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Split realities – dilemmas for rural/gastro tourism in territorial development

Gusztáv Nemes[a] and Kyra Tomay[b]

ABSTRACT
This article explores dilemmas associated with rural tourism and gentrification in the context of territorial development through two Hungarian case studies. An analytical framework is developed based on the parallel perspectives within economic, social and functional dimensions that often lead to split realities and grave problems. We claim that the iterative interplay between rural tourism and gentrification that prepares the ground for booming development helps to explain the process and its results. As concluded, although rural tourism appears to be an attractive, transferable tool for territorial development, policymakers must carefully apply neo-endogenous development principles to achieve sustainable improvements.

KEYWORDS
rural development; rural gastro tourism; rural gentrification; split realities; territorial development

1. INTRODUCTION

'Recycling' rundown urban neighbourhoods through gentrification and investing in heritage, culture and commerce has been a widespread, conscious strategy in urban regeneration for years. Rural tourism has involved similar trends in the rural arena and has become a fast-growing industry in recent decades. Such tourism is reinforced by consumer preferences for the ecological, alternative, local and small scale, and is facilitated by the internet, ubiquitous information and communication technology (ICT) and internet-based social networks, providing instantaneous information about almost anything, anywhere. In some regions, such as Toscana and Provence, rural tourism has converted whole areas into small economic miracles. The process has been recognized and actively applied by rural policies as a panacea for territorial development and solving rural problems with considerable success (Marcouiller, 2007). However, transposing such 'ideal' models into different socio-economic circumstances is associated with many dangers. Enhancing local production, tourism and visitor numbers, besides generating benefits, can lead to social, economic and environmental degradation too (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004).

This article (1) explores how recursive processes of rural tourism and gentrification pave the way for progress in the context of territorial development; (2) explains what problems and conflicts may occur along the way; and (3) presents the implications of the latter for development policies. To demonstrate our analysis, the cases of two Hungarian 'gastro villages' are used. The success of these locations is indicated by the presence of expensive restaurants, wineries, pensions, rising real estate prices, and the growing number of immigrants, tourists and rising social media visibility. However, beyond the shiny touristic reality, burning rural problems exist too: depopulation, ageing, a lack of jobs and schools, and poor services and infrastructure. Resources, profit and power are being dominated by urban interests, while indigenous people can hardly integrate into the booming local economy. Nevertheless, after decades of rural gentrification, the structure of local society is much more complex than the simple dichotomy of oppressed locals and colonizing incomers. Thus, once we explore beyond the economic rationale, responding to important questions concerning territorial development – such as which local values could/should be reconfigured as development resources, and which strategies and development directions could ensure long-term sustainability – becomes complicated.

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This article develops a new analytical approach based on parallel perspectives in economic, social and cultural dimensions that often become split realities, leading to problems in setting objectives, forming development strategies and fostering communication amongst important local stakeholders. Although our case studies are unique, they involve processes characteristic of rural areas. We explore the question how much of a panacea can rural tourism be for territorial development?

2. RURAL TOURISM, TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM– GENTRIFICATION – CONCEPTS FOR ANALYSIS

In this article we use sources from three different research fields to build the framework for our analysis: (1) the literature on tourism, and especially rural and gastro tourism from a sociological point of view, focusing on the tourist gaze and demands, actors and socio-cultural effects rather than tourism as an industry or a system (Leiper, 1979) or a value-chain network; (2) literature on gentrification, and rural gentrification, especially the process and different waves of the latter (Atkinson, 2003; Lees, 2000); and (3) literature on territorial and rural development, concentrating on neo-endogenous development principles (Shucksmith, 2009; Torre & Wallet, 2015). Combining these theoretical roots, we adapt to a rural context the process, stages, and consequences of 'tourism gentrification' as originally studied in Mediterranean urban tourism destinations (Cocola-Gant et al., 2020; Jover & Díaz-Parra, 2020).

2.1. Rural tourism – 'off the beaten track'
Tourism[1] became a major modern phenomenon after the Second World War, embracing practically all social classes in industrialized Western societies (Cohen, 1984). Today, most individuals in the developed world travel every year to gaze at new sights (Urry, 1990).[2] The demand for leisure has created a fast-growing industry that involves organizing peoples' mobility for the purpose of their entertainment (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Early forms of mass tourism focused on the consumption of staged coastal resorts, historic cities and other spaces designed or rebuilt for tourism. Today, however, as global tourism increases and competition between destinations intensifies, tourists increasingly target unique, intangible destinations, seeking to consume 'off-the-beaten-track' experiences (Cocola-Gant, 2018). Ubiquitous ICT, Google, and social media-based tourist guides ensure that visitors have information about sights, dangers to avoid and food to eat anywhere. Residential areas are drawn into tourism by Airbnb and other platforms that offer accommodation in private homes repurposed as tourist spaces, and touristification can be observed in many Mediterranean cities and coastal areas (Cocola-Gant, 2018). This process also penetrates the countryside to the core (Phillips, 2002), resulting in masses of urban people appearing in various rural cultural

contexts, inflicting huge and yet largely unexplored socio-economic and cultural changes in rurality.

