

Abstract for ASA Workshop on Expectations and Satisfaction
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Forward Into the Past: 'Digging' the Balearic Islands Mini abstract:
Tourist motivations, expectations and satisfactions excavating prehistoric sites on Mallorca will be contrasted to the desires, aims and goals of the archaeologist organisers and varied local perceptions of whose heritage is being considered and how and by whom it is being marketed.

Long Abstract (on site) A rise in heritage, identity and environmental consciousness has made conservation of the ancient, the natural and the unique of major importance to both local and tourist visitors to the Balearic Islands. However what is 'natural' or 'authentic' and worthy of conserving is a disputed question. With tourism now a major economic and social force in most of the islands bordering the Mediterranean, culture is often commoditized. Monuments are cleaned and made accessible to tourists and the tourism industry relies on such images to attract people to adventure into the past, they market past culture. Restored ancient monuments and preserved relics on the island of Mallorca offer the visitors an experience of another place and time which allows them to view their own lives in contrast to a far distant past. Island systems, are unique laboratories to gain knowledge and understanding of tourist and providers expectations, satisfactions, appeal and desire in local, international and global terms. This study will focus on an archaeological dig in one of the most tourist oriented areas of the Mediterranean where the commoditization of people, present and past cultures and environment is highly developed. The tourists have diverse expectations (but are their expectation really met?); there are locals who try to imagine/anticipate what the tourists expect from Mallorca (e.g. an experience of another place and time) but how successful is their guess?; there are archaeologists with their own expectations of discovering another place and time. How these different/similar expectations interact with each other will form the dynamic of this paper. The tourists motivations, imaginings and satisfactions of participating in the unravelling of ancient lives through the study of artefacts, landscapes and human remains will be contrasted to the stereotypical expectations of sand, sea and sex tourism so often associated with the Balearic Islands..

Forward Into the Past: 'Digging' the Balearic Islands

Historical and contemporary myths of the Mediterranean continue to attract a multitude of visitors. A rise in heritage, identity and environmental consciousness has made conservation of the ancient, the natural and the unique of major importance to both local and tourist visitors to the Balearic Islands. However what is 'natural', 'authentic' or 'heritage' and worthy of conserving is a disputed question. Walsh (1992) sees heritage as a resource, a form of cultural production feeding new social identities and Fowler (1992) sees heritage as distinct from history (and prehistory) by virtue of its location within the leisure and tourism industry. This paper will suggest that participating in an archaeological dig combines both by offering social, physical, intellectual, spiritual, leisure and recreational experiences.

With tourism now a major economic and social force in most of the islands bordering the Mediterranean, culture is often commoditized. However, what is ultimately consumed are not objects or places but each person's sensation or illusions of them. Places are often imbued with magical or mythical qualities by those who observe them even more than by those who inhabit them. Traveling down unmarked roads hoping to 'discover' new sights, sounds and feelings far removed from one's usual recognisable habitat allows the traveller's imagination a wide span. Many who study tourism today write about 'authenticity', spectacle, the imaginings of governments, tourist site developers, constructors, souvenir manufacturers, providers of services, accommodations, activities for tourists made 'real' for tourist consumption...

Tourists come in many sizes, ages, nationalities, ethnicities,. Within any of these groups there are also many differences (Cohen). Therefore to discuss tourists we need to identify the characteristics of those we are talking about. There are mass tourists that come to Majorca by the thousands every summer, there are those who have bought second residences in the places they once visited as holiday makers and soon decided to make their visits more regular, there are authors and artists, hikers and bikers and archaeology students hoping to join one of the many 'digs' that are revealing the islands

past visitors, settlers and cultural remains. The perception and promotion of the islands natural landscapes, climate, and agricultural past includes all of these choices and more.

Re-imagining the past – glorifying it, making up things or interpreting them in different ways may be people’s way of expressing either a desired or nostalgic image of a harmonious past and/or a recent present which never really existed. Thus the element of fantasy or the imaginary enters into the way in which local people conceptualise their history, visitors observe sites and specialists interpret prehistory. (journal of History Workshop Luis Passirini). Monuments are cleaned and made accessible to tourists and the tourism industry relies on such images to attract people to adventure into the past, they market past culture. Ancient land and buildings owned by elites and cared for by locals have been modernised into hotels and landscaped gardens. However, many locals, land owners, residents, or farmers, may not identify in any way with these changes and in contrast to those who make their living from tourism, are not always willing to open their lands for public access.

Island systems, are unique laboratories to gain knowledge and understanding of tourist and provider expectations, satisfactions, appeal and desire in local, international and global terms. This study will focus on an archaeological dig in one of the most tourist oriented areas of the Mediterranean where the commoditization of people, present and past cultures and environment is highly developed. Excavating and restoring ancient monuments and preserved relics on the islands of Mallorca offer these visitors an experience of another place and time which allows them to become physically (and spiritually) involved in an unwritten past and to view their own lives in contrast. The tourists’ motivations, imaginings and satisfactions of participating in the unravelling of ancient lives through the study of artifacts, landscapes and human remains will be blended with the aims and goals of the archaeologists and contrasted to varied local perceptions of whose heritage is being considered and how and by whom it is being marketed.

We gain insights into providers perceptions of tourist imaginings via the analysis of informational materials given to tourists from tourist offices based at airports, official centres, hotels, etc. These reveal the activities and cultural resources highlighted for tourists: excursions, museum visits, tours,

music, art, etc? Through these sources we are made aware of the variety of respondents, questions and answers we require to begin to understand the vast array of expectations or satisfactions of any of those mentioned. These internal materials should be contrasted/compared with those materials published outside the islands by tour operators, travel magazines, newspapers, etc.

