

# Audiovisual Fiction, Tourism, and Audience Studies: A Literature Review

Jorge Nieto-Ferrando  
University of Lleida, Spain  
[jorge.nieto@udl.cat](mailto:jorge.nieto@udl.cat)

Beatriz Gómez-Morales  
University of Lleida, Spain  
[beatriz.gomez@udl.cat](mailto:beatriz.gomez@udl.cat)

Deborah Castro-Mariño  
University of Groningen, Netherlands  
[d.castro.marino@rug.nl](mailto:d.castro.marino@rug.nl)

## Abstract

Institutions are investing increasing amounts of resources in the promotion of their regions through audiovisual fiction. At the same time, there has been increasing scholarly interest in the relationship between audiovisual fiction and tourism, and particularly the effect of that relationship on potential tourists. Despite the inherently interdisciplinary nature of this field of research, very little attention appears to be given to what media studies, and particularly audience studies, could contribute. The purpose of this article is to offer a critical review of the literature on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism from the perspective of audience analysis. To this end, previous studies are categorised according to their objectives (e.g., to study the effect of films and series on destination image, travel motivations, experiences and intentions to visit, or tourist visits themselves), and an analysis is offered of their main findings and conclusions and of the use they make (if any) of audience analysis. The article then concludes with some proposals of ways to integrate audience analysis more fully into studies of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism to support research in this field.

## Highlights

- Despite the inherently interdisciplinary nature of studies analysing audiovisual fiction-induced tourism, scholars have only occasionally considered reception, audience and media studies.
- The analysis of the research published from 1992 to 2021 provides a picture of the evolution of research interests and the adoption of audience analysis.
- A particularly productive concept in audiovisual fiction-induced tourism is the notion of involvement developed in audience analysis.

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- The adoption of audience analysis has made it possible to consider new variables in the study of image, Motivations, and experiences.
- The effect of audiovisual fiction productions on images, motivations, experiences or intentions is conditioned by their relationship with other media texts.
- The development of a comprehensive understanding of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism requires a reconsideration of the relationship between audiovisual texts and their effects on audiences

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### Introduction

Research on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism analyses tourism to locations associated with films and television series. Many of the studies in this field examine the influence

of film and television productions on tourists’ decision-making process and on their experience at the destinations.

Despite the inherently interdisciplinary nature of this field of research, scholars have only occasionally considered reception, audience and media studies (Fernandez Young &

Young, 2008; Sangkyun Kim et al., 2009; Sangkyun Kim, 2012b), at least until recently. This has resulted in the identification of simplistic relationships between the presence of a destination in a film or television series and the effect on its perceived image, tourist motivations, tourist experience or intentions to visit. In many cases, the research is also characterised by a uniform conception of audiences, ignoring their sociocultural diversity (beyond the most basic socio-demographic parameters), their different levels of film and television viewing, and the complex relationship they establish with audiovisual texts. There are also very few studies that consider the interaction of films and television series with other media texts, apparently overlooking the fact that audiovisual fiction products do not exist in isolation.

The objective of this article is to offer a critical review of empirical research on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism from the perspective of audience analysis. Under the umbrella of audience analysis we include the study of reception, consumption and effects as these concepts are understood in mass media research. This review is motivated by the need to improve interaction between tourism studies and media studies. More specifically, this study proposes to:

1. Categorise previous studies based on their objectives and on how these have evolved over time.
2. Conduct a critical and conceptual analysis of these studies and identify their main findings and conclusions, as well as the use they make (if any) of theories related to audience analysis.
3. Propose possible ways of integrating tourism studies more fully with film and television studies from the perspective of audience analysis to support research in this field.