Rural tourism can be defined in many ways. For this article, we use the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) definition, namely:

> a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of products generally linked to nature-based activities, rural lifestyle, culture and landscape. Rural tourism activities take place in non-urban areas with the following characteristics: (i) low population density, (ii) landscape and land-use dominated by agriculture and forestry and (iii) traditional social structure and lifestyle.
> (UNWTO, 2020)

Thus, we understand rural tourism as a broader concept than agro-tourism, and we include in our analysis both day visitors and overnight guests, since both are important for our gastro-tourism focus. Gastronomy has always played an important role in appealing to visitors' desire for authenticity (Csurgó et al., 2019). In recent decades, this has developed into the trend of 'tasting a destination' (Cavicchi & Ciampi Stancova, 2016).

2.2. Virtual tourism realities within a rural context
'Rurality' – sanitized representations of rural life – is a construction mainly created *for* and *by* urban tourists and visitors. While the *living reality* of the 'rural' typically involves hard living conditions for local people, for urban people rural areas are often seen as nostalgic, idyllic places (Pato & Teixeira, 2016). The rural idyll is a product of the social imaginary (Appadurai, 1996), in opposition to urban reality (Bell, 2006). The countryside and country life is thought to be 'real', 'authentic' and romantic (Urry, 1990). What people see, therefore, is highly selective: we get the idyll we want (Bell, 2006). As Craik puts it, 'cultural experiences offered by tourism are consumed in terms of prior knowledge, expectations, fantasies and mythologies generated in the tourist's original culture, rather than by the cultural offerings of the destination' (Craik, 1997, p. 118). Thus, in the framework of rural tourism development, a virtual tourism reality is created within the rural context, based on the social imaginary and needs of visitors arriving with urban cultural demands.

2.3. The new rural paradigm and the role of rural tourism in territorial development
Territorial development as a distinct concept refers to the process of the construction of territories by local populations in relation to policy directives or more general incentives (Torre & Wallet, 2015). This approach is differentiated from both regional and local development through its scale and complex, holistic approach. Applying the principles of neo-endogenous development (a type of governance that is locally rooted but outward-looking) territorial development has become an inherent part of rural development (Shucksmith, 2009). Rural development policies during the last 40 years have turned traditional

sectoral policies into more holistic and sustainable interventions, often referred to as the New Rural Paradigm (NRP) (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2006, 2016). Instead of maintaining traditional industries (e.g., industrial agriculture), NRP relies on the many activities present in rural areas: new industries, ICT, tourism and cultural dynamics (Lowe, 2006). Thus, territorial development, embodying most of the principles of the NRP, has become increasingly relevant within rural development. European Union (EU) Structural Funds, particularly the various tools of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Regional Policy, alongside many national funding schemes, have subsidized various levels of strategies, networks and large numbers of projects (Maroto-Martos et al., 2020). Most notably, the LEADER Programme, which is aimed at territorially based, complex rural development, and achieving neo-endogenous rural development on an institutional scale, has managed to channel central resources to support local, territorial objectives and became a model policy for territorial development within the EU (Shucksmith, 2009).

Rural tourism – using embedded, inalienable resources and contributing to long-term sustainability through community development and the enhancement of the local image – has been considered an important tool of rural development policies. In theory, well-managed rural tourism provides natural ways to reconfigure local resources to support economic development, preserves cultural landscape and heritage, promotes indigenous products, and supports traditional ways of life (Csurgó et al., 2019). Rural entrepreneurs are major actors in rural development, especially within the food industry, and more broadly in relation to all activities directly and indirectly linked to the valorization of agricultural production (Torre & Wallet, 2015). Thus, rural tourism based on entrepreneurs and their networks is an ideal match for territorial development, delivering many benefits to the rural economy, counteracting depopulation, and encouraging cultural exchange between urban and rural areas (Randelli et al., 2011; Ray, 1998). Rural tourism cannot be seen as an isolated phenomenon (Michels, 2017; Phillips, 1993; Solana-Solana, 2010), as through rural gentrification and other processes it has changed rurality to the core in many localities. These changes tend to create social, cultural, and environmental problems and tensions, leading to complex realities that ultimately affect the resource base of the tourism business.

