

# CURRENT RESEARCH AND TRENDS IN CULTURAL TOURISM: A REVIEW

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**Abstract:** *This review article analyses the evolution of cultural tourism as a field of study over the previous decade, outlining important trends and research topics. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has reaffirmed the importance of cultural tourism as a means of attracting tourists from across the world. There has also been a rapid growth in the study of cultural tourism, particularly in areas like cultural consumption, cultural reasons, heritage protection, and the relationship with creative industries. A rising emphasis on indigenous and other minority populations, as well as geographical extension of cultural tourism research, are among the major study areas. Some recommendations for further study, including the emergence of trans-modern cultures and new technological implications, are included in the report's end.*

**Keywords:** *Cultural tourism, tourism industry, Tangible Heritage, Intangible heritage*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Culture and tourism have been inextricably linked throughout history. People travel to observe cultural sites, landmarks, and events. As a result, they contribute to the spread of culture. Only in the last few decades has the impact of culture and tourism been officially described as a type of consumption. Cultural tourism has evolved as a social phenomenon and academic subject primarily as a result of the surge in leisure travel following World War II. European tourism aided in the promotion of cultural understanding and the restoration of devastated economies. Foreign travel increased as money and consumption expanded in the 1960s and 1970s, as did cultural consumption. The term "culture tourism" was coined in the 1980s to describe the rising migration of international tourists to significant monuments and sites. At this time, the World Tourism Organization developed its first definition of cultural tourism. In the early 1990s, this 'new' market was estimated to be worth between \$2 trillion and \$3 trillion, and these numbers were linked back to the WTO, despite the fact that there was no way to know how they were generated. During the 1980s and 1990s, both international and domestic travel increased, culminating in a 'heritage boom' [1][2].

The early 1990s reflect a period of cultural tourism transition during which, in contrast to the earlier emphasis on high-society visitors, a new opportunity for growth in the broader market was uncovered. Academic study has been formed as an aim for a well-known phenomenon within numerous tourism destinations, such as cultural tourism. It was during this period that the first textbooks on cultural tourism were published in the United States [3]. Ancient tourism, heritage tourism, gastronomic tourism, film, and innovative tourist attractions are just a few of the many enterprises that have sprung up. Growing knowledge of culture may explain the increase in the number of publications on the subject of culture. The concept of culture continued to develop conceptually, resulting in an increase in the number of publications devoted to the subject. Congestion of World Heritage Sites raised issues, which Boniface addressed in 2013. In addition to new experiences becoming increasingly significant to tourists, tangible heritage, which had previously been largely neglected, contributed to highlighting the importance of intangible legacy in tourism [4]. Additionally, the UNWTO conducted an online poll of approximately 43% of UNWTO member nations and 61 international experts and academics as part of its annual Report on Tourism and Cultural Synergies, which was issued in April 2018. 88 percent of national tourism organizations agreed that cultural tourism was a critical component of their tourism strategy. Additionally, survey respondents predicted that cultural tourism would develop more rapidly during the next five years. For the first time, empirical research provided support for initial estimations. This method accounted for around 39% of all foreign tourism arrivals in 2017, or over 516 million abroad trips. It appears to be substantiating a claim that culture tourism (or the hypothesis that it accounts for 40% of global tourism) is based on scant, if any, empirical data [5]. The definition of cultural tourism is one of the most challenging topics [6]. At the 22nd Session of the General Assembly, held in Chengdu, China, the UNWTO presented a new operational definition for the various categories of tourism, which also included cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is a subset of tourism that entails exploring, learning about, experiencing, and consuming tangible and intangible facets of a destination's culture.

Contemporary cultural tourism now has a more comprehensive meaning. The phrase is currently used to refer to not only physical landmarks and monuments, but also to ways of living, creativity, and "everyday culture."

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE: MAJOR THEMES

According to a Google Scholar search for the term "culture tourism," the growing body of information about cultural tourism is established. Between 2005 and 2015, cultural tourism publications grew at a breakneck pace, accounting for approximately 5% of all tourist publications by 2017. Simultaneously, various new subthemes within the field have aided in the advancement of this growth. Sociology, economics, anthropology, and psychology are all major academic departments that deal with these themes. First, a brief review of some of the important areas of study relevant to these subjects is provided, followed by a discussion of some of the significant developing research topics in these fields. A large amount of emphasis has been placed on research articles produced after 2010, which is understandable given the breadth of the literature. Additional sources may be able to give summaries of the material that has been published to date [7]. However, an examination of the literature reveals that the current review is the first to address the topic of cultural tourism in its entirety. According to our examination of Google Scholar and Scopus articles, cultural tourism is a sort of consumption of culture, and the reasons for doing so are many. They include the desire to experience a place's culture and its legacy, as well as its economic benefits.

