

Street Art as a Sustainable Tool in Mature Tourist Destinations:

A Case Study of Barcelona

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the activities most urgently in need of innovation and creativity to keep the boom going. This paper seeks to understand how mature destinations and tourism managers devise innovative and sustainable solutions in everyday practice. Current trends in demand call for active experiences that generate emotions, stir up feelings, present content and provide a dose of pleasure. The case study presented here is an innovative street art project called *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* (Open-Air Art Gallery), a clear example of reactivation, recovery and urban development that involves the local population and associations as part of the local government's drive to encourage community participation and empower change with regard to urban issues. The viability and sustainability of this commendable example are analysed through in-depth interviews with the respective project managers, the guides who run the tours and the visitors who have participated in the tour.

Keywords: tourist experience, governance, street art, sustainability, mature destinations, Barcelona

Introduction

As stated by Taylor (2014), 21st-century society is undergoing a paradigm shift from the nation state to the city, thereby assuming a key role in guaranteeing people's rights. This is leading to the promotion and development of creative cities (Scott, 2006; Sasaki, 2008) as a response to the current challenges faced by these societies in light of the increasing demand for tourism and leisure. According to the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization), 1,400 million international tourists travelled around the world in 2018 as part of a trend that has been rising constantly since 1995. Cities are therefore focusing their efforts on enhancing their positions as attractive enclaves for consumption (Zukin, 1995; Florida, 2002; Miles & Paddison, 2005; Smith, 2007; Domínguez-Pérez et al., 2015). Traditionally, tour operators and guided tours played a key role in shaping these tourist enclaves and in conveying a unified image to tourists (Cocks, 2001) by designing sightseeing tours to specifically selected locations that had been embellished by local governments beforehand (Huka, 1990; Judd & Parkinson, 1990; Sassen & Roost, 1999; Cocks, 2001; Harvey 2001; Blázquez & Murray, 2010; Crespi-Vallbona & Domínguez-Pérez, 2016; Sorando & Ardura, 2016; Gil & Sequera, 2018). These usually included historic sites, monuments and cultural centres, often located in central areas. More recently, however, demand for emotional and memorable experiences has been increasing (Goossens, 2000; Oh et al., 2007), and operators have been on the constant lookout for unique, authentic local destinations. This *New Urban Tourism* approach (Füller & Michel, 2014) takes account of the fact that tourists are seeking everydayness, even ordinary and mundane aspects and spaces, away from tourist enclaves. This new demand lies in tourists' desire to "be the local" rather than "play the role of the local"; in other words, to share the feelings, experiences, lifestyle, and perceptions of local residents in their own city. This does not mean that they no longer visit tangible cultural assets such as museums and monuments or experience intangible assets such as lifestyle, image and creativity (Maitland & Newman, 2009), but the emphasis is

on seeking the “truth” and “nature” of the tourist experience (Uriely, 1997). Such interaction, assimilation and engagement with local identity represent the aspects most coveted by tourists (Stebbins, 1997). As Salazar states (2005: 629), “the ‘local’ not only refers to a spatially limited locality; it is, above all, a space inhabited by people who have a particular sense of place, a specific way of life, and a certain ethos and worldview”. Thus, it should be noted that local heritage is becoming increasingly important as a landmark for visitor enjoyment (Wearing, et al., 2010; Modlin et al., 2011; Edensor, 2008; Crespi-Vallbona & Richards, 2007). The remodelling of tourist attractions has therefore become an unavoidable task in the urban development process (Wang et al., 2014). This postmodern tourism is underpinned by an open attitude toward multiple cultures, multiple options and multiple tourism development paths. In this context, street art presents an aesthetic opportunity for tourism and creativity; a new attraction to be harnessed.

However, the impact of highly intensive tourism on well-established, oversubscribed destinations is being met with progressively stronger opposition; the consequences cited range from overburdened public spaces to social impacts (Goodwin, 2016; Weber, 2017; Huete and Mantecón, 2018; Milano, 2018; Mansilla, 2018), which often cause local residents to become weary of such high levels of tourism. Visitors are also demanding rewarding experiences rather than overcrowded attractions (Jin and Pearce, 2011; Santana-Jiménez & Hernández, 2011; Zehrer & Raich, 2016; Crespi-Vallbona & Smith, 2019). Tourist destination governance is therefore being forced to address these many challenges, and our main research question focuses on the decisive factors that contribute to the sustainable coexistence of rewarding tourist experiences and everyday life for residents; in other words, how can tourist cities offer fashionable attractions and experiences without making life inconvenient for residents?