Tourist literature endeavours to highlight the unique and attractive character of each place it describes and, in part, may represent a version of the island that is very real for many people. We need to think about the kinds of knowledges, values, concepts and attitudes being conveyed. Differences in the descriptions given reflect the differing ambitions and assumptions of their authors.(Catherine Nash 1997 Lampeter Human Geography and EMRD Project).

Having run an archaeological project in Mallorca for the past 30 years, I would like to use the 'tourists' who join this project as my study group to gain some deeper insights into the motivations, expectations and satisfactions they have experienced during their fortnights visit to our archaeological project. The 'dig' I am discussing is marketed by a non-profit environmentally concerned organisation, Earthwatch, to a limited subscription (members pay an annual fee of £25 to join and receive three brochures a year) audience, as follows:

This sun-soaked, scenic isle, with terraces of olive fig, almond, and lemon groves climbing steep slopes from the blue Mediterranean Sea, has been a cultural melting pot for six thousand years. Prehistoric cultures immigrated from every direction in succession, bringing their own advances in architecture, agriculture and metallurgy. You can help investigate the activities of various cultures that used the Son Mas Sanctuary, among the oldest known ritual sites in the Western Mediterranean and help to interpret the migrations of peoples to this crossroads of the Mediterranean, from the mists of prehistory until Roman times, and their impact on the ecology and development of the island. Deia, a quaint village in the northern sierras of Mallorca steeped in history, provides a timeless backdrop for your exploration. (Earthwatch catalogue 2006)

This invitation to participate in an archaeological dig on Mallorca draws on the visual, social, cosmopolitan, intellectual and adventurous curiosities of the individual contemplating this project. The prospective participants are

drawn from a captive 'members' audience. The above description has been designed to entice people to join the archaeologist in this beautiful setting to aid in unravelling the prehistoric past of Mallorca. Their participation will provide the funding needed to realise this work. The archaeologist's acceptance of non-professional volunteers aged 16-75 is motivated by their essential financial and physical contribution to the realisation of the project.

Many of the participants (mostly American a few British) expressed 'dreams of being an archaeologist' which when they were growing up in the 1940s, 1950s or 1960s was seen to be risky in terms of earning a living. These visitors came to Mallorca with the illusion of 'living their dream...'. They said, 'the description of the project reawakened their dream and allowed them to imagine what life as an archaeologist was like'. The setting in a mountain village with terraced landscape supporting olive trees, streams running from the mountains to the sea, sunny days and social evenings in local cafes made it even more attractive.

They commented on their sensation that whatever had transpired on this landscape over the centuries had definitely involved enormous human efforts. Stone walls criss-crossed the mountains, supporting trees and earth and the occasional set of buildings (fincas). The PI running the project was the epitome of the intrepid archaeologist; tall, muscular, intense and incredibly enthusiastic about what he said "was not a profession" but "a way of life". He lived, breathed and dreamed archaeology. And his enthusiasm touched all those who came to the project.. This combination of landscape, charismatic leader and imaginings of lives lived within ancient stone buildings in unknown social spaces where rituals of life and death were carried on made this 'holiday' a dream come true.

The participants live communally in a unique artist built home, sharing dormitory accommodations, meals and daily field and lab activities. Evenings they can join the 'other' visitors and locals in the few village cafes where they can compare their experiences being involved in a scheduled work project in contrast to the sun, sea and sangria days of those they imagine are 'normal' tourists. However, a vacation, time away from home, a change of routine, travel, recreation and leisure are parts of all of their experiences.

Reactions from those they meet may vary from; "Are you crazy, spending your holiday digging up Mallorca" to "Wow, how exciting...!" Their

choices to join this project may range from: “Fulfilling a life’s dream to be the first person to uncover a past relic” or “wanting a participatory, group experience for learning and contributing to science” or “It just fit into my holiday schedule”.

It is clear through the comradeship and esprit de corps that develops over the fortnight’s duration that both the archaeologist and the team gain knowledge, pleasure and in-depth communication from this experience. (Fn People of different social backgrounds, perfect strangers joined together for this project form a ‘normative communitas’ (as described by Turner) instant friendships develop and many people who meet on a team maintain friendships over many years and often return to the project to once again share in its progress. (Two women returned seven times, one man eleven times).

Prehistoric archaeology identifies and studies cultures displaced in place and time in the absence of documentary accounts. It is between the direct interaction of individuals and objects that the culture is mediated; the objects have embedded within the materiality of their design and manufacture a series of cultural values that shape the practices, both body and mind, by which those objects were used. They have been shaped for instrumental purposes and designed to fit in with particular types of cultural practice. Where a successful cultural form provides an ongoing framework for interpreting and generating experience, boundaries are easily discernable, symbols are neatly situated, and sequence is explicitly controlled. (P.Rabinow Reflectionson Fieldwork in Morocco1977 Berkeley:U of C Press). Nevertheless, participants interpretations and imaginings are often more colorful and ethnocentric which adds to evening discussions animated by local wine.

The mediation of tourism encounters in the village over extended intervals of time and space has evolved to the point that ‘the diggers’ are identified in local vernacular as *els oses* (those who dig up graves- bones). Nicknames are an important indication of a person’s place in village life. (fn Waldren 1996 House names as metaphors for social relations). “Diggers” are recognised by their khaki trousers or bermudas, dusty t-shirts and heavy shoes in the midst of the tourist’s sandals and bright colours. By the second day they are greeted in the local shop or cafe and often asked “How is it going? Did you

find anything good today? (fn local shop owner's sons speak English and enjoy contact with familiar visitors).

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