### 2.1. Cultural consumption

Sociologists have extensively studied the subject of cultural consumption as a form of cultural tourism. Much of this study has been conducted to gain a better understanding of the many types of people that travel on cultural excursions and how they are differentiated from one another. As early as the 1960s, when cultural tourism was first discussed, vacationers were classified as "generic" or "particular" cultural tourists. While most visitors went on vacation to relax and forget about their worries, some travelers made a concerted effort to immerse themselves in the destination's culture. These distinct typologies were later expanded to encompass distinct modes of cultural tourism based on characteristics such as the purposefulness and depth of cultural motivation [7] visits to attractions and events [8], or the degree of mixing in a person's cultural tourism behavior. To this purpose, the great majority of these research concentrated on determining which segments of the cultural tourism demographic are most likely to find various types of cultural activities particularly intriguing. Stylianou-Lambert (2011)[9] discovered that visitors view museums differently depending on the perceptual filters they apply. This demonstrates that in order to truly understand the complexities of cultural tourism, a multidisciplinary and multidimensional approach is required. Richards and van der Ark (2013)[10] employed multiple correspondence analyses to ascertain the characteristics of cultural consumption in cultural tourism. Based on these results, we may infer that vacation kind and attraction setting have a major influence on the kind of culture that is consumed, which implies Visitor experience is created through a combination of visitor-related and context-related aspects [11]. Furthermore, according to Richards and van der Ark (2013)[10], cultural tourists may be drawn to the creation of a career in cultural tourism, especially if younger tourists are more inclined to consume contemporary art, creativity, and modern architecture, while older tourists favor traditional monuments and museums.

### 2.2. Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism has been a significant issue of sociological research as a form of cultural consumption. The majority of this research is focused on cultural tourism audiences, with the specific purpose of comprehending this population's segmentation and stratification. Earlier discussions of cultural tourism centered on the distinction between 'generic' and 'specific' cultural tourists, with the former seeking a vacation that incorporates some aspect of the destination's culture and the latter travelling to gain information about the destination's culture [6]. This straightforward dichotomy was later expanded to encompass distinct types of cultural tourists based on various characteristics, such as the depth and purposefulness of the desire to explore a culture (as evidenced by stays at attractions and events or low levels of mixing in cultural tourism behavior), versus those who simply want to see and spend money on tourist traps (e.g., shops and restaurants) [12][13]. The majority of these studies aimed to identify unique subgroups or segments of the cultural tourism audience that would be drawn to particular sorts of cultural events. Falk (2011)'s [11] research on tourist attractions and experience emphasizes the importance of both visitor- and context-related characteristics in the visitor experience. Cultural tourists might consider establishing a "travel profession" if they enjoy contemporary art, innovation, and modern architecture, whereas conventional tourists prefer to see more traditional art and architecture.

### 2.3. Economic aspects of cultural tourism

Tourism has the potential to be a substantial economic engine, particularly for historical preservation, as tourism revenue helps fund preservation initiatives. At times, the impact of tourism revenue streams on cultural institutions has raised concerns about how far those streams have spread [2]. A recurring theme in discussions on cultural tourism, particularly in developing economies, is a desire to promote tourism across geographic boundaries [14]. A special edition of the Journal of Cultural Economics published recently emphasized the rising link between cultural tourism and the economy (2017). The publication is comprised of several research, one of which details the spending habits of cultural tourists in Amsterdam [15]. Although significant theoretical progress has not been made, Noonan and Rizzo (2017)[16] note in their introduction to the special issue on "The Economics of Cultural Tourism" that "both theoretical and empirical advances have been made in recent years." The latter instance identifies new application areas, such as persons who use illegal drugs recreationally, foreign students taking language classes, and film festivals, as well as the capacity to operate in wholly new fields, such as the development of online "crowd sourcing" and cultural customs. However, there is little difference between cultural tourism and tourism in general. It represents a fundamental challenge to the field in terms of advancing toward the development of unique cultural and economic theories of tourism. Currently, the availability of time series data is assisting in the improvement of the accuracy of economic research on cultural tourism in a few locations. Spain is a noteworthy example, as surveys performed over the last few years with domestic and foreign tourists have yielded useful data from which to learn. As the studies demonstrate, Spain's burgeoning cultural tourism sector attracts both long-haul and first-time visitors [17].