A large body of research has been produced on the relationship between audiovisual fiction and tourism since the 1990s. This has given rise to a few general reviews covering all dimensions of the relationship between tourism and audiovisual fiction, such as the articles by Connell (2012), Dominguez-Azcue et al. (2021) or Cardoso et al. (2017). However, in recent years, as the research has continued to develop, some literature reviews have focused on specific geographical regions, such as Asia (Nakayama, 2021), or on particular issues, such as the relationship between audiovisual fiction and tourist destination image (Nieto-Ferrando et al., 2021). The main contribution of this study is to add

to these reviews focusing on specific issues (in this case, the effect of audiovisual fiction on tourists or potential tourists) from specific perspectives (the theoretical contributions of audience studies), with the aim of highlighting the need for better communication between tourism studies and media studies.

## Method

With the objectives outlined above, this review considers studies contained in Web of Science and Scopus dating from 1992 to 2021. The first year in this period marked the publication of an article by Riley & Van Doren that could be considered a trailblazer in the study of the effect of audiovisual fiction on tourism. The articles selected are from academic journals published in English only, in view of the large volume of research published in this format and in this language. The search terms used were “film-induced tourism”, “film tourism”, “movie-induced tourism”, “movie tourism”, “TV-induced tourism”, “TV tourism”, “popular media-induced tourism”, “popular media tourism”, “screen-induced tourism” and “screen tourism”. These terms are by and large the most widely used in the research in this field (Beeton, 2016; Riley et al., 1998; Su et al., 2011). However, we have not included the search term “media tourism” due to the fact that it also encompasses other media forms such as literature and music, rendering it unsuitable for a study focusing exclusively on audiovisual fiction.

The plethora of terms being used in this field and the extent to which they refer to the same phenomenon or to closely related phenomena warrants a discussion that would exceed the scope of this study. In any case, to avoid potential confusion we have decided to coin a new term that covers our object of study as specifically as possible: “audiovisual fiction-induced tourism”. This term expresses the key idea of film and television productions as inducers, given that we are studying audiences and the effect of such productions on them, but focusing specifically on audiovisual (i.e. film and television) fiction.

Despite the abundance of terms, none of the definitions proposed considers the distinction between fiction and non-fiction, even though most of the studies using these terms focus their research exclusively on the effects of audiovisual fiction productions. This is the reasoning for our proposal of the new term “audiovisual fiction-induced

tourism”, which is used here to refer to fiction films and TV series, although it could also be adopted in research on other audiovisual fiction productions (e.g. fiction web series)

The review has been limited to articles that examine the impact of audiovisual fiction on the attitudes and behaviours of tourists or potential tourists; in other words, in accordance with the proposed objective, studies that focus on the effect of film and television on tourist decision-making processes and experiences. This excludes studies that explore the representation of destinations in films or television series (their projected image) or the effect of such representations on the destinations and their residents (the positive or negative outcomes for the locations they show). Also excluded from the study are literature reviews and articles that are exclusively conceptual. The search in Web of Science and Scopus yielded a total of 105 articles, once it had been verified that the content of each article was in keeping with the terms indicated and explored questions related to effects.

After a preliminary review of the articles, in order to ensure a more systematic approach, the following categories related to the general objectives of the review were established: (1) awareness and information; (2) overall perceived image; (3) cognitive perceived image; (4) affective perceived image; (5) internal motivations; (6) external motivations; (7) expectations and experiences; (8) behaviour and experiences; (9) satisfaction; (10) intentions and decisions; (11) visitor numbers; (12) loyalty; and (13) other. With the exception of the “other” category, which covers studies with objectives that do not fit into any of the other categories, each category was placed in one of four basic areas: (A) Images (categories 1–4); (B) Motivations (categories 5–6); (C) Experiences (categories 7–9); and (D) Intentions and Visits (categories 10–12). These categories and areas are not mutually exclusive, as many studies pursue more than one objective.

