Nostalgic festivals: The Case of Cappadox

Introduction

It is broadly acknowledged that cultural festivals serve as powerful, interactive venues imbued with the potential to stimulate feelings of nostalgia (Kim, 2005; Li, Huang and Cai, 2009). The festival setting therefore represents a core cultural space, where individuals can engage in the process of 'sense-making', 'self-exploration', 'self-discovery' and 'yearning for the past', all buttressed by the inherent exposure to interactive sociality that a festival's tangible and intangible offering provides. To explore this heady nexus of past and present, this study considers the consumer experience at one of Turkey's most novel and popular contemporary festivals, Cappadox. Hosted annually in the distinguished geographic region of Cappadocia, this cultural festival offers visitors the opportunity to engage in contemporary consumption couched within an historic setting (Taheri, Gannon, Cordina and Lochrie, 2018).

Firmly established in the land where 'East' meets 'West', the Cappadox festival is positioned as an unmissable, under-the-radar European arts festival, attracting a wide range of European performers and visitors alike, while retaining a programme keen to celebrate modern Turkish culture (Coldwell, 2018). Here, visitors' personal identity conception salutes the contemporary formation of a 'festival' as a product of consumer experience (cf. Jafari, Taheri and vom Lehn, 2012; Lau and Li, 2019; Nic Craith, 2012). Therefore, such cultural festivals are "considered as social construction processes that are conditional not only to the level of penetration of globalization, but also to the way in which these processes are mediated through local processes of place making" (Lau and Li, 2019:45). As such, several intangible characteristics (i.e., consumer experience and consumer engagement) extend the tangible aspects of festival consumption. It is also important to recognise that many festivals are closely associated with historic and cultural representations of the nation in which they are hosted and "intangible heritage [e.g., festival events] manifests diverse symbolic meanings and national embodiments, often grounded in the material and tangible remnants of the past" (Park, 2011:521).

Festivals can thus provide visitors with the opportunity to come together with likeminded individuals in order to experience the tangible and intangible festival offerings, and bask in the nostalgic and transformative experience of the art and culture showcased therein (cf. Gonzalez, 2008; Lau and Li, 2019; Nic Craith, 2008; Nic Craith and Kockel, 2015; Tan, Tan, Kok and Choon, 2018). As such, the main objective of this chapter is to draw the attention of marketing and consumer behaviour scholars to the 'transformative' and 'nostalgic' nature

of festivals in our ever-changing, experiential societies (Jones, 2012). In doing so, data was collected from European visitors to different cultural events, concerts and proceedings (e.g., music, dance, art) at the Cappadox Festival, Turkey. Since 2015, the Cappadox festival has served as a top cultural heritage attraction for European visitors eager to experience its varied programme and otherworldly landscape (Taheri, Gannon, Cordina and Lochrie, 2018). This study follows an inductive qualitative approach, with several implications drawn from the findings and pertinent directions for future research provided. In festivals, the consumption experience extends beyond the offering's core consumption stage (i.e., it is provides the aforementioned *transformative* experience) as festivalgoers feel nostalgia for satisfactory experiences (e.g., emotional outcomes, strong nostalgic memories) and discuss their experience with others (e.g., participative interaction, Word of Mouth (WoM)). This is likely influenced by the level of entertainment, escapism, flow and learning dimensions that the festival offers. In other words, festival consumption experiences may carry symbolic value and engender interpersonal meanings for consumers, over and above their functional value as entertainment arenas.

Yet it is also established that cultural consumers' experiences are often transient as they seek to see everything a cultural experience or site has to offer within a limited timeframe (cf. Bourdieu and Darbel, 2008; Leinhardt, Knutson and Crowley, 2003). Here, they are may embrace cultural tastes obtained through past experiences, stimulated by feelings of nostalgia within the consumption contact zone. For instance, important questions concerning 'who we are with?' and 'how much do we know about the site we are visiting?' significantly affect visitors' experiences of cultural heritage (Gannon et al., 2017). While this is consistent for both new and first time visitors, locals also consume cultural heritage, most of whom have considerably more entrenched knowledge, memories, and emotional feelings for the objects, experiences, and interactions manifest within their *local* cultural consumption spaces (Belk, 1990; Black, 2009; Kotler, Kotler and Kotler, 2008). Regarding those with prior knowledge of the content contained within cultural places, the visiting experience becomes more enjoyable as their level of engagement increases; they go beyond merely interacting with objects contained within cultural heritage sites, with their sense of engagement extended by creating bonds with others who share similar feelings towards the context and content contained therein (Gannon et al., 2017). This study contends that this social bond can intensify the nostalgic feelings visitors experience towards objects found within cultural heritage sites. Further, the analysis of 32 in-depth interviews with European consumers attending the Cappadox festival, Cappadocia, Turkey, demonstrates the reciprocal nature of this relationship, whereby

individuals' interactions with cultural objects creates a sense of nostalgia, which in turn stimulates the pursuit of heightened levels of social interaction within the cultural festival context.