Cultural tourists are a prominent type of visitor to Spain and hence contribute to the financial sustainability of local museums [18]. Fernandez-Morales and Cisneros-Martinez (2015)[19] demonstrate that cultural tourism significantly contributes to the reduction of seasonal variance in Andaluca. Guccio et al. (2018)[15] conduct study in Italy on the relationship between money and cultural legacy. On average, a million euros invested in cultural heritage generates over a thousand additional cultural tourists, demonstrating the direct relationship between regional tourism performance and the number of cultural visitors. Additionally, these researchers examined the appeal of art exhibitions to tourists in Italy [20]. A long-term study revealed that modern art exhibitions have a positive short-term effect on tourism and a moderately positive long-term effect on visitor flows. According to their research, "temporary art exhibitions benefit from increased visitor traffic if they are integrated into a location's core features."

## 2.4. Cultural heritage

Historically, cultural tourism has relied on tangible legacies, such as buildings, for support. Perhaps even more unpredictable than heritage definitions are the problem of cultural tourism. He views heritage as a collection of diverse resources, including built patrimony, a way of life, ancient artifacts, and contemporary art and culture. However, there has been a focus on specific aspects of heritage, such as World Heritage Sites, or on the 'content' of heritage those visitors and others struggle over. According to **Alberts and Hazen (2010)** [21], properties must possess "integrity" and "authenticity" and "great universal importance" in order to be considered for World Heritage classification. They acknowledge, however, that such concepts are difficult to define and subject to interpretation depending on the cultural context. This book examines Ogimachi, Japan, and the impact the World Heritage Site has on the local inhabitants. This study discovered that WHS inscription increased tourism, had a high appeal to domestic tourists, and influenced how local residents felt about cultural preservation and WHS designation. **Shin (2010)** [22] also does research on Gwangju, Korea's cultural capital. It was observed that the majority of residents living near the building site agreed on the importance of cultural tourism and believed it may have a good effect on urban growth. While some senior residents expressed dissatisfaction with the effects of cultural tourism, others expressed satisfaction with the city's better reputation and the community's strengthened ethnic identity and pride. **Vong and Ung (2012)** [23] discovered that visitors to Macau's heritage sites gain knowledge about the city's history and culture. They emphasize the critical function of customer service in the packaging of heritage tourist objects. The most recent study widened the definition of cultural heritage to cover both tangible and intangible legacies. **Zhu (2012)** [24] conducts an ethnographic study of the Naxi wedding ceremony held in the Lijiang Wedding Courtyard. It is extremely controversial whether this ritual results in authentic performance. However, this practice cultivates an acute awareness of the connection between memory, habit, and bodily practice. Zhu introduces the concept of "performative authenticity" to emphasize the transforming process of authentication. Additionally, it includes an increasing degree of emotional labor in the creation of cultural materials [25]. Concerns about the sustainability of heritage have grown as tangible and intangible heritage are more integrated into the tourism industry. To ensure that heritage and tourism continue to be integrated, **Loulanski and Loulanski (2011)** [26] conducted a meta-analysis of the literature and identified fifteen critical factors, including local involvement, education and training, authenticity and interpretation, sustainable tourism management, and integrated planning.

## 2.5. Creative economy

The phrase "creative economy" has been used to refer to the emergence of creative processes and the production of new knowledge throughout the economy for a lengthy period of time [27]. Intangible legacy and contemporary culture have become more popular as destinations for cultural tourism, and this has resulted in an increased focus on the relationship between the tourist industry and the creative economy. Through creative economic approaches to tourism, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) highlighted the advantages of providing engaging creative content and experiences, stimulating innovation, and contributing to the originality and attractiveness of destinations.