2.4. Rural tourism – (and) gentrification – a mutual reinforcement

Tourism is difficult to be differentiated from the more permanent invasions of the middle class into certain urban and rural areas; in other words, from gentrification and lifestyle migration (Cocola-Gant, 2018). Gentrification has been a leading research field for urban sociology for decades. By definition, it is a process whereby the middle-class flow into poor, working-class inner-city neighbourhoods, often inhabited by ethnic minorities,

resulting in the gradual transformation of the physical, social and cultural fabric of the neighbourhood, including displacement of the poor and minority (Cocola-Gant, 2018; Smith, 1996). Since the 1990s, gentrification has consciously been used in urban development policy as a panacea for the problems of downtown areas (e.g., social and physical degradation, depopulation and ageing) (Atkinson, 2003; Smith, 2002). Gentrification also facilitates the diffusion of tourism, creating tourist-friendly sanitized spaces, consumption facilities and a middle-class sense of place that attracts further consumers (Cocola-Gant, 2018; Cocola-Gant et al., 2020).

Rural gentrification is a younger research field, closely related to the rural turn of tourism (Phillips, 1993; Solana-Solana, 2010). Resulting from the general trend towards teleworking, transitional forms of the latter are emerging, positioned between visiting rural locations and permanently living within them. Many authors have tried to conceptualize the transition from being present as a casual visitor to becoming a permanent dweller in rural areas. *Lifestyle migration* has been conceptualized as a hybrid form of mobility between migration, *lifestyle entrepreneurship* and *permanent tourism* (Janoschka & Haas, 2014). *Lifestyle migrants* predominantly belong to wealthy societies and involve individuals relocating themselves partially or permanently in foreign countries with lower costs of living, thus capitalising on differences in purchasing power and social and symbolic power relations in a globalized world. These migrants act as pioneer gentrifiers, turning unknown areas into fashionable destinations and creating opportunities for profitable reinvestment through sharply rising real estate prices. The present article broadens the concept to the domestic scene, based on the margin between the real-estate prices of the metropolis and peripheral villages. Hines (2010) introduced the concept of *permanent tourists* in rural gentrification as a conceptual hybrid, specifying that some rural gentrifiers continue to pursue tourist activities in a regular and constant fashion (Hines, 2010, p. 509) instead of engaging in local economic and social life.

Lifestyle entrepreneurs move to rural areas, and engage in local governance and economic and social life. They connect to a settlement as a desirable living place, and start small enterprises to both forge a closer relationship with their new home and replace or complement their urban income (Atterton et al., 2011; Pato & Teixeira, 2016). We introduce here the new concept of *intrepreneurs*. They are lifestyle migrants too, although with a more profit-oriented, entrepreneurial attitude of relating to a locality mainly as an economic space through their enterprises. They do not engage significantly in community life or governance, and usually do not live in their 'second homes'. New businesses often take the form of small tourism-based small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are normally designed to attract other urban people – fellow migrants and short-term visitors. The presence of an interesting intellectual community and the emerging tourism infrastructure (restaurants, accommodation and an experience economy) create the

context for a local 'virtual' tourism reality that attracts tourists on an increasing scale. As a result, both gentrification and tourism switch into high gear. Investors and territorial development policies are activated. More high-quality tourism businesses open, bringing in more visitors, some of whom become permanent/residential tourists and buy houses. The process penetrates local living reality to the core, changing the cultural, socio-economic context. However, besides such tangible development, unwanted, harmful effects can occur too. The rest of this article explores this process through two case studies.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

We present two separate, but in many aspects similar case studies. Oldstone[3] is located near Lake Balaton, a significant tourism destination. Grapevine is a small village in the south-west of Hungary, part of the Villány wine region. Both are small villages (fewer than 500 residents), and have six or seven fancy restaurants, wineries and many guesthouses. Both have built their touristic image around gastronomy, wine and landscapes, and have become the two (and only) settlements in the country referred to as 'gastro villages'. This conscious process of image-building was the primary reason for their choice as our two case study locations. To examine contemporary socio-cultural and economic processes in the framework of tourism gentrification, primarily qualitative methods were applied. We conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews in both settlements with all significant actors (mayors, tourism business owners and managers, and non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives), tourists and visitors, and with some random inhabitants, both gentrifiers and indigenous. In Grapevine we conducted 25 semi-structured interviews[4] in 2019. In Oldstone[5] somewhat fewer – 15 – interviews were conducted, although these were complemented with the qualitative analysis of some open-ended questions from a survey (118 questionnaires with residents). Systematic research was complemented with participant observation (taking part in community and touristic events on random occasions, as well as during eight field-research camps with university students) and the analysis of news, blogs and other social media items.