(A) “Images” covers research analysing how audiences identify and develop images of destinations based on the audiovisual fiction that features them. Films and TV series are an important source of information that enhances viewers’ knowledge of destinations. Their use as an information source may be conscious or unconscious and is related to the use of other sources (1). Perceived image is the set of impressions that audiences have of a destination based on the sum total of the beliefs, ideas, expectations and feelings it elicits (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Gallarza et al., 2002). Perceived image can be studied generally (2), although more commonly a distinction is made between its two components: cognitive

(3) and affective (4). The cognitive component of the image is linked to beliefs about the destination and its attributes, while the affective component is related to the emotional responses it elicits (Beerli & Martín, 2004; Gartner, 1994; Hyounggon Kim & Richardson, 2003; Macionis, 2004). Perceived image is essential to tourists’ decision-making process, as this process depends more on impressions than on objective information. According to Gartner (1994), perceived image can be influenced by tourism-inducing agents such as advertising, and by autonomous agents (i.e., agents unrelated to destination promoters), which include fiction films and TV series. Recent studies, however, have questioned the autonomous nature of films and series in view of the involvement that destination promoters may have in their production (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006a; Shani et al., 2009).

(B) “Motivations” covers research whose objective is to analyse motivation, which is the driving force behind tourist behaviour. Dann (1977) distinguishes between push factors, which stem from the tourists themselves, and pull factors, which are associated with the destinations. Push factors are internal tourist motivations that include ego enhancement, fantasy, escape from everyday life, relaxation, social interaction, education, novelty and status (Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Goodall, 1990; Pearce & Lee, 2005) (5). External motivations, or pull factors, are arise from the particular attributes of the destination. Audiovisual fiction promotes these attributes through visual exposure, their inclusion in a storyline, and/or their association with certain characters or celebrities (Macionis, 2004) (6).

(C) “Experiences” covers studies analysing the effects of audiovisual fiction on the tourist experience and its consequences. The effect of films and TV series on a destination’s perceived image and on motivations generates certain expectations in tourists who visit the destinations they show. These expectations interact with the reality of the tourist experience (7). Audiovisual fiction productions can also condition a wide range of tourist behaviours at the locations that such productions influence them to visit (8). When the expectations of the tourist experience and the degree of perceived authenticity of the destination are met or exceeded, the result is satisfaction (9).

(D) “Intentions and Visits” includes studies of the effect of audiovisual fiction on the intention to visit a location and the visit itself. Intentions can be considered the necessary precedent to tourist behaviour (10). Tourism research links

perceived image and push and pull factors to intentions and decisions, which in turn may result in visits to tourist destinations and attractions (11). Loyalty, the desire to visit a destination again or to recommend it to other tourists (Oppermann, 2000; Velázquez et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2014) (12), is also related to satisfaction with the tourist experience.

The order of the four areas in the outline above is not intended to reflect a chronological succession in the tourism process. The effect of audiovisual fiction on the construction of a destination's image and on motivations to visit it are chronologically interchangeable. The "Intentions and Visits" area is analysed last here simply because most studies analyse this area as an epiphenomenon of one or more of the other areas. This is especially notable in the case of the "loyalty" category, which is clearly associated with "experiences".

The studies classified under each of these categories are listed in subsection 3.1, the first part of the "Results" section. This section also includes an analysis of the chronological evolution of the research, which reveals the gradual adoption of the conceptual perspective of audience analysis and identifies the objectives that have tended to predominate at different times. A concise "geography" of the research is also offered, dividing the audiovisual productions, destinations and audiences/tourists studied by country. Subsection 3.2 identifies the main types of audience analysis adopted in studies of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism.

Subsections 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 offer a critical-conceptual review of the sample. This review also includes references to other studies which, although they do not form part of the sample because of their format (books or book chapters) or because of their year of publication, are essential for understanding the evolution of the research. These four subsections are organised according to the basic areas of "Images" (3.3), "Motivations" (3.4), "Experiences" (3.5) and "Intentions and Visits" (3.6). All of the subsections analyse the specific objectives of the articles, their findings and conclusions, and relate them to those of other studies. Each subsection begins with the analysis of studies that are not founded on the theoretical principles of audience analysis, in order to highlight studies that do draw on these principles to show that the tourism-inducing effect of audiovisual fiction is inextricably linked to the complex processes triggered by the spectator to understand, interpret and enjoy fiction films and series. Also analysed are studies that consider audience

diversity to be essential in their hypotheses, research questions or results. Subsection 3.7 concludes the "Results" section with an analysis of research that explores audiovisual fiction and its effects without decontextualising or isolating it from other media texts.