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to better understand the relationships and boundaries between street art and sustainable governance tourism in the postmodern context of well-established tourist destinations. The article includes a review of the literature on current tourist trends in terms of motivation, demand, strategic planning and governance by DMOs (destination management organisations), and analyses street art as an attractive, exciting tourist attraction. The case study analysed is *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* (Open Air Art Gallery), a set of 24 street murals in a shopping area of Barcelona, Catalonia. The results show that street art has become a creative and innovative tourist activity. Furthermore, the concept of *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* can be replicated in modern-day urbanscapes due to its sustainable governance, given that it benefits from the involvement and collaboration of the public sector, private organisations and local residents. In short, the originality and contribution of this paper lie in its analysis of the relationship between urban street art, the characteristics of contemporary society and urban spaces, and the expectations of tourists.

Literature Review

Current Trends in Tourist Demand

In the current postmodernist, post-industrial society, consumption and aesthetic preferences have undergone a major shift. The emerging notion of the “consumer society” is spreading around the world through globalisation processes (Baudrillard, 1970, 2016; Bell, 1976). Postmodern consumers, or post-tourists (Feifer, 1985), reflect how modern-day society is focused on hyper-consumerism and the aestheticisation of everyday life, characterised by a huge variety of trivial consumer products (Hernández-Ramírez, 2018). In this context, cultural

projects and events are examples of activities that are experiencing significant growth (Bianchini, 1993; Evans, 2003; García, 2004; Rodríguez Morató, 2007; Scott, 2010).

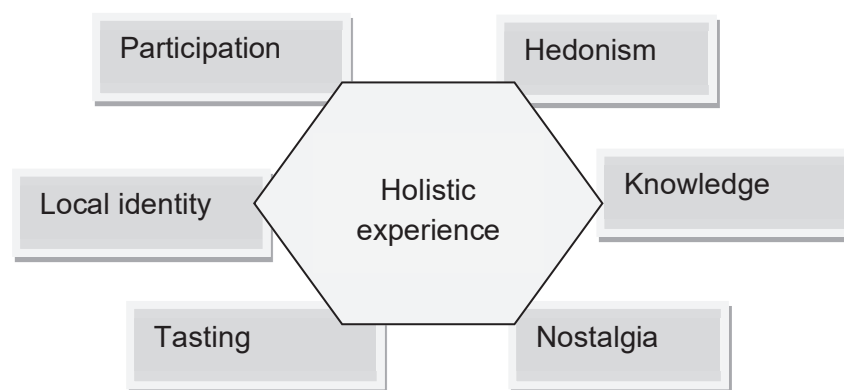
Consumption has evolved from simple behaviour aimed at satisfying material desires to a particular kind of behaviour that involves constructing social and spatial relationships (Wang et al., 2015). According to Lipovetsky and Serroy (2016), our world is immersed in the era of “artistic capitalism”; that is, an emotional, aesthetic, artistic dimension that conceals financial capitalism. Hence, a constant process of aestheticisation is occurring. Postmodern consumers consume for mere pleasure, and tourism, leisure, services, etc. have become mandatory cultural experiences and part of a socially accepted lifestyle (Maffesoli, 2005; Guo & Wang, 2009; Dipaola, 2011). This functional aesthetic has gradually infiltrated the daily lives of the masses. Zukin (1995) described the postmodern city as a “commercial and consumer place”. In that sense, urban centres have begun to implement embellishment or aestheticisation processes designed to attract tourists and provide consumers with entertainment options (Zukin, 1995; Delgado, 2003; Sorkin, 2007; Muñoz, 2008; Romero, 2010), and even invoke happiness in people (Lipovetsky, 2006), since they do not want to be deprived of luxury, comfort or enjoyment. Specifically, they seek visual pleasure. Zhang and Cui (1998) suggested that landscapes should be developed so that visitors can understand and describe them independently and feel encouraged to participate. Hence, providing post-tourists with such visual pleasure involves a battle to create attractive images, generate new landmarks and offer participative experiences, thereby strengthening the view of leisure as a central aspect of life. All these transformations must be emphasised in the local setting (Blanco, 2009; Rius-Ulldemolins, 2014), so ‘creative cities’, i.e. those with a global and holistic cultural view (Vanolo, 2008), are expanding globally as they seek to provide consumer options to the ‘creative class’ (Florida, 2002).