As such, this chapter addresses recent calls (e.g., Black, 2009; Falk and Dierking, 1997; Hooper-Greenhill, 2007; Taheri, Jafari, and O'Gorman, 2014; Jafari, Taheri, and vom Lehn, 2013) to further investigate the factors that influence cultural consumers' engagement within the cultural heritage context. The focus is therefore on the interplay between the concepts of nostalgia and social interaction. It examines the way in which feelings of the past influence visitors' engagement in the present. The key contribution stems from the demonstration of how feelings of nostalgia shape social bonds and interaction among cultural heritage consumers. It is hoped that the findings will extend extant understanding of consumption within the *cultural heritage* and *festival* contexts. The chapter begins by outlining the theoretical underpinning, before the research design and methodology is explained. Next, the findings are discussed, followed by concluding remarks centred on providing suggestions for future research.

Nature of engagement

Engagement generally refers to a sense of involvement stemming from an adequate response to stimuli, and can emerge either alone or when participating in communal and social consumption activities (Abdul-Ghani, Hyde, and Marshall, 2011; Taheri, Jafari, and O'Gorman, 2014). Within consumption literature, engagement is defined as "a state of being involved, occupied, fully absorbed, or engrossed in something (i.e., sustained attention)" (Higgins and Scholer, 2009:102), with focus on "commitment to an active relationship with a specific market offering" (Abdul-Ghani et al., 2011:1061). Whatever definition we take, engagement refers to the level and type of interaction and involvement individuals experience during consumption (Taheri et al., 2014). Engagement contributes heavily to the value derived from experiential consumption and the extent to which consumers feel truly 'part of' an experience (Grant, 2000; Higgins, 2006). Mollen and Wilson (2010) classify engagement based on extant literature in three fragments: 1) the mental state accomplished by active, sustained cognitive processing; 2) the satisfying of utility and relevance 3) emotional bonding or impact. Hollebeek (2010) views engagement as a two-way interaction between 'engagement subjects' (i.e., consumers/customers) and 'engagement objects' (i.e., products, brands, or services). Based on this, engagement could therefore be seen as an interaction between visitors or tourists (engagement subjects) and visitor attractions (engagement objects).

Interest in the concept of engagement spans multiple disciplines, including consumer psychology, education, leisure, tourism, and heritage, with diverse definitions (Cordina, Gannon and Croall, 2018). For instance, it is argued via interaction with objects, products and brands (Edmonds et al., 2006) consumers' can construct meaning by experiencing involvement (Higgins, 2006), representational action (Herrington, Oliver and Reeves, 2003), the cognitive activity of delivering extra-textual perspectives (Douglas and Hargadon, 2000), commitment (Mollen and Wilson, 2010), and/or an emotional connection to consumption (Rappaport, 2007). More specifically, with regards to cultural consumption and tourism, the concept of engagement has long interested scholars. A substantial body of literature has examined how the supply side influences cultural heritage sites visitors' consumption patterns, stressing the importance of the cultural environment. Here, specific reference is made to the design of cultural heritage sites' intangible offerings (Nic Craith and Kockel, 2015; Yalinay et al., 2018), and how this encourages visitors to engage and interact with objects and artefacts therein (cf. Falk and Dierking, 1997; Hooper-Greenhill, 2007; vom Lehn, 2006).