Finally, section 4 ("Discussion and Proposals") interprets the results of the research and proposes future directions that could ensure a more enriching exchange between tourism studies and audience analysis.

## Results

### Research Categories

Of the 106 articles analysed, only 33 draw on theories of audience analysis. This is evident in the references cited in the studies, in the explicit statement of theoretical assumptions and even in the hypotheses posited.

Table 1 classifies the studies by objective, according to the basic areas and specific categories outlined above. Each study generally pursues two or three objectives. Among the most common are the exploration of the effect of audiovisual fiction on cognitive image, affective image and visiting intentions, on the two types of motivations or on tourist behaviour, satisfaction and loyalty to destinations.

Scholars have given the most attention to the effect of audiovisual fiction on behavioural intentions and visits (52), followed by its effect on images (49), on motivations to visit (37), and on experiences (31). Although in the "Experiences" area, 45.2% of studies draw on audience analysis, in the other areas the proportion is only around 25%. At the level of categories, the lowest percentages were for "visitor numbers", "satisfaction", and "awareness and information", while the highest were for "behaviours and experiences", "expectations and experiences" and "loyalty". This reflects the close connection identified in tourism research between experience and loyalty, and the fact that many articles explore these two together.

The "other" category includes three studies. Two of these complement the analysis of the effect of films and series on images, motivations and experiences with a consideration of subsequent audiovisual viewing, posited as a way of expanding and completing the tourist experience (Chan, 2007; St-James et al., 2018). The third article (Bolan & Kearney, 2017) analyses online posts by fans of

**Table 1.** *Research Categories* ([back to text](#))**A. IMAGES (49, 12 AA\*)**

1. Awareness and information (8, 0 AA) Iwashita, 2006; Iwashita, 2008; Quintal & Phau, 2014; Josiam et al., 2015; Quintal & Phau, 2015; Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015; Araújo Vila et al., 2021; Ertz et al., 2021.
2. Overall perceived image (27, 6 AA) Busby & Klug, 2001; Iwashita, 2006; Seongseop Kim et al., 2007; Bandyopadhyay, 2008; Iwashita, 2008; Di Cesare et al., 2009; Hahm & Wang, 2011; Rodríguez Campo et al., 2011; Su et al., 2011; Irimiás, 2012; Busby & Haines, 2013; Busby et al., 2013; Dung & Reijnders, 2013; Spears et al., 2013; Josiam et al., 2014; Quintal & Phau, 2014; Quintal & Phau, 2015; Gkritzali et al., 2016; Itoo & Nagar, 2017; Justus et al., 2018; Ozretic-Dosen et al., 2018; St-James et al., 2018; Sangkyun Kim, Seongseop Kim & Han, 2019; Seongseop Kim, Sangkyun Kim & Petrick, 2019; Ertz et al., 2021; Zaini et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2021.
3. Cognitive perceived image (27, 6 AA) Hyounggon Kim & Richardson, 2003; Mercille, 2005; Iwashita, 2006; Hahm et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2008; Shani et al., 2009; Liou, 2010; Hahm & Wang, 2011; Hudson et al., 2011; Peters et al., 2011; Soliman, 2011; Rodríguez Campo et al., 2011; Josiam et al., 2014; Quintal & Phau, 2014; Correia Loureiro & Barbosa de Araujo, 2015; Quintal & Phau, 2015; Wong & Lai, 2015; Zeng et al., 2015; Gkritzali et al., 2016; Yen & Croy, 2016; Ahmed, 2017; Giraldi & Cesareo, 2017; Yang et al., 2017; Ozretic-Dosen et al., 2018; Wen et al., 2018; Hua et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2021.
4. Affective perceived image (15, 4 AA) Hyounggon Kim & Richardson, 2003; Lee et al., 2008; Shani et al., 2009; Liou, 2010; Peters et al., 2011; Quintal & Phau, 2014; Correia Loureiro & Barbosa de Araujo, 2015; Quintal & Phau, 2015; Wong & Lai, 2015; Zeng et al., 2015; Gkritzali et al., 2016; Giraldi & Cesareo, 2017; Yang et al., 2017; Ozretic-Dosen et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2021.