The interests and behaviours of these modern-day consumers of tourism have changed. Contemplative sightseeing has almost disappeared, and participative experiences that invoke emotions are springing up everywhere as a reflection of new demands and trends (Vogeler & Hernández, 2002; Bordas, 2003; Richards, 2004; Bonilla Moya, 2006; de Rojas & Camarero, 2008; Cuenca & Prat, 2012; Rivera Mateos, 2013). Changes in tourism demand mean that people are now seeking new experiences that are far removed from their daily routines; new activities that provide them with the opportunity to discover and learn about different cultures, and leisure spaces where they can experience and revive historical events and memories (Crespi-Vallbona & Mascarilla-Miró, 2020).

Consequently, the attributes that shape holistic experiences include participation, hedonism, local identity, knowledge, tasting and nostalgia (Figure 1). These attributes are associated with the different needs, interests, motivations and expectations of tourists, thereby providing them with the global, satisfactory experience sought by postmodern consumers (Tsay, 2016). The McDonaldisation of tourism products has become a way of life in the context of postmodernism, but new tourist demands are shifting from commercialised tourism to immersion travel, which is key to attaining sustainable development in tourism. *Hedonism* is intrinsic to any tourist activity, as visitors seek pleasant, multisensory, enjoyable moments (Malone et al., 2014). *Participative tourism* is the current market leader, since visitors love dynamic, interactive, participative activities (Herbert, 2001), including *cognitive actions* that allow them to learn and acquire knowledge and information (Larsen & Meged, 2013; Sharpley, 2014). *Local identity*, the tangible and intangible heritage rooted in the destination, is the aspect most coveted and valued by tourists (Edensor, 2008), as it reveals the uniqueness of a place, thereby distinguishing it from elsewhere in the globalised, homogeneous world (Wearing et al.,

2010; Modlin et al., 2011). *Tasting* local food plays a decisive role in satisfactory experiences and offers genuine immersion in the everyday life of a destination (Boniface, 2003; Henderson, 2009). Finally, *nostalgia* must be included in tourist experiences, since it triggers meaningful personal and specific feelings from the past (Moscardo et al., 2004; Willson & McIntosh, 2008) that reinforce the experience.

Figure 1. Attributes of holistic experiences



Source: authors' own data.

In terms of demand, therefore, one basic factor that contributes to sustainable tourism in mature destinations is the holistic experience in which consumers can participate and interact while enjoying themselves and gaining knowledge. It is important that these experiences be rooted in the local identity and offer memorable moments to satisfy multiple senses: smell, sight, cognition, taste and touch. Consequently, it is necessary to implement a strategy to design and create competitive products; in other words, to generate new tourism products that embrace cultural identity, emotions and memorability, in line with new trends in tourist demand.

Sustainable Destination Governance

Culture and leisure play an important role in the development of urban spaces and have received considerable attention from researchers (Lefebvre & Nicholson-Smith, 1991; Zukin, 1995). Thus, cities are compelled to be innovative and creative, to diversify and differentiate their leisure and tourist spaces and to focus on the connection between social relationships and space.

In such a chaotic context, managers of DMOs face a complex, delicate challenge; they are required to provide tourists with attractive resources, products and services, to retain the host community's essence, authenticity and uniqueness, which is much sought after by tourists, and to attempt to reconcile the interests of all users, i.e. tourists, residents and the public and private sectors (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). The current challenge for tourism governance is thus underpinned by sustainability (Lloyd, 2000; Hiernaux-Nicolás, 2003; Crespi-Vallbona, et al., 2019), for which the involvement of local residents is imperative (Presenza et al., 2013). The challenge is therefore to foster the involvement and collaboration of the public sector, private organisations and the local population in the planning, development and design of tourist landmarks. Based on the so-called network governance approach (Hall, 2011), public-private collaboration is gaining popularity in the tourism sector to balance the interests of all stakeholders (van der Zee *et al.*, 2017).

These networks are typically driven by DMOs. According to van der Zee et al. (2017), the strategic placement of managers, both inside and outside the network, is important for funding, information and other resources. However, due to the complexity of the industry, it is difficult for bottom-up networks to succeed without some sort of public-private partnership (Hall, 1999). Therefore, there is no doubt that mixed entities generate positive externalities that all tourism providers share and appropriate (Cambrils, 2016).