Within this context, Edmonds et al. (2006) identify three salient categories of engagement: 'attractors' drawing visitor attention towards an exhibit; 'sustainers' lengthening the duration of visitors' engagement; and 'relaters' fostering deeper visitor-exhibit relationships, thus encouraging future visits. Further, Hooper-Greenhill (2007) regards engagement as pivotal to both the educational and recreational roles of modern cultural heritage sites. Edmonds et al. (2006:316) note that cultural heritage offerings that achieve this triumvirate "meet the highest approval in the world of cultural heritage sites and art galleries." Consequently, the success of cultural heritage offerings is often measured in relation to the average time spent on-site and the perceived level of interactivity, as well as the ease with which visitors can interact with tangible heritage offerings therein. Such measures reflect the increasingly high-tech forms of 'edutainment' argued to underpin engaging cultural heritage sites. However, some authors note a degree of backlash against the dumbing-down of cultural heritage, where the focus is on entertaining visitors rather than stimulating them mentally (Goulding, 2000). In other words, the level of interactivity of an exhibit is not necessarily correlated with levels of satisfaction, enjoyment, and learning in the case of all cultural heritage consumers.

Further, the demand side considers how visitors' own characteristics influence their engagement within cultural heritage consumption contexts. Here, tourist typologies originally distinguished between the 'psychocentric' and 'allocentric' tourist (Plog, 1974). Whilst the former typically values familiarity, the latter is more interested in engaging with the novel or

the unknown. Moscardo (1996) extends this categorization by positing the notion of 'mindful' and 'mindless' visitors. Mindful tourists experience greater learning and understanding (alongside higher levels of satisfaction) than mindless visitors, who typically experience lower levels of engagement. Pattakos (2010), meanwhile, contends that visitors' levels of engagement exist within a continuum, with those at the highest level being pro-actively engaged in their experiences. Elsewhere, Edmonds et al. (2006) demonstrate how active and passive visitors interact with exhibits in an art gallery where technological means (e.g., light and sound effects, computer programs, and sensors) facilitate engagement.

Within the cultural heritage sector, visitor engagement has also been classified with particular reference to the objects contained within a site (Kolar and Zabkar, 2010). Here, Edmonds et al. (2006) identify four core categories of interaction between visitors and objects, namely static, dynamic-passive, dynamic-interactive and dynamic-interactive (varying). At the highest level of interaction, dynamic-interactive (varying), visitor-object relationships emerge when the experience is influenced by both players and changes over time as a direct result of the history of these interactions. It is also argued that nostalgic feelings and social interaction are the key drivers of local visitors' behavior in cultural heritage sites particularly in Turkey, from the perspective of engaging with exhibits (cf. Brown and Humphreys, 2002; Karanfil, 2009). The following section explores literature shedding further light on these factors and the nature of their relationship with visitor engagement.

Nostalgia and social interaction

The importance of nostalgia in shaping the way in which visitors engage with destinations and attractions is established, with its influence recognised from early perspectives on pathological conditions to more recent work on sociological phenomena and identity development and maintenance (Davis, 1979; Holak, Matveev and Havlena, 2008; Jafari and Taheri, 2014). While often difficult to isolate, Belk (1990:670) defines nostalgia as "a wistful mood that may be prompted by an object, a scene, a smell, or a strain of music". Further, Sierra and McQuitty (2007:106) consider it "a yearning for the past, or a fondness for tangible or intangible possessions and activities linked with the past, and is experienced when individuals feel separated from an era to which they are attached". Nonetheless, despite this abstract conceptualization, the majority of individuals have felt nostalgia at some point in time. This may be manifest in a number of ways, or in a number of places, such as at work, when visiting a memorable place, drinking in a café or pub, tasting a particular food, watching a film, listening to music, dancing with partners, talking with childhood friends, or even walking the

streets of our formative years (cf. Goulding, 1999; Holbrook and Schindler, 1991; Jafari and Taheri, 2014).

As such, nostalgia has several meanings. It can be described as aiming to bring again what previously was; feelings of contentment with the past, even if modified; and the re-appropriation of symbols that create ownership of symbolic capital (Gvion, 2009). Holbrook and Schindler (1991:330) also note that nostalgia can be manifest as "a preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favorable affect), toward objects (people, places, or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth)". Holbrook (1993) explores these characteristics further, positing four main features of nostalgia. He contends that 'preference' refers to consumers' tastes towards a variety of objects used in consumption; 'objects' refer to both popular and highbrow culture; and finally, 'when one was younger' refers to an individual's 'personally experienced past' and the wider context this exists within (Davis, 1979).