**B. MOTIVATIONS (37, 9 AA)**

5. Internal motivations (21, 7 AA) Chan, 2007; Bandyopadhyay, 2008; Macionis & Sparks, 2009; Reijnders, 2010; Peters et al., 2011; Lee & Yoo, 2011; Suni & Komppula, 2012; Roberson & Grady, 2015; Chang, 2016; Meng & Tung, 2016; Oviedo-García et al., 2016; Reijnders, 2016; Teh & Goh, 2016; Bieńkowska-Gołasa, 2018; Liu & Pratt, 2019; Waysdorf & Reijnders, 2019; Josiam et al., 2020; Michael et al., 2020; Ng & Chan, 2020; Araújo et al., 2021; Araújo Vila et al., 2021.
6. External motivations (30, 8 AA) Carl et al., 2007; Chan, 2007; Seongseop Kim et al., 2007; Bandyopadhyay, 2008; Fernandez Young & Young, 2008; Connell & Meyer, 2009; Di Cesare et al., 2009; Shani et al., 2009; Reijnders, 2010; Bolan et al., 2011; Hudson et al., 2011; Busby et al., 2013; Spears et al., 2013; Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015; Chang, 2016; Meng & Tung, 2016; Reijnders, 2016; Yen & Croy, 2016; Ahmed, 2017; Bieńkowska-Gołasa, 2018; Rittichainuwat et al., 2018; Kanaan et al., 2019; Liu & Pratt, 2019; Waysdorf & Reijnders, 2019; Josiam et al., 2020; Michael et al., 2020; Ng & Chan, 2020; Araújo et al., 2021; Araújo Vila et al., 2021; Hua et al., 2021.

**C. EXPERIENCES (31, 14 AA)**

7. Expectations and experiences (11, 4 AA) Mercille, 2005; Carl et al., 2007; Chan, 2007; Connell & Meyer, 2009; Buchmann et al., 2010; Bolan et al., 2011; Sangkyun Kim, 2012a; Dung & Reijnders, 2013; Justus et al., 2018; Teng & Chen, 2020; Lovell & Thurgill, 2021.
8. Behaviour and experiences (21, 13 AA) Connell & Meyer, 2009; Sangkyun Kim, 2010; Reijnders, 2010; Sangkyun Kim & O'Connor, 2011; Sangkyun Kim, 2012a; Sangkyun Kim, 2012b; Sangkyun Kim, 2012c; Sangkyun Kim, 2012d; Sangkyun Kim & Wang, 2012; Dung & Reijnders, 2013; Sangkyun Kim & Assaker, 2014; Frost & Laing, 2015; St-James et al., 2018; Liu & Pratt, 2019; Waysdorf & Reijnders, 2019; Du et al., 2020; Soligo & Dickens, 2020; Teng & Chen, 2020; Li et al., 2021; Lovell & Thurgill, 2021; Promkhuntong, 2021.
9. Satisfaction (12, 2 AA) Carl et al., 2007; Im & Chon, 2008; Connell & Meyer, 2009; Peters et al., 2011; Sangkyun Kim, 2012d; Dung & Reijnders, 2013; Frost & Laing, 2015; Teh & Goh, 2016; Justus et al., 2018; Rittichainuwat et al., 2018; Liu & Pratt, 2019; Li et al., 2021.