Finally, the support of local residents is critical for successful tourism development in an area (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Two key indicators of this support are trust and power (Nunkoo, 2017); when these are properly distributed, they have been proven to have a direct, positive effect on the local population's perception of tourism development (Madrigal, 1993; Kayat, 2002) through their involvement in decision-making processes. Residents are key stakeholders whose opinions can heavily influence tourism projects and programmes, which require policymakers to first find out about their perceptions of tourism and their views of the potential direction of further developments (Presenza et al., 2013). Only after key stakeholders have been heard can sustainable tourism development take place. Bottom-up decisions are often even more successful than top-down decisions, since the former truly take the active participation of the local population seriously, while top-down decisions are usually seen as impositions (Fromhold-Eisebith and Eisebith, 2005). In short, the sustainable governance strategy involves a new destination management model based on close ties with the private sector, public intervention and the support of the local population, all of which can help establish stable, successful networks that form the basis of innovation. This type of governance focuses on relationships and networks, values and rules to guarantee innovation and sustainability (Jamal and Camargo, 2018).

Thus, another basic factor in terms of the destination that contributes to sustainable tourism development is network governance, i.e. the need for a strategic approach to tourism with qualified staff, coordination of stakeholders (public and private organisations and the general public), and transparency of actions.

Street Art and Tourism

Destination competitiveness is linked to the capacity of destinations to maintain their market position and even constantly improve their potential attractiveness with value-added products (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; d'Hartserre, 2000; Hassan, 2000). In that context, street art is emerging as a new tourist resource.

The growing interest in urban art as a tourist attraction falls within the definition of postmodern behaviour and is consistent with tourists' quest to consume all kinds of cultural and even countercultural experiences, such as dark tourism and street art. Best (2012) analyses urban street art as a tourist phenomenon in Melbourne and highlights the "out of the ordinary" way in which it grabs tourists' attention and its potential to be institutionalised as a tourist attraction by DMOs. This author also emphasises the initial shock and subsequent mainstream legitimisation of this rebellious, confrontational form of expression. McAuliffe (2012) explores the links between graffiti and the creative city in Sydney, and the legal and moral aspects of street art. Ferrell (2016) examines the contradiction and complexity presented by street art, and claims that it can be a marker of both urban decay and vital urban culture. Perera (2019) analyses urban art as a tourist attraction in Madrid, and Rius-Ulldemolins (2014) does the same in El Raval, a touristified neighbourhood in central Barcelona.

Ganz (2004) states that the etymology of 'graffiti' is linked to the Italian word *graffiato*, meaning 'scratched'. Throughout history, these representations were rejected and went on to become a form of resistance. Bou (2005) explains that street art, as the name implies, encompasses all artistic incursions into the urban landscape and derives directly from the graffiti painted on Harlem (New York) train cars in the late 1970s. The philosophy and *raison d'être* of street art have since evolved, as society has undergone socio-political and cultural

changes, but its delinquent, anti-system spirit remains the same. Street art therefore refers to artistic expression that transforms public spaces (walls, public transport, benches, signposts, etc.) and conveys personal feelings, beliefs and ideologies (Gastman, et al., 2006; Rose & Strike, 2004; Quintavalle, 2007), and is usually carried out without permission (Abarca, 2010). These art forms thus give rise to new formulas for social interaction (Goodsell, 2003; Sacks, 2005) and have both a public and an urban dimension, since they are exhibited in spaces used for consumption and by the public, thereby turning them into instruments of social and physical transformation (Staal, 2012).

Urban street art is akin to open-air galleries, since it gives rise to spaces in which urban cultures converge. In the development of modern streets, in particular, which are hubs of intense consumer activity, culture has become a symbol for shaping spaces and a means of generating consumer demand. Postmodernism therefore has a major role to play in promoting street culture and street art in its different forms and techniques (Visconti et al. 2010), including tagging, highly stylised writing, sticking, stencilling, poetic assault and urban design. This latter form consists of an aesthetic practice to embellish a public space (Banksy, 2006), while other forms of street art have a marginal, diabolical, ordinary, mundane, anti-establishment and ephemeral component that is perfectly in keeping with the shift towards the demand for such everyday experiences, away from urban centres, on the outskirts of cities that are promoted as beautiful. Street art is not designed to be enjoyed by tourists, but aims to present the artists' subjective, angry and critical views of social, political and economic issues. Modern-day creative cities offer new paths designed to recognise graffiti culture that have led to its emergence as a tourist attraction (McAuliffe, 2012), in keeping with the new demand for alternatives to the regular attractions observed by so many scholars (Maitland & Newman,

2009; Stors & Kagermeijer, 2013, Füller & Michel, 2014; Mordue, 2017; Gravari-Barbasa, et al. 2017; Frisch et al., 2019).