We used cross-case analysis (Andersson et al., 2002; Ryan, 2012) to explore the interacting catalytic effects of tourism and gentrification in a rural context. Our analytical framework, which mixes the above-mentioned research approaches, aims to identify the common elements of the tourism gentrification process and distinguish its stages in order to explore the effects of development. Our main research questions for the case studies were: What are the course and the stages of the tourism gentrification process? Who were the main actors and stakeholders? What are the consequences (positive and negative) of the urban middle-class invasion (of residents, entrepreneurs, and tourists) for local society, the economy, culture, and the environment? What are the main tensions between the different 'realities' experienced by different layers of the complex local societies?

4. RESULTS – THE CASE STUDIES

Similarities originate from both cases being successful rural tourism destinations situated in a beautiful natural environment that use gastronomy, wine and local food production as their main touristic attractions. Both locations are strong brands, driven by a few expensive, stylish restaurants and wineries established by entrepreneurs, mostly from an urban milieu, who have had the appropriate cultural and social capital to recognize the new trend of 'tasting a destination'. The last 10 years have brought significant changes to both areas – exponential growth in visitor numbers, social media appearances and rising property prices – unambiguous signs of their becoming prime tourism destinations.

> High gastro … that is, we pretend to eat as if we were in nature, but this can be done in an ironed shirt and white collar while sipping nice wine. This is the Oldstone brand I think, this is the image: you can sit in a white shirt in the vineyard, but that vineyard should be disinfected and paved.
>
> (lifestyle entrepreneur from Oldstone)

There are significant differences too. Oldstone is more accessible, located within two hours' drive of Budapest, near to Lake Balaton. Many holidaymakers 'pop in' for a short excursion, an artisanal ice cream or a stylish dinner. There is not much need for strategic marketing. In contrast, Grapevine is geographically and culturally more remote, somewhat off the mental map of wealthy urban tourists. Visitors do not just pop in, hence tourism must be more targeted. Grapevine became a destination thanks to the conscious, strategic, collective action of local entrepreneurs in terms of branding and event development.

4.1. From bohemian pioneers to real-estate investors – the stages of tourism gentrification
4.1.1. First stage: Artists and bohemian pioneers
The first stage of tourism gentrification was a slow and peaceful inflow of urban newcomers – mainly artists with high levels of cultural capital and aesthetic commitment, but little money to invest. Oldstone was discovered by painters and architects and the film industry in the mid-1970s, and Grapevine by ceramists in the early 1990s. In both cases, urban pioneers were attracted by idyllic environment, cheap old houses, and the possibility of a traditional rural lifestyle that could provide an escape from city life. Early gentrifiers had decisive impacts, changing local identity and community. Social imaginaries were rebuilt as well-known, desirable destinations for urban intellectuals (Szijártó, 2002). Thus, urban people with high levels of cultural capital, by relocating themselves in tiny villages, played a bridging role between two fundamentally different socio-economic and cultural worlds, and defined the context for later waves of gentrification and tourism.

At first my friend moved here. She came to some festival in Pécs, and then happened to visit here to see a band, and she liked it so much that she moved here within a year, and so did we. We got tired of the stress and life in Budapest. We weren't satisfied with our work either, so I told my friend to look around for us, to see if there was a house for sale … it had to be completely renovated, I actually had to rebuild this house from scratch with my husband.

(first-wave gentrifier artist, Grapevine)

Permanent newcomers became important figures in the local community, and often obtained social and political influence. They shaped the locality according to their own vision. In the case of Oldstone, some of the first immigrants started agricultural production, organized local markets, established a sales cooperative, etc. They also appreciated local cultural and natural heritage, and tried to protect it through local regulations, education and projects. In Grapevine, the very first urban pioneer was elected mayor in 1990, rebuilt local governance, and started new trends. The village became part of an important territorial cultural festival and a wine-route was built through the area, attracting the first larger waves of tourists. In parallel, local building regulations were tightened up, protecting the traditional peasant architectural image of the village, but hindering indigenous residents seeking to modernize their homes.

The first generation of urban migrants were naive, peasant-loving intellectuals who fell in love with the old people living here. These were living villages back then, and we thought the peasant world would recover from communism finally, and we wanted to save it for the time being. So, this first generation started to cultivate the land and the vineyards during weekends, but very few managed to infect their children with this attitude.

