they directly and obviously inform a tourist what to look at and, indirectly and by omission, what to avoid. These selected sights are then reproduced in photographs and circulated amongst family and friends after the conclusion of the trip. Thus not only is the destination presented in a certain positive or negative way by destination marketers, but also the viewers and visitors are influential. In order to gain the attention of potential tourists, these images must be distinct from the ordinary everyday experiences. Most importantly, the objects must present imagery of the “exotic” or the “other”.<sup>92</sup> This once more ties up with and features prominently in anthropological and sociological studies connected to heritage and cultural tourism. The significance of the concept of the “tourist gaze” further accentuates the relevance of studying tourism within the humanities.

Turning from the theoretical to the mere practical evidence of tourism's relationship with the humanities is a 2011 study by J. Tribe and H. Xiao. They claim that the journal *Annals of Tourism Research* is specifically geared at “exploring the academic side of tourism” as part of the social sciences/humanities.<sup>93</sup> Academic journals in general have the purpose to disseminate new knowledge and to showcase the development of a field of study. In accordance with this, C-K. Cheng, X. Li, J.F. Petrick and J.T. O'Leary claim that “[examining] journal performance is thus considered important for the growth of a research field”.<sup>94</sup> Numerous such studies have already been conducted in marketing, economics, medicine and other fields of research and would be able to trace the academic development of tourism as well.

In this very relevant editorial of *Annals of Tourism Research* Tribe and Xiao analyze past issues to identify an academic trend for studying tourism within the parameters of the humanities. By reflecting on tourism research and its knowledge production, they realized that “its theoretical state-of-the-art from paradigmatic, methodological and multi-disciplinary perspectives have constituted a primary subject area of published articles in recent volumes”.<sup>95</sup> Prominent topics of study included tourism education and research, different approaches to tourism studies and its development. The latter topic deals with the actual and possible impacts of tourism, the relationship of tourism with communities and other stakeholders and discussions about sustainability.<sup>96</sup> Other articles have focused on aspects such as authenticity and the experiences of tourists, identifying different types of tourists, destinations and attractions, the motivation and behaviour of tourists – which ultimately also affects their decision-making to travel to a destination – in addition to knowledge and analysis of the

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<sup>92</sup> M. Smith, N. MacLeod and M. Hart Robertson, *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, p. 176.

<sup>93</sup> J. Tribe and H. Xiao (eds.), “Developments in Tourism Social Science”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(1), 2011, p. 11.

<sup>94</sup> C.-K. Cheng, X.(R.) Li, J.F. Petrick and J.T. O'Leary, “An examination of tourism journal development”, *Tourism Management* 32(1), 2001, p. 53.

<sup>95</sup> J. Tribe and H. Xiao (eds.), “Developments in Tourism Social Science”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(1), 2011, p. 11.

<sup>96</sup> J. Tribe and H. Xiao (eds.), “Developments in Tourism Social Science”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(1), 2011, p. 11-15.

satisfaction of tourists. Tribe and Xiao add that culture, heritage and cultural change made up another focal area of tourism research, as did the representation of history, identity and image production.<sup>97</sup> Interestingly, the areas of recently published articles in the *Annals of Tourism Research* fall beyond the domain of the above-mentioned themes, while the authors also point to new subject areas relating to and located within the humanities.<sup>98</sup>

As is evident, the disciplinary focuses incorporated within the scope of tourism have grown and diversified over time. While this is true, a narrower disciplinary focus was evident in other recent journals. In fact, such topic specialization seems to be a trend displaying the increasing maturation of tourism research.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, the proliferation of tourism journals, covering theoretical and applied knowledge, indicates that tourism is indeed an expanding field of study. This is also reflected in the growing number of degrees in tourism offered at tertiary institutions.<sup>100</sup>

## Conclusion

Even though tourism has been traditionally viewed as part of economic and business sciences, it is evident that the field of study is of great relevance to the humanities and has developed in this direction. In the past, tourism was studied under diverse disciplines. Since this provided difficulties in terms of developing an encompassing theoretical framework, scholars are divided. As indicated, some have suggested developing it as a distinct discipline, while others have argued that tourism, as a comparatively new field of study, does not yet fulfill the criteria necessary for a discipline. It seems that at this stage, the best way to approach the study of tourism is to apply interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary methods of research. This points to growth and a depth in maturity for the field, so that it may soon emerge as a discipline in its own right. Indeed, the “interdisciplinary approach articulates the double movement of disciplinary specialization and the awareness of an autonomous logic of the touristic that has been emerging within ‘tourism studies’”.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, the study of heritage and cultural tourism can be comfortably located within the humanities, though not yet as a discipline in its own right at this stage, but as an interdisciplinary field of study borrowing and integrating elements from a range of the established disciplines within the humanities.

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<sup>97</sup> J. Tribe and H. Xiao (eds.), “Developments in Tourism Social Science”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(1), 2011, p. 15-20.

<sup>98</sup> J. Tribe and H. Xiao (eds.), “Developments in Tourism Social Science”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(1), 2011, p. 20-22.

<sup>99</sup> C.-K. Cheng, X.(R.) Li, J.F. Petrick and J.T. O’Leary, “An examination of tourism journal development”, *Tourism Management* 32(1), 2001, p. 57.

<sup>100</sup> C.-K. Cheng, X.(R.) Li, J.F. Petrick and J.T. O’Leary, “An examination of tourism journal development”, *Tourism Management* 32(1), 2001, p. 58.

<sup>101</sup> F. Darbellay and M. Stock, “Tourism as Complex Interdisciplinary Research Object”, *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(1), 2012, p. 455.