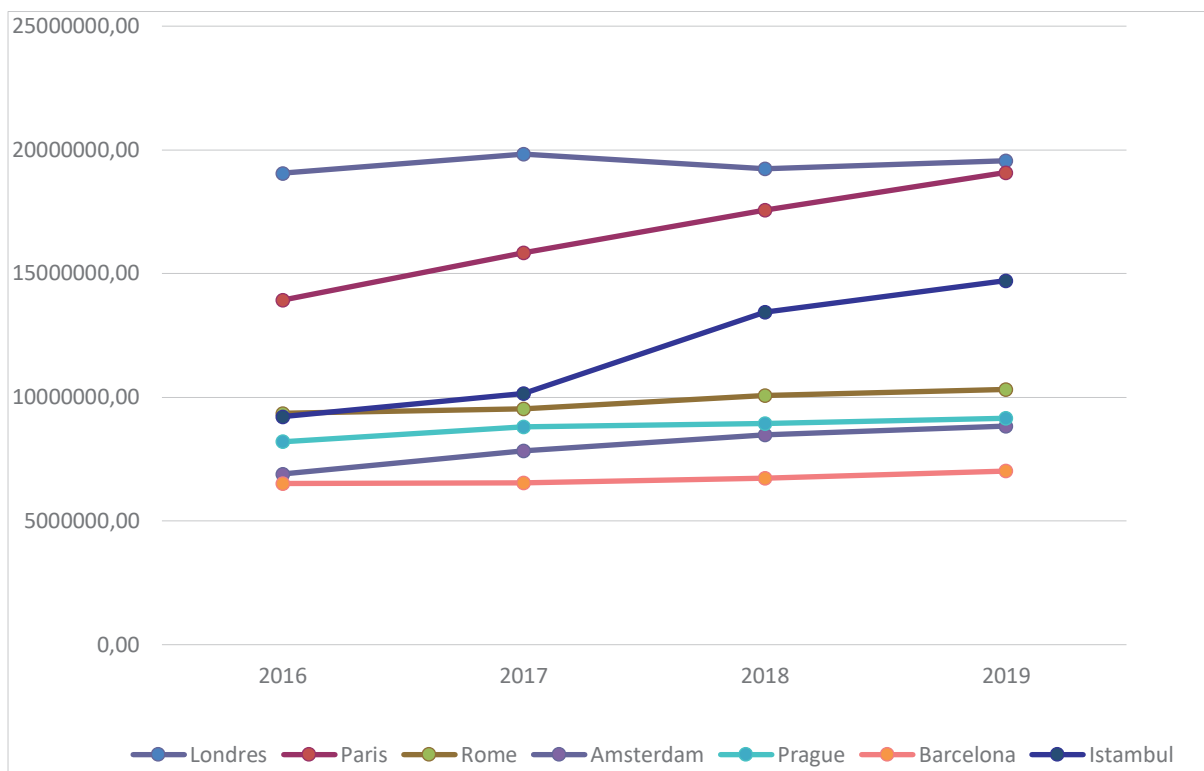
Methodology

The case study analysed here is *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* (Open Air Art Gallery), located in Barcelona, Catalonia. Methodologically, it involved an analysis of policy documents related to the local government's tourism and economic development strategies, participant observations (which consisted of spending time with people and engaging in numerous informal conversations during our many visits to the neighbourhood), and more formal interviews conducted between November 2017 and April 2018 with the local authorities, members or representatives of local organisations, tour guides, local residents and visitors to *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert*. Interviews typically lasted for half an hour and the questions related to the subjects' perceptions of street art as an instruments for sociocultural change in urban spaces, the resulting changes in the neighbourhood's commercial and everyday social life and their experience of the guided tours to view the paintings.

Barcelona: A Mature Tourist Destination

According to Euromonitor International (2018), Barcelona is one of the most visited cities in Europe (Figure 2). The first tourism plan produced by Barcelona City Council (1988-1992) had a clear objective to position Barcelona on the world tourist map and provide enough accommodation for the 1992 Olympic Games, for both participants and visitors. This planted the city in the minds of potential tourists across the world and created an image and a brand associated with cosmopolitanism, modernity, design and tradition, with open-minded, welcoming and friendly residents (Alabart et al., 2015).