(first-wave gentrifier artist, Oldstone)

4.1.2. Second stage: Urban intellectuals, lifestyle migrants and second home owners
The second stage of tourism gentrification had significantly different results in terms of the socio-cultural fabric. In Oldstone, property prices rose from the 1970s onwards, thus around the time of the big socio-economic transitions of the 1990s, the area was already expensive for many lifestyle migrants. Being within some two hours' drive from Budapest, the second wave of gentrifiers was dominated by wealthy middle-class people, who bought and renovated real estate primarily in the form of second homes. Instead of cultivating or keeping animals, peaceful and comfortable holidays became the main motivation. Many old stone buildings were reborn as beautiful, valuable houses. However, indigenous people tended to leave, and the number of children and young people declined. Community life and the availability of public services deteriorated, further reducing the attraction of Oldstone as a living place for lifestyle migrants and young families.

In Grapevine, tourism gentrification started later and proceeded more slowly, thus housing and agricultural land remained cheap and available, making the village perfect for lifestyle migrants. Following the pioneers, in the 2000s middle-class people started arriving. They settled down with their families as lifestyle entrepreneurs and launched small wine and tourism businesses to supplement their urban-derived incomes. This migration resulted in a different kind of socio-economic development, bringing new life to the village. Rural tourism took off, significantly changing the catering and service industry. In the Oldstone area, pubs, inns, and simple private rooms for rent were part of a long tradition. However, the emergence of urban middle-classes with solvent demand and a desire for rural idyll, featuring Provencal motifs, required changes. In Oldstone, the first 'Provence-style' pension aimed at wealthy tourists opened in 1998, shortly followed by a restaurant. Nevertheless, these establishments were the early birds, and some 15 years passed before this trend became the norm in the area.

After all, those who wanted more freedom and had independent ideas, they wanted to create their own jobs. There were still vineyards for sale, many people started making wine. Then a lot of young families moved here from Budapest or Pécs to start businesses and start their lives here.

(local entrepreneur, Grapevine)

4.1.3. Third stage: Lifestyle entrepreneurs, intrepreneurs and mass tourism
In Grapevine, the first restaurant was established only in 2013; a year marking the start of a new era in Oldstone too, with the opening of another soon-to-become-famous fine-dining restaurant. Following that year, the 'gastro revolution' took off in Hungary, and both villages attracted increasing publicity in blogs, magazines, and social media. Gastronomy and local products were blended with landscape and nature within the social imaginary, and both locations became trendy, hyped-up gastro-tourism destinations. This resulted in a sharp increase in visitor numbers and many other changes, eventually transforming the local socio-economic fabric significantly.

The new wave of incomers who bought houses and entered the tourism business could still be considered lifestyle migrants. Nevertheless, houses and land are now expensive, and tourism service standards are high, thus starting a new business requires significant financial capital. Business opportunities, however, have become more tangible, and making a wise investment will almost certainly bring returns. Thus, a much more profit-oriented, entrepreneurial attitude has become the norm both in Oldstone and Grapevine. Most important businesses that define the tourism context today started as lifestyle entrepreneurs many years ago. They built up their social and economic capital and went through different phases of professionalization as entrepreneurial ventures. Other entrepreneurs have arrived in recent years, possessing significant financial and social capital, and started as professional businesses from scratch. The latter should be considered *intrepreneurs*.

Grapevine's main attraction can be identified as its cultural and wine festivals, making strategic coordination inevitable. Cooperation here emerged through economic relationships between enterprises associated with different waves of gentrification. Today, these enterprises are strongly networked within the tourism association, and work in partnership with the local government to harmonize tourism businesses with the *living reality*, striving for long-term sustainability. In Oldstone, some emblematic restaurants, two wineries, a gallery/art-café, and the premium pensions are the main attractions. The area is so trendy that accommodation and catering are fully booked throughout the extended season. As *intrepreneurs*, their owners do not participate in local governance or have strong partnerships with local government. They have a semi-formal entrepreneurial network, but this is limited to the organization of a few events and marketing initiatives.

> It's starting to be a bit much for me. That's not why we came here, we used to go to the cow for milk, there were 100 geese in the village, and peace of mind – they are completely gone. I would go crazy in Oldstone, a crazy snobbish place … I fled Budapest, but what I fled has caught up with me.
>
> (second wave gentrifier, Oldstone)

4.1.4. A fourth stage?: The threat of 'cold cash'

Economic success poses risks. Recent years have brought in investors with completely different objectives and commitments who see the area simply as an investment opportunity. In Oldstone, several interviewees called the phenomenon 'the appearance of cold cash'. Until now, tourism services, though of high quality and expensive, remained unique and small scale. Big investors may change this overnight, gravely damaging the social imaginary of the area. There have been several attempts at such expensive projects, the most serious involving the construction of two apartment-based hotels in Oldstone (100 new self-catering apartments, potentially involving hundreds of new visitors arriving each week to the tiny village). Such attempts were fended off by indigenous and gentrifiers standing shoulder to shoulder. However, there are many examples of locals losing battles against aggressive external investment in Oldstone's geographical proximity (around Lake Balaton). (For a summary of the above-described processes/stages, see Table A1 in Appendix A in the supplemental data online.)