Therefore, as per Holak et al. (2008:172-173) nostalgic experiences may differ in two key ways: "1) the personal versus collective nature of the experience and 2) the basis of the feeling in direct versus indirect experience". Personal experiences refer to memories which differ across people, while collective experiences refer to cultural events that members of society share (Holak et al., 2008; Jafari and Taheri, 2014). Further, Sierra and McQuitty (2007:100) stress that "for people to have nostalgia-related responses (e.g., a yearning for the past), they must have memories of the past, either lived or learned". Thus, nostalgia and its effect on cultural consumer patterns are linked to past experience, or at least knowledge of how things once were (Davis, 1979; Goulding, 2001). Havlena and Holak (1996) identify four types of nostalgic experience: personal nostalgia (i.e., direct individual experience); interpersonal nostalgia (i.e., those which combine other people's experiences with the individual's interactions with that person); cultural nostalgia (i.e., when members of society share the same historic values and create a cultural identity); and virtual nostalgia (i.e., emotion emerging from collective (yet indirect) experiences). Given this, Goulding (2001) suggests that nostalgia can influence the myriad of factors affecting consumption choices within the cultural heritage context, with this nostalgia deep-rooted in the cultural experiences of the consumer's youth (Holbrook, 1993; Jafari and Taheri, 2014).

Further, nostalgia has a close relationship with identity, where consumers may make sense of who they are through recognizing and understanding their past (Gvion, 2009; Jafari and Taheri, 2014). Cultural consumers may generate attachment from the past (e.g., memories

from their childhood about particular cultural heritage sites) or they may have indirect nostalgic feelings based on external sources. Some consumers also symbolically, tangibly, or intangibly link their past memories to contemporary consumption experiences (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003; Sierra and McQuitty, 2007). Nostalgia can contribute to individuals' sense of identity based on shared heritage and memories, where self-identity provides consumers with the push to purchase a product or service (i.e., engage with a cultural heritage sites). For instance, a consumer who positively recalls visiting a cultural heritage site with friends in his/her youth is likely to experience positive emotions when talking with friends about the same kind of cultural heritage sites (Goulding, 2001; Reed, 2002).

Moreover, Falk and Dierking (1997) argue that most visitors go to cultural heritage sites in a group and that those who visit alone nonetheless invariably come into contact with other visitors and staff. Therefore, the perspective and experience of these consumers is influenced by the social context. In this regard, McLean (1999) highlights how other visitors, not just exhibits and object contained therein, are likely to impact upon how memorable visitors perceive cultural heritage site consumption to be. Additionally, cultural consumers are not passive, but skillful performers. Aiming to access new avenues of social capital and knowledge, they are subject to steady levels of engagement with cultural products, whilst simultaneously forming ties that are adjusted to the scene of the performance of others (Bagnall, 2003; Putnam, 2000; Jafari, Taheri and vom Lehn, 2013). Hein and Alexander (1998) and Falk and Dierking (1997) therefore stress the important role of social interaction in consumers' cultural heritage site experiences, and the influence this has over the enjoyment and learning derived therein.

As such, the interplay between consumption, engagement, social interaction, and nostalgia brings to mind social capital concerns, such as strong/weak social ties and bonding/bridging theories (Putnam, 2000). Social capital theory can be used to understand 'within society' relations and 'outside society' relations. For instance, when a group of people visit cultural heritage sites, they mostly talk about the characteristics of the place and their past experiences. Essentially, visitors participate in a social manner, changing and influencing the experience of others, within this cultural consumption setting (Blumer, 1969; Bourdieu and Darbel, 2008; Goffman, 1990; vom Lehn and Heath, 2005). As such, visitors do not typically experience cultural heritage sites in isolation, instead processing their experiences tinged by the influence of social interactions therein. Jafari et al. (2013) also contend that there is symbiotic interplay between consumption and sociality, suggesting that: consumption nourishes sociality (e.g., leisure and brand communities) and sociality influences consumption (e.g., consumption of food and drinks). Driven from any interplay between consumption and

sociality, sociality can strengthen existing ties, establish new ties, and extend online and offline environments. To this end, social interaction within cultural spaces has long been argued to influence the nature of consumption, visitor behaviors, and ultimately engagement (Falk and Dierking, 1997; Hooper-Greenhill, 2007; vom Lehn, 2006; Jafari et al., 2013).