Figure 2. Most visited European cities (2016-19)



Source: prepared by the authors from the Euromonitor International Report, 2019.

Barcelona's most popular cultural sights and attractions are located in the historic centre and include the Rambla, the cathedral and the Gothic Quarter. The overcrowding and oversaturation in these central areas have given rise to a number of social movements against tourism. The government has reacted to these movements by approving initiatives to regulate and redistribute tourism in the city. The current Strategic Tourism Plan (*Pla Estratègic de Turisme 2020, PET20*) views the city's tourism management as a collective project that involves all sectors, spaces and management tools. This implies a redistribution of tourism throughout the city and the decentralisation and decongestion of the touristified centre. PET20 also aims to design shared strategies to harmonise local residents' everyday lives with tourism practices. In short, the key objectives are to minimise the negative impact of tourism and introduce new methods for coordination and coproduction among stakeholders, thereby boosting sustainable initiatives.

Pinacoteca a Cel Obert emerged against this backdrop. As a cultural project, it serves social, economic and tourism purposes, among others. Furthermore, it is coordinated and implemented by a wide range of organisations and social groups. Territorially speaking, the project is being run in two neighbourhoods, Sants and Les Corts, both of which are located outside the more central, congested areas of Barcelona. It is therefore a clear governance-related action aligned with the strategy of PET20 to redistribute tourist traffic throughout the city, away from the historic centre. It also involves the creation of new attractions, in this case based on street art, and brings different stakeholders together.

There are two basic examples of street art as potential tourist landmarks in Barcelona. El Raval, a touristic area of the city, has several examples of urban paintings and poetic assault (Rius-Ulldemolins, 2018; Klein, 2018b). The *Windows Art Circuit*, which has been organised annually by *Poblenou Urban District* since 2015 in the fashionable *El Poblenou* neighbourhood, is a similar project. Both these street art tourist routes are promoted by the local tourism organisation, *Turisme de Barcelona* and, since 2012, Barcelona City Council has been using street art as an instrument for social and urban transformation in a number of different neighbourhoods with the aim of reviving them economically and building a sense of community and belonging among the residents. Some of these actions, such as *Murs Lliures* (Free Walls) in 2012 and *Ús Barcelona* in 2014 (and held almost annually in different spaces since then), have been temporary and ephemeral, while others, such as *Dóna la Cara per Poblenou* (Stand Up For Poblenou) in 2017, *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* in 2017 and *El Nostre Mur* (Our Wall) in 2018, are permanent. The latter has even sought to include immigrants and marginalised artists as legal citizens.

Pinacoteca a Cel Obert

Pinacoteca a Cel Obert is defined as a new consumption experience in a public space, far removed from the famously crowded streets of Barcelona. It consists of 24 shop shutters (Illustrations 1 and 2) in a shopping area painted by two famous street artists. The practice of painting shop doors is common in Barcelona, and most feature the artist's tag. However, the key feature of these 24 painted shutters is that they depict reproductions of famous works of art by traditional artists, rather than personal, critical and even invasive "real" street art.

Illustration 1. "Ruby" by Alfons Mucha at Europa jewellery shop, 21 C/Europa.



Illustration 2. "Bubbles" by Claude Joseph Bail at the Goccia Verde shop, 111 C/Galileu.



Source: the authors' own photos.

In the two neighbourhoods where these 24 painted shutters are located, there is an active network of shopkeepers called the *Associació de Comerciants Sants-Les Corts* concerned with the economic, social and cultural revival of the area. The project was planned and designed bottom-up through this association and with the political and economic support and impetus of the local authorities (specifically the departments of finance, promotion and tourism of the Sants-Montjuïc and Les Corts district councils). The cultural organisation, *Rebobinart*, ran this art project through two recognised street artists, Jalon de Aquiles and Lucie Blin. It was then brought to life by a group of residents who set up a cooperative called *Revivint el Patrimoni* to work as tour guides. These tour guides decided to create a tour that would offer a holistic

experience. Various meetings among all these stakeholders eventually gave rise to successful networks and a street art gallery, which plays a leading role in this contemporary movement to embellish urbanscapes (Sherry, 1998; Wang, 2005; Bonfantini, 2015)..