> Ever since, it has become quite obvious that there are people who see nothing but money in this settlement, and confrontation was inevitable. So, from there [due to this] I would be lying as a local if I said it wasn't putting my nose out of joint.
>
> (indigenous resident, Grapevine)

5. DISCUSSION – SPLIT REALITIES

Tourism within a locality tends to create a form of virtual *tourism reality* that contrasts with the local *living reality*.

Tourism reality is rooted in consumer trends and a fundamentally urban culture and creates a framework for serving the demands of primarily urban tourists. Additionally, it delivers consumers and creates a tangible environment of prospering tourism-related businesses: hotels, restaurants, touristic events, and festivals. *Tourism reality* is the local manifestation of the 'transnational rural' (Bell, 2006) that, through social imaginary, attracts visitors into an area. Rural *living reality*, in contrast, is rooted in a fundamentally local rural culture, embedded knowledge, networks and kinship that frame everyday rural life. This includes many tangible and intangible aspects, from the availability of public services, infrastructure, houses or building plots, to community life, local governance, and ways of making a living. '*Tourism and living realities*' in any concrete case are naturally interconnected, and often marked by conflicting perspectives that frame the approaches of actors in relation to diverse situations and topics.

In our comparative case study, conflicting perceptions of reality were identified in three basic dimensions (*economic*, *social* and *functional*), termed *split realities*. A *split reality* occurs when some important aspects of local reality are perceived in different, and essentially conflicting ways. Some differences of perception between stakeholder groups with different worldviews, interests, and cultural backgrounds are inevitable. Nevertheless, when the same village, market, restaurant, event, etc. is repeatedly perceived differently by different actors, this is likely to lead to failing communication and potential conflict and implies an uncertain future for the locality. The latter can jeopardize exactly those rural values that created the resource base for rural tourism development in the first place.

5.1. Split economic realities – tourism revenue

Different perceptions of economic reality in a tourism destination are strongly connected to revenue from tourism. Actors can own prospering businesses, run small enterprises that sustain self-employment, receive a salary, or not participate at all in the tourism economy. In Oldstone, the obvious economic winners are *intrepreneurs* (efficient, profit-maximizing individuals) with a high level of cultural capital, who own fancy restaurants, hotels, and cafes that set the context for the local tourism scene, who perceive the economic reality as teeming with business opportunities. In Grapevine, smaller *lifestyle entrepreneurs* and some indigenous producers are more characteristic. They perceive the tourism economy as providing a *fair revenue for independent living*. This '*fair living group*' in both cases also involves highly qualified, well-paid employees (chefs, managers, sommeliers) who make a conscious choice to live in the area. The average indigenous local who works in tourism is normally an unskilled employee (e.g., cleaner, caretaker). Their perceived economic reality involves uncertain seasonal employment in low-paid jobs, managed by incomers with an urban culture. Nevertheless, while in Oldstone the majority of catering staff are from outside, in Grapevine indigenous people are somewhat

better integrated. Finally, some locals are *indifferent* to the tourism economy: locals in public jobs, those living on social benefits or who commute for work, or gentrifiers with no economic attachment to the locality who behave as *permanent tourists*.

5.2. Split social realities – government, governance and community

The perception of social reality is strongly connected to community life and local governance. Touristic events can replace traditional ones, and local pubs become fancy restaurants, depriving *everyday reality* of its traditional meeting places. Local leadership, defining power relations, objectives and scope for action are also decisive. Powerful tourism businesses often make alliances. However, they may stay within the tourism reality, absent from local (political) life, or the opposite – they take part in (or take it over) and become context-setters of local politics. We found an interesting contrast in this situation. In Oldstone, the most important economic actors are intrepreneurs, not those living in the locality. They do not participate in local governance and community life, but deal with their own businesses, organize their own events, and weakly collaborate. The local authority is led by mainly indigenous people who have little knowledge about or influence on the tourism economy and communicate only weakly with its important actors. Thus, local living and tourism realities are *segregated*, even *divergent*. Cooperation, strategic thinking, and partnership concerning the future and the direction of development of the village is lacking, resulting in tension.

In Grapevine the situation is rather different: *lifestyle migrants and entrepreneurs* strongly participate in local politics and closely cooperate with each other and the local government. Nevertheless, incomers' engagement in local politics has created split realities. The formers perceive the value of working for the common good of the village in responsible public positions; *touristic* and *living realities* are nicely integrated, the future of the village is strategically planned, and village life and community are changing in character but developing (*responsible integration*). However, many *indigenous locals* tend to see the local living reality as overtaken by a tourism reality. From this perspective, lifestyle migrants squeeze others out of positions of power and decision making. Old communities and ways of life are sacrificed for business goals and an overwhelming tourism reality (*colonized exclusion*).