Over the years, a slew of research has examined how tourism affects the creative economy, as well as its many sub-sectors and activity types and the crucial role of information and networks in tourism. Convergence has occurred in numerous regions across the globe as a result of the emergence of creative enterprises, creative clusters, and the creative class [28]. To be clear, although **Fahmi et al.** [29] accepts that the expansion of the creative economy has been related to other economic development objectives (such as tourism and cultural preservation), they stress that it has been "compulsorily attached" to these other agendas. Some of the most famous monuments in the world's architecture, such as the Bilbao Guggenheim, were designed by starchitects [30]. Alternatively, stay at design hotels or pay a visit to the World Design Capital [31]. Destination marketing's objective is to attract the "creative class" of cultural tourists who are attracted to areas with a favorable creative climate and "buzz." As more of these locales are uncovered and classed as "creative clusters," there are an increasing number of them worldwide [32]. Many of these once-designated clusters are now major tourism destinations in a number of countries, and the number of visitors visiting informal creative hotspots in cities such as London is expanding [33][32]. While numerous case studies such as "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" and "Lost in Thailand" demonstrate the impact of the film, the media also has a significant impact on cultural tourism flows, as evidenced by the numerous other examples found in case studies such as "The Lord of the Rings" and "Lost in Thailand" [34]. In 2013, one million additional Chinese tourists visited Thailand as a result of the Lost in Thailand film, demonstrating how tourism for film can rearticulate geopolitical imaginaries (and consequently global perspectives) and contribute to specific place images and stereotypes.

Create art, dance, cook, and engage in other forms of creative expression to help define a destination's culture. To attract tourists, projects must now deal with mobile creative processes and concepts embedded within a site. Numerous individuals will begin to question whether copyrighting or conserving intangible cultural material should be permitted [35]. Globalization of culture raises the stakes for integrating intangible legacy, as it is already a challenge for material heritage. A lot of work has been done in the field of gastronomy to ensure that food items are produced locally, such as the formation of local-labeling programs and regional product authenticity. Labels like this one are both instruments for keeping our food safe and techniques to attract cultural tourist visits [36].

A variety of food and wine-related tourist routes, including as olive oil routes, cheese routes, and wine routes, also help to promote cultural tourism [37]. Furthermore, the mobility of creative abilities and knowledge has offered fresh insights into the role of networks in delivering knowledge flows and generating creative experiences. While a well-known rock festival promotes cultural tourism, in order to highlight the Vikings, a Viking ship museum and, most recently, the development of the RAGNAROCK Museum, which tells of the movement of borders and the influence of youth culture throughout time, were established.

### 3. RECENT EMERGENCE & PROSPECTS IN THE STUDY OF CULTURAL TOURISM

Many of the patterns mentioned in the United Nations World Tourism Organization report on Tourism and Culture Synergies may be seen in this short assessment of cultural tourism studies from the previous decade or two (2018). Almost all of the academics who participated in the UNWTO poll agreed that sustainable heritage will substantially grow during the forecast period, not just in the five years prior to the study.

In some respects, this isn't a surprise, given the development of cultural tourism is mostly driven by greater tourism, rather than just a development in world heritage [38]. Although travel and tourism has traditionally been seen as a specialized business that attracts tourists with a higher educational level as well as disposable income, it has evolved into a more mainstream sector that is accessible to a broader demographic. For example, in many places the expansion of "mass cultural tourism" has resulted in congestion at major sites and accusations of "overtourism" in certain towns. Because the cultural tourist market has become less elitist, culture tourism's once-dominant status is now under jeopardy. Once upon a time, cultural tourism was considered as a kind of socially acceptable filter that would assist bring in 'good' visitors. Increasing numbers have made it possible for it to be perceived as the thin end of the mass tourism wedge, destroying the very culture that visitors seek. Mixed results have been found in the present study on the hypothesized impacts. **Popp** [39] discovered evidence of both good and negative consequences associated to the influx of cultural visitors in Florence, Italy's art capital. **Neuts and Nijkamp** [40] observed the same thing in Bruges, Belgium, where they discovered no connection between congestion and local sentiments. It has been shown that cultural tourist flows offer significant well-being benefits for people of German cities studied by [41].

Tourism's cultural focus is shifting as cultural tourism grows. There is now a dual search for the ordinary and the extraordinary [42]. Tourists are increasingly trying to "live like a local" in order to avoid being labelled as a tourist, or because the 'local' has become the new standard of authenticity. Local means different things to different people in the community, therefore how does one define a 'local'? As a matter of fact, this is a question that many travelers, as well as many places, find difficult to answer [43].