Street art has been the subject of extensive studies conducted from an aesthetic and ideological perspective, including in terms of urban rights and the production of urbanscapes. In this study, it is not analysed in terms of the pure, strict definition of street art, but rather as an entertainment and cultural product and a powerful commercial tourist attraction, given that its purpose is to embellish public spaces. The basic aim of *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* is to revive the area and attract people to the shops, a goal underpinned by the belief that the more embellished the streets, the more people will visit the neighbourhood. It serves as another social and cultural milestone on the local agenda and, ultimately, has evolved into a tourist attraction.

Discussion

The data collected in relation to *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* can be used to analyse the key factors behind sustainable tourism management in mature destinations like Barcelona.

It seems that street art has become another tourist attraction in Barcelona due to the fact that tourists are demanding new experiences and want to visit ordinary places outside beautiful historic centres, and *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* fits the bill perfectly. It offers an opportunity to gain an insight into the factors that contribute to sustainable tourism development and governance. First, this route can be used as a cultural product to reduce congestion in the crowded centre of Barcelona and redirect tourist traffic towards other neighbourhoods. Second,

it is consistent with the holistic experience approach, since it includes a wide range of attributes (participation, hedonism, knowledge, nostalgia, local identity and tasting) and offers visitors a rewarding experience. Finally, it is a project that benefits from the collaboration and mutual understanding of the public administration, private organisations and the general public. This participative network governance is also essential to develop sustainable tourism in mature destinations, especially because of its bottom-up approach. The model strengthens the ties between the project participants and the local community, thereby fostering new forms of management and organisation to generate shared value and mutual profit. The public spaces and streets in two non-central Barcelona neighbourhoods have been embellished for the visual pleasure of the community, thus providing them with more urbanscapes to enjoy and use for socialising. The 24 paintings not only provide the community with street culture, but also promote small businesses in the area.

In January 2017, the local administration took over the management and coordination of the *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* project through two initiatives. First, it launched a tour guide training course for unemployed people, which resulted in the creation of a tour guide cooperative called *Revivint el Patrimoni*. The second initiative involved working side by side with the *Eix Sants-Les Corts* shopkeepers' association with the aim of reviving the shopping area and eradicating the invasive tags and graffiti that dirtied their premises. Together with the cultural organisation, *Rebobinart*, a decision was reached regarding the structure of the *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* project. Well-known street artists Jalón de Aquiles and Lucie Blin helped the shop owners decide on the work of art that would appear on their door or shutter. This was usually related to their respective businesses. In October 2017, they started with classical paintings, such as *Lady Lilith* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Interior of a Restaurant in Arles* by Vincent van Gogh, *Yellow Cow* by Franz Marc, *Fruit* by Alfons Mucha and *The Market* by Joquim Sorolla. Finally,

Revivint el Patrimoni, designed and offered guided tours of the 24 painted shutters to provide visitors with an immersive experience.

What I was most pleased with was the friendly atmosphere when we discussed the content of the paintings with the artists... All of us created something amazing. (Interview with the representative from the shopkeepers' association)

This project takes a sustainable tourism approach; the decisions related to its implementation and the design of the route were all done collaboratively and all stakeholders played a role in its development and success. *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* provides residents with a permanent cultural and leisure activity. However, the same cannot be said for foreign visitors, due to the lack of promotion and any kind of synergy with the local DMO (Turisme de Barcelona).

Nobody has promoted the route. That's the main problem... Where can people, tourists, residents from other areas of the city find out about the route? Nowhere... or it's not easy anyway. These are the only brochures, which were printed when it launched... but there's been no advertising... This is a sustainable project; it has a lot of value, but there's no one to make sure it survives. (Interview with the representative from the cultural organisation, Rebobinart)

Most of the small shopkeepers have respected the agreement, and they protect and clean the shutters and cover the costs... but some businesses have closed and the new owners don't have the same enthusiasm or commitment of the former owners. It's such a pity! (Interview with the representative from the local authority)