5.3. Split functional realities – usages/functions of rural space

The same rural space can be perceived as having fundamentally different functions – as space for *work*, *rest*, and *adventure*. These are interconnected and overlapping; the same person may have the need for any or all of the latter at different times. In this regard, Oldstone and Grapevine are similar. *Work* involves building and maintenance, agricultural activities, animals, machinery, chemicals, dirt, noises and smells – ingredients of a local living reality. Rural entrepreneurs want to freely develop their businesses

– 'to live their entrepreneurial lives'. As a space for *rest*, the rural implies an idyllic, tranquil, environment, where people meet and greet each another, but respect each other's privacy. This is expected by both indigenous people and incomers. Even visitors view tranquillity as a prime attraction. Once they occupy their Airbnb for the weekend, they want calm and privacy. However, living in the age of the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), visitors perceive the rural as an *adventure* space, wanting to experience, taste, and see everything. In 'holiday mode', people are braver and more outgoing. Having paid for the experience, they often feel the right to gaze at everything and everybody. They peep into gardens, courtyards, houses, and post photos on Instagram featuring local people and private events. Oldstone and Grapevine are small villages in which actors with different cultures are juxtaposed within a limited space, and disagreeing perceptions of reality generate many conflicts.

5.4. Splits and stages – connection and explanation

We argue that *tourism realities* and *local living* realities constantly interact. The style and scope of this interaction depend on the local socio-economic, cultural, and environmental context, which is strongly influenced by the different stages of the rural gentrification process, interconnected with rural tourism. The consequences of the latter depend on the nature and degree of the split between the different aspects (economic, social and functional) of *tourism* and *living realities*. Our two case studies show significant differences in this regard.

In Oldstone, tourism reality arrived in a kind of vacuum. The gentrification process (especially its second stage) was characterized by urban middle-class incomers buying second homes, but not moving to the locality. Thus, now less than one-third of houses are occupied by permanent dwellers. The breakdown of social fabric and diminishing local services did not make the village attractive to *lifestyle entrepreneurs* as a living space. Instead, mainly *intrepreneurs*, those not living in the locality, created tourism enterprises, developing them into thriving, professional businesses over time. They pay tax, and some donate to tourism-related infrastructure projects. However, the village is their place of work; they do not participate much in local life, community events, or governance. Additionally, the village is perceived as a declining 'recreational space' both by indigenous and migrant dwellers, and even by many visitors. Rapidly growing visitor pressure, crowds, traffic, and the all-piercing 'tourist gaze' cause conflicts amongst different *functional realities*, and the tranquil, safe, refuge character of the village is jeopardized. The perception of exclusivity, the feeling of being exceptional when staying there, is also fading. This erodes the idyllic social imaginary of the whole territory and undermines the resource base of economic development.

Local people also perceive the territory as a declining 'rural living space' that is facing severe rural development problems, thus split realities have become evident.

Concerning *economic realities*, tourism development and gentrification have colonized local resources, raised house prices, and accelerated the gradual displacement of the indigenous. Income disparities appear to be huge, with some business owners supposedly earning fortunes, while the indigenous can only access unskilled jobs or are excluded from the tourism economy. Public services have been cut, shops are expensive for locals, and the number of children is further declining, thus ageing and the outmigration of indigenous people is occurring. *Social realities* are severely split too. While tourists and gentrifiers have much to enjoy in the form of gastronomic and cultural events, local people have lost their traditional events and meeting places. Moreover, deliberately not visiting the stylish restaurants, wineries, and events has become a means of rejecting the local tourism reality for many. The local authority is dominated by indigenous people, since intrepreneurs do not participate in public issues. Thus, local governance and the local economy remain unintegrated, implying the lack of a coherent strategy for harmonizing tourism development with local life, resulting *in severely split tourism and living realities*. Moreover, traditional agricultural activities, ways of life and working, local networks, and community life are breaking down or being abandoned altogether as *tourism reality is taking over*.

In Grapevine, gentrification has also had strong effects but is dominated by *lifestyle migrants* and *entrepreneurs* moving into the area with their families to establish new careers. Therefore, the recently booming *tourism reality* arrived in a relatively vigorous local *living reality* with a complex and strong economic and social fabric, pre-existing businesses, significant human capacity, and local networks ready for action and adaptation. The interaction between *tourism* and *living realities* here has led to a somewhat more integrated outcome. The decline of Grapevine as a 'recreational space' is limited to festivals and events (noise and crowds), which have not become an everyday problem. The social sphere is even more different. Gentrifiers here are *lifestyle entrepreneurs* who became active in local governance and community life. Their business interests lay with a growing tourism sector; however, as local dwellers they realized the need to control the process. This led to conflict with previous elites, but also to negotiations and alliances with local actors, and to collaboration aimed at implementing a conscious and coherent strategy for creating a sustainable balance between tourism and living realities.