Methodology

For this study, data was sought from European visitors to the Cappadox cultural festival hosted annually in Cappadocia, Turkey. This multi-day festival emphasises participation, interaction, and entertainment, and offers visitors the opportunity to experience a comprehensive corpus of cultural workshops and events centred on demonstrating contemporary Turkish traditions and intangible heritage (Coldwell, 2018). The Cappadox Festival has quickly become a mainstay of the Turkish cultural heritage scene, attracting a large number of both domestic and international visitors and a range of globally-recognised corporate partners and sponsors (Cappadox, 2018). Hosted within the confines of the Cappadocia UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Cappadox Festival is also noted for its scenic surrounds. Here, the Festival site's distinctiveness is manifest in the troglodyte architecture, inhabited cave-dwellings, and underground caverns reflective of the wider region (Taheri et al., 2018). However, irrespective of Cappadocia's reputation as a visitor site of cultural significance, the Cappadox Festival provides a less established consumption experience; 2018 represents the fourth time it has welcomed visitors to the region (Taheri et al., 2018). As such, the festival represents an interesting vehicle for the study of nostalgia, social interaction, and engagement in a cultural consumption context. It is not constrained by the ingrained nature of better-established festivals, yet exists in a location well-recognised throughout the region and further afield and popular with a wide range of cultural visitors.

As such, in order to explore the interplay between the aforementioned concepts, semi-structured interviews with festival attendees were conducted. Each interview lasted around 30 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed for posterity. Overall, 32 participants between the age of 20 and 58 were interviewed. In order to explore these European visitors' opinions and perspectives of their cultural festival experience, two initial interviews adopted an open-ended conversation approach. Further, given the lack of consistency with regards to the language interviews were conducted in, the study adopted Hogg, Laio and O'Gorman's (2014) translation theory approach. Here, the research team ensured that an appropriate level of focus

was afforded to translating interview responses into English. Following data collection, the thematic approach was used to conduct the data analysis (Wells et al., 2016).

Results

Arguably, one of the core dilemmas within contemporary society is concerns the interplay between identity and social interaction (Goulding 1999; Jafari and Taheri, 2014). Nostalgia-based heritage sites are typically endowed with characteristics that offer visitors the opportunity to engage with others in interactive environments (Jafari and Taheri, 2014). This therefore emphasises the opportunities for communal consumption available to visitors therein. The findings reveal that the festival servicescape in some way contributes to this (Yalinay et al., 2018). Here, physically walking through the heritage site arouses nostalgic feelings in visitors, and provides them with the imaginative stimuli required to 'walk into the past', particularly if the environment satisfies visitors' extant cultural motivation:

> I have been coming to this place in last couple of years. It is still the same smell and same feeling. It reminds me of the past and history in a modern representation. I used come here with my mum when I was a little girl. The place has been changed a lot. I think the festival has helped as well…I feel I have gained a lot from my experience. I am totally satisfied! (Female, Married, Shop Assistant, Turkish, 44 years old)

Even when focus is on education, cultural accuracy, and individual discovery, the importance of social interaction (with family and friends) and interactive storytelling looms large. Indeed, our participants suggested that social interaction and the communal aspects of cultural consumption *helped* them to discover the culture(s) portrayed within the contemporary festival context. Social interaction in such cultural places 'in the *now*' stimulated feelings of nostalgia for familial interaction 'in years gone by', where the social aspects of cultural heritage consumption brought about favourable memories of '*consumption past*', demonstrating the cross-generational, temporal importance of communal cultural consumption:

> You know we interact with Cappadocia through the festival. It is like having fun with your friends in a historical area. I used to come here when I was a kid with my father and grandfather. It is still inspiring. (Male, Divorced, Office worker, Turkish, 45 years old)

Such interaction may increase the level of visitors' satisfaction, and the majority of the participants stated that the social aspects of cultural heritage consumption in the festival context encouraged them to share their festival site experience with their contacts on social networking sites. This echoes extant research, where Jafari et al. (2013) note that visitors' sociality can be extended beyond the tangible heritage and festival boundaries:

> The last couple of years have been great. I come here with my friends and enjoy it! There is a desire to portray different aspects of village, the caves, the people, and the history. It's all there. The festival helps us to discover these more. It is like personally interpreting the past. I feel I have converted to the historical area…I will tell my friends to visit this place. I put a lot of photos in my Instagram page. (Female, Single, Student, French, 30 years old)