According to **Jovicic** [44], the emergence of 'new cultural tourism' may be traced back to a number of significant societal shifts that have occurred in the last several decades. These are the mobility turn, the performative turn, and the creative turn [45]. When it comes to cultural tourism, we can see all three of these trends coming to life. Since tourists and locals increasingly play varied roles in relation to one another, it becomes more difficult to define the "culture tourist" and the target of cultural tourism as static categories (Russo & Richards, 2016). An in-betweenness, as identified by **Kjr Mansfeldt in 2015** [45], emerges as a result of this, where the untouristic starts to define visitor experience and create new space that does not belong to either of these two worlds.

As a result, the definition of cultural tourism is being challenged by this complexity. UNWTO's original definition of cultural tourism was that it encompassed "all tourism experiences" (because all tourism implies learning), but subsequent definitions were more narrowly focused on measuring and understanding this emerging phenomenon [2], and even more broad concepts that include in-betweenness and non-tourism were proposed by the UNWTO (2018).

This demonstrates the need of studying cultural tourism as a set of cultural activities participated in by a broad variety of actors in the destination and by visitors themselves, rather than as a specific kind of tourism or a cohesive tourism sector. When looking at visitors and other players in the system at a micro level, **Tim Edensor's** [46] studies of tourist performance at the Taj Mahal in India provide a lot of promise. However, these micro-behaviors must be connected to the level of larger social organizations. Tourism may benefit from **Randall Collins's** [47] theory of ritual, which connects individual behaviors to the dynamics of the group and the wider social and economic factors. Crowd studies have grown in scope since Collin's assertion that individuals respond physically to each other in crowds. This might be a valuable connection to further research. A crowded environment has a distinct effect on people's behavior, and this is becoming the case for most cultural tourists. Many studies have previously tried to monitor cultural tourists, but modern technology also give the option of tracking their mood as they go from one cultural event to the next [48].

A distinct change in the emphasis of cultural tourism research is occurring from Europe and North America's traditional focus on physical legacy to Asia's fast evolving interaction between tourism and culture. As cultures in fast-changing environments such as China, Taiwan, and Korea rediscover their connections to physical and intangible history, a flurry of new research is developing. Many of these new innovations combine preservation of historic sites with modern technology, enhancing content generation and making tourism and the creative economy more intertwined. Government-sponsored programmes have aided the creation of innovative tourist experiences and apps, as can be seen in **Korea** [27].

### 4. CONCLUSIONS

We have shown in this short study how scholarship on cultural tourism has risen considerably and matured into a well-defined field that integrates multidisciplinary perspectives. According to a recent UNWTO poll, cultural tourism is set to increase in popularity in the near future. As research avenues diverge, the topic of cultural tourism as a study object becomes more fragmented and diverse, mirroring the fragmentation and variety of cultural tourism demand and supply. Historical tourism, film tourism, and literary tourism

are all emerging subfields of cultural tourist studies. While the study of cultural tourism may now be entwined with other disciplines, this poses the potential that the socioeconomic context of cultural tourism may be lost. According to a recent study of academic journals, Bourdieu's investigation [49] into the function of taste in consumption receives less citations than in the past.

Many discussions have erupted over the origins and consequences of cultural tourist experiences, as well as the staging or presentation of them. Power relations in representations of culture in tourism are generally assumed and not examined in depth, resulting in a concentration on experience consumption rather than creation. When it comes to questions of power, the emphasis on individual consumers seems to conceal social groupings and the interplay between them. Crowd behavior and social media interactions may now be studied to see how visitors respond to cultural events and their fellow tourists, thanks to new technology. In the future, they should provide new avenues for studying group dynamics and the interactions between visitors, locals, and other players.

New research directions are anticipated to emerge as a result of cultural tourism's growth and popularity. An important task will be to track the continuously shifting definitions and interpretations of the word "culture," which has significant consequences for defining cultural tourism. This study will likely focus on the growing overlaps between real-world and virtual experiences brought on by cultural tourism's use of technology. It's also difficult to predict how societal developments, such as the increased mingling and movement of various cultural groups, would affect the creation and consumption of culture by visitors in a more fundamental way.

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