Emerging tourism services are similar to those in Oldstone, but more locals are employed in businesses, and other trickle-down effects are easier to identify. However, the recent influx of *intrepreneurs* and the increasing number of events has started to upset this delicate balance, leading to conflicts between tourism entrepreneurs' employees and locals. During the last local election, these conflicts resulted in a significant shift in local governance, when instead of a gentrifier an indigenous person was elected mayor for the first time since 1990. Nevertheless, most local tourism entrepreneurs recognize the danger of the village losing its rural character and turning into an 'idyllic vacationland', and there is a broad, consciously shaped consensus amongst local actors not to let *tourism* and *living realities* split any further.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this article is to explore rural tourism and gentrification in the context of territorial development, thereby addressing the question: Is tourism a panacea for solving rural problems? 'Split realities' in *economic*, *social* and *functional* dimensions were identified to help explore the complexity of the topic. We argued that rural tourism can easily be recognized as a panacea for territorial development. There are many examples of destinations that have succeeded in very different cultural, economic, social and environmental contexts around the world. The recipe seems to work well, even if simply transferring methods of development from one place to another contradicts the principles of neo-endogenous/integrated development theories that support the concept of territorial development. Understanding this contradiction lies with the iterative interplay between rural tourism and gentrification. Remote, dying out, sparsely populated areas with low property prices attract pioneer gentrifiers. Some of them move into the area, attracting lifestyle entrepreneurs with an urban cultural background, strong cultural capital, and innovation capacity. The latter develop the human and financial resource base and the urban cultural context for rural tourism. Then rural tourism takes off, and businesses and infrastructure rapidly start to develop. However, fancy rural restaurants, cafes, and pensions often have very little to do with the cultural and geographical context of the locality. They are designed, managed, and utilized by incomers with an urban culture who provide high quality services that target the well-to-do elite with sophisticated demands.

Thus, rural tourism should not be treated as a panacea that can spur development anywhere. It should be understood as a special case of external investment (even colonization) that uses local resources (space, land, culture, etc.) but creates a fundamentally urban context (a virtual tourism reality) within rural localities. Although tourism reality can be created in different areas and businesses can take off, the consequences can be damaging to a locality. Tourism and local living realities can split and clash, resulting in conflict, the loss of rural values, and the erosion of the human, cultural, and environmental resource base of the area – the opposite of what territorial development aims for.

However, we argue that local context – the actual interaction between the local living reality and the emerging tourism reality – is decisive in relation to the actual socio-economic and cultural effects. Important factors include the level of empowerment, participation, and the speed and strength of the process. These factors can be and often are strongly influenced by development policies and external investment. If rural tourism is understood as a panacea for overcoming complex rural disadvantages, it is likely to result in supporting regulatory frameworks, the

delivery of significant public funds, and increasing private investment. Such suddenly available sources of finance and development options are typically more accessible to people with an urban background and connections than their rural counterparts. Thus, gentrification and business development, alongside the displacement of the indigenous population, and even of first-wave rural gentrifiers, becomes more aggressive. This can lead to more severely split and conflicting realities, the loss of rural values, and other unintended consequences. Policy interventions and other types of external investment must thus be planned strategically and carefully, with a view to managing complexity. These interventions should thoroughly apply neo-endogenous development principles to influence tourism gentrification in a less exclusive, colonizing direction, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability of rural values.

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DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author on request. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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NOTES

1. There are a number of ways tourism can be defined, and for this reason we use the definition of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), as an all-encompassing umbrella term for the activities and industry that create the tourist experience.

> Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure.
>
> (UNWTO, 2010)

2. The 'tourist gaze' suggests that the tourist experience involves a particular way of seeing. It articulates what separates the tourist experience from everyday living. The tourist gaze is a set of expectations that tourists have about local populations in the search for an 'authentic' experience.

3. Grapevine and Oldstone are pseudonyms for the settlements, used to ensure the anonymity of interviewees.

4. The research was conducted in the framework of the Local Society Research Centre, University of Pécs.

5. Lo-Káli research is an ongoing interdisciplinary research that started in 2018, using methods and concepts from sociology, cultural anthropology, economics and environmental psychology. Title: 'Myths and Realities of Local Food Systems – Discourses, Producers, Customers and Socio-economic Effects in the "Hungarian Provence"' (K-129097).

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