As such, festival sites cannot be considered simple objects-endowed places; they must also be considered as people-oriented social spaces (Jafari and Taheri, 2014; Taheri and Jafari, 2012). Festivals and heritage spaces have the capacity to stimulate connections between individuals by achieving 'mutual benefits' through 'strengthening existing ties' (Jafari et al., 2013; Putman, 2000; Simon, 2010). In the case of Cappadox, some of the festival visitors interviewed explicitly mentioned this, while also highlighting the nostalgic value of the strengthening of existing social ties, particularly when familial in nature:

> I came here 10 years ago. It is still the same place - I feel déjà vu…My partner and I are going through a difficult time and I thought I should take her here as we came here 10 years ago! …I talked a lot with my partner after a log day of activities…I love the place and I think the festival plays important role here…I'm so happy about all the memories and flashbacks during my visit (Male, Engaged, Shop Assistant, Turkish, 32 years old)

In cultural sites, "we learn about who we are, our history and our culture through stories and by telling stories" (Shankar et al., 2001:431). Such stories and social interactions make festival experience entertaining by "using consumption objects as resources to interact with fellow consumers" (Holt, 1995, p.9). This consumption is varied and can be manifest in many forms in the festival context. However, the contemporary visitor experience does not need to be analogous with a visitor's memories in order to stimulate feelings of nostalgia. Here, embodied

practices such as music and intangible heritage serve as aesthetic and social experiences (Nic Craith and Kockel, 2015; Taylor, 2016). Those visiting Cappadox experienced various representations of cultural heritage (e.g., through music and heritage workshops), representing the performance and re-performance of traditions for the purpose of cultural consumption, with the aesthetic and social elements combining to turn such performances into an engaging product (Taylor, 2016). Indeed, reimagined cultural heritage sites can go some way to engaging visitors by retaining core sources of value presented and maintained in a contemporary manner, with one participant stating:

> I came here for a school trip when I was a little kid. It is still the same place. Yes, it has been modernised for tourists but it is still beautiful. I remember we walked around and enjoyed the history and food. Yes, the food is still amazing here. We went to my favourite restaurant and it reminded me of my childhood…the festival helped a lot with changes as well. There are a lot of activities here and I can take a lot from them. (Male, Divorced, Security, Turkish, 42 years old)

As such, the cultural heritage festival concept represents a compelling and novel context for demonstrating the complex interplay between engagement, interaction and nostalgia. Here, the festival's value is not necessarily derived from its tangible offering, but instead from the its more intangible characteristics – a place offering memorable experiences, opportunities for significant social interaction, and the strengthening of existing bonds – each of which have the power to live long in the visitor memories. Therefore, cultural heritage festival consumption can nourish sociality as "through consumption, people build up social ties with each other and even feel a sense of belonging to a wider social group or community" (Jafari et al., 2013:1731). As such, some participants contend that the festival serves as a catalyst to develop social interactions and strengthening existing ties. Here, the findings suggest that the depth of detail contained within any visitor memories borders on the irrelevant – it is the nostalgic significance derived from who is being remembered and their links to the cultural setting that holds greatest value:

> I am here again after many years. It is still very beautiful. The festival is amazing too. We used to come here for school trips. We had a nice history teacher with us. My grandfather joined us as well. Both passed away. However, I can still feel them here. This is a beautiful memory. I will send some photos to my grandmother. She will love

this place. She could not make when we came here with my grandfather. I love festivals - particularly the live music bands. (Male, Divorced, Office worker, Turkish, 45 years old)

Discussion and conclusion

This chapter explores the interplay between notions of nostalgia, social interaction and the interactive engagement experiences for a sample of European visitors to a contemporary festival in a world-renowned cultural destination. In this festival context, cultural consumers directly interact with the cultural sites through their prior knowledge as well as static and visual facilities provided more generally within the cultural site (cf. Kotler et al., 2008; Taheri and Jafari, 2012; Jafari and Taheri, 2014; Jafari et al., 2013). This study demonstrates how the intangible heritage experience (and its associated offerings) can provide both consumers (and indeed cultural festivals) with a valid source of identity. In doing so, the interplay between nostalgia and identity can stimulate feelings of engagement in consumers. In addition, the findings reveal that cultivating tangible and intangible heritage is vital in developing cultural identity, particularly for festivals showcasing national culture and identity, as they can result in destination loyalty and nostalgic feelings for visitors (cf. Nic Craith and Kockel, 2015; Taylor, 2016). Here, shared experiences and communal nostalgia serve as intangible heritage, and are of vital significance in stimulating engaging cultural consumption.