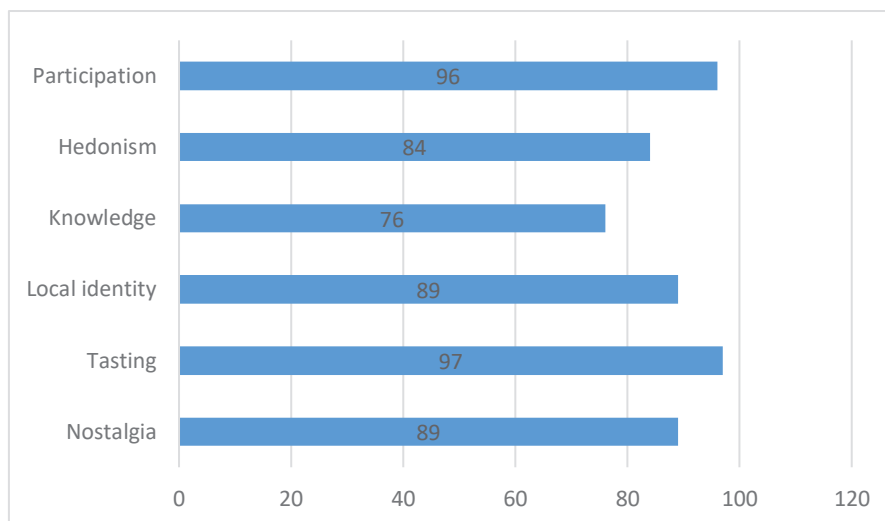
The route encompasses all the attributes of the holistic experience so sought after by modern tourists. In fact, the results show the significant degree to which each attribute is fulfilled

(Figure 3), findings that emphasise the interactive and participative nature of the tour, the nostalgic moments that occurred during the visit, the surprise fruit-tasting session at the end and the amount of local knowledge and information acquired in such a fun, hedonistic atmosphere.

I have discovered another van Gogh. I didn't know he painted in such a realistic way... and I had no idea about the American artists... It really is a fun tour... It wasn't what I was expecting. I learnt so much. I was excited and felt very happy... I'd strongly recommend it... (Interview with a visitor from the neighbourhood of Gràcia)

Figure 3. Perception of satisfaction according to the attributes of the Pinacoteca a Cel Obert

holistic experience



Source: the authors' own data.

Participation (96%) was one of the most highly scored attributes; the respondents highlighted how much fun they had had sharing information and trying to guess or work out answers to the questions asked by the tour guide. The turning point on all visits we observed was always the same, and came when the visitors had to build a paper magnifying glass to observe the painted shutter of the Fap store, which specialises in the restoration of vintage cars. The painting is *Death on the Ridge Road* by Grant Wood (Illustrations 3 and 4). The social interactions that

took place on the tour were therefore the aspects most frequently mentioned by the respondents.

What I liked most was the way we were encouraged to participate throughout the tour, which forced us to interact with each other. For example, when we told each other about our favourite books in front of Renoir's painting and when we tried to guess what artist and painting was shown on a shutter... and even when we described personal things related to our childhoods... when we stopped to blow soap bubbles like the boys were doing in the painting... It was amazing!... (Interview with a visitor from the neighbourhood of Sants)

Illustrations 3 & 4. "Death on the Ridge Road" by Grant Wood at the Fap store, 140 C/Galileu



Source: the authors' own photographs.

Finally, the paper supports the new concept of street art as a means of increasing community value, reviving a shopping area, embellishing a public space and serving as a new attraction to redirect tourists away from Barcelona's congested city centre. The only thing it is lacking is institutional promotion through its inclusion on the *Turisme de Barcelona* website.

Conclusions

This paper supports a sustainable tourism governance model based on a network approach in

urban spaces, which seeks mutual understanding and collaboration between the public sector, private businesses, cultural associations and the general public. This is designed to drive innovation through artistic expression on urban furniture, specifically through the use of formal street art techniques to recreate classical pieces of art on the shutters of private businesses with the permission of the local authorities and the private owners and the assistance of renowned urban street artists. The ultimate aim is not to break the rules or mark the territory, but to embellish, generate conversation, decorate, revive and raise awareness of local and traditional trade in the city, thus providing tourists and visitors with a new consumer experience and emphasising the participation of the public-private sector and the general public in its design and implementation; in other words, to seek local support and sustainability for the project. The goal is for this new street art route to be included on Barcelona's list of must-see attractions, thus truly making a tourist attraction out of *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert*.

Future Research

Pinacoteca a Cel Obert is a fashionable topic, as street art forms part of the urbanscape. As a tourist attraction, it offers an example of how to decentralise and diversify tourism in mature destinations. However, more institutional promotion is needed to analyse the effects and sustainability of *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert*. Further research is therefore required to provide sustainable indicators, not only in relation to the number of national and international visitors, with a distinction made between residents and tourists, but also with regard to the social value generated and shared with the neighbourhood and the way in which it enhances the cultural life of the residents and reinforces strategic economic sectors.

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