This interaction is underpinned by the sense of nostalgia visitors feel about the cultural sites, bolstered by performances, workshops and events comprising the contemporary festival context. Here, European visitors elect to interpret their own experiences and engagement, alongside their social interactions with others, as the wide programme offered by the Cappadox festival can be interpreted, enjoyed, and engaged with in multiple ways. For our European visitors, the pursuit of nostalgia is not solely symptomatic of missing the past or returning back to days gone by, but also "simply an emotional manifestation that reminds tourists of their younger days, reflecting nostalgic longing for a romanticized or idealized past" (Zhao and Timothy, 2017:101). Nostalgia therefore becomes a shared experience, which creates the basis for bonding with likeminded individuals and romanticising the past within such settings. New facilities and new ways of engaging visitors can thus be seen to mediate the relationship between cultural sites and the nostalgic experience of visitors. European visitors seek new information and create new links to their pre-existing knowledge and experiences in order to learn meaningfully (i.e., determining what we learn from such experiences). Here, the European visitors held strong connections with the objects and exhibits (i.e., tangible heritage)

that could correspond to their sense of nostalgia. Replacing such memory- and meaning-laden objects may introduce fresh concepts within the domain of cultural consumption, but for a particular group of individuals the link between the present and past is cut-off. In such instances, the creation of social bonds amongst individuals becomes less likely.

Nonetheless, this study contends that cultural heritage festivals represent important avenues for social interaction (both online and offline), particularly for visitors with extant interest in culture and heritage (Kolar and Zabkar, 2010). Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003:41) also stress that "the tourist may go on interacting with it (the intangible heritage) long after he/she has departed". To this end, tourism and heritage developers and planners should preserve the integrity of tangible heritage, which ultimately serves as the main selling point of Cappadocia by carefully managing the physical heritage components therein. They must also deliver an interactive bespoke festival package by presenting intangible cultural heritage through attractions that closely match the tangible setting. Here, factors influencing the traditional lifestyle of local residents need to be considered in order to gain a better understanding of the community's culture and history. This interaction between both tangible and intangible heritage can therefore enhance tourists' perceptions of both the destination and the festival, thus contributing to their pursuit of their true selves. In doing so, promotional literature and materials should be designed cognisant of this. Here, communication strategies should reflect the interactive, communal, and participative experiences required to stimulate engagement in order to appeal to visitors. For example, an emphasis should be placed on information sharing (i.e., through interactive blogs and forums) with visitors encouraged to share their nostalgic experiences. As such, this study echoes Jafari et al. (2013) in stressing the importance of interactive sociality and the interactive consumption process. Managerial impetus should therefore be placed on designing heritage sites and festivals in a way that allows visitors to experience "meanings and feelings – through experiences of cultural consumption – with one another" (Jafari et al., 2013, p.1745); with the opportunity for this emphasised in promotional materials. As such, managers must understand the importance of *'third'* spaces (Jafari, Taheri and vom Lehn, 2013) (e.g., festival and heritage sites) as platforms for social interaction, and design servicescapes cognisant of this (Yalinay et al., 2018). In addition, the results may serve as a reference for other European festivals, by showing how engagement and social interaction can influence visitors' experiences. Recognising this may also contribute to the sustainability of intangible cultural heritage. European festivals developers and organisers should try to build trust, amass a sense of 'power sharing', and educate the local community

on the benefits and threats of hosting cultural festivals (cf. Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; Kaina and Karolewski, 2009).

Finally, in order to stimulate nostalgia and engagement, the choice of sponsorship and must be cognisant of the unique cultural offering and intangible heritage contained within the consumption space. For example, if the festival has a particular theme (e.g., folk music) the thematic content (e.g., musical performance) should be high quality and supported by appropriate music sponsors. The results indicate that social interaction and engagement are the important attributes for increasing level of nostalgic feelings, thus, European festivals should have interesting programs and activities that reflect the tangibility and intangibility of heritage sites with a particular European significance; i.e., '*placing heritage*' "affixing the idea of a European cultural heritage to certain places in order to turn them into specific European heritage sites" (Lähdesmäki, 2016:766). Hence, European festival marketers must consider the value of their tangible and intangible heritage offerings and the cost of admissions and onsite activities. As such, planning a successful European festival with loyalty-building attributes (e.g., nostalgia and social interaction) may motivate tourists to visit destinations with the express intention of consuming such identity building, social experiences.

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