**Table 1.** *Research Categories* ([back to text](#))

<b>D. INTENTIONS AND VISITS (52, 14 AA)</b>	
10. Intentions and decisions (34, 9 AA)	Hyounggon Kim & Richardson, 2003; Iwashita, 2006; Seongseop Kim et al., 2007; Bandyopadhyay, 2008; Hahm et al., 2008; Im & Chon, 2008; Lee et al., 2008; Iwashita, 2008; Di Cesare et al., 2009; Shani et al., 2009; Hahm & Wang, 2011; Hudson et al., 2011; Peters et al., 2011; Redondo, 2012; Busby et al., 2013; Quintal & Phau, 2014; Rajaguru, 2014; Correia Loureiro & Barbosa de Araujo, 2015; Josiam et al., 2015; Quintal & Phau, 2015; Wong & Lai, 2015; Ahmed, 2017; Giraldi & Cesareo, 2017; Itoo & Nagar, 2017; Mitev et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2017; Seongseop Kim & Sangkyun Kim, 2018; Wen et al., 2018; Sangkyun Kim, Seongseop Kim & Han, 2019; Seongseop Kim, Sangkyun Kim & Petrick, 2019; Josiam et al., 2020; Ertz et al., 2021; Hua et al., 2021; Irimiás et al., 2021.
11. Visitor numbers (12, 2 AA)	Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Tooke & Baker, 1996; Riley et al., 1998; Busby & Klug, 2001; Fernandez Young & Young, 2008; Sangkyun Kim et al., 2009; Toma et al., 2009; Balli et al., 2013; Seaton, 2015; Tkalec et al., 2017; Mellinas, 2019; Du et al., 2020.
12. Loyalty (7, 3 AA)	Iwashita, 2006; Connell & Meyer, 2009; Mansson, 2011; Sangkyun Kim, 2012d; Waysdorf & Reijnders, 2019; Teng & Chen, 2020; Li et al., 2021.
<b>OTHER</b>	Chan, 2007; Bolan & Kearney, 2017; Según St-James et al., 2018.

\*AA: Articles that draw on theories associated with audience analysis.

*Game of Thrones* (Benioff et al., 2011–2019) with the aim of drawing some conclusions that could help destination promoters enhance the tourist experiences of fans of the series.

The analysis of the research published from 1992 to 2021 provides a picture of the evolution of research interests over the years and the adoption of audience analysis (Figure 1). It is important to stress that this review focuses on research on the effects of audiovisual fiction on audiences/tourists, and that other areas of research on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism may have quite a different evolution over time.

In terms of the number of academic publications, the three-year period 2007–2009 was when research in this field was consolidated. Apart from a few earlier studies, this is also the period when scholars began adopting audience analysis, whose presence increased considerably in the period 2010–2012, before dropping off again in the next three-year period. However, it was in the period from 2019 to 2021 that the number of studies grounded in audience analysis finally began to come close to the number of studies that do not consider this approach.

Scholarly interest originally focused on the effect of film and television on tourist numbers. This reflects the need to justify the research in the context of tourist studies. The period 2001–2003 marked the publication of the first studies of the effects on destination image, which would come to be a predominant focus in the years from 2013 to 2018. It was in this period that the study by Hyounggon Kim & Richardson (2003) was published, and in 2004–2006 when

Mercille published his study (2005). Both these studies use theories related to viewer interaction with texts, the latter from the perspective of cultural studies.

With the exception of a few precursors, the period 2007–2009 was when scholars began taking an interest in the effects of audiovisual fiction on motivations and experiences. In the period 2010–2012, a total of 11 texts were published focusing on its effect on experiences, seven of which draw on audience analysis. Most of these articles involved the researcher Sangkyun Kim (Sangkyun Kim, 2010, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Sangkyun Kim & O'Connor, 2011; Sangkyun Kim & Wang, 2012). Also notable in this category is the study by Reijnders (2010) from the perspective of cultural studies. From this time on, many articles contained references to terminology taken from audience analysis in all areas, although only a few made use of its theoretical developments. This changed in the period 2019–2021, when the categories “Images” and “Experiences” had the same number of studies, reflecting a more widespread integration of theory related to audience analysis.

An analysis of the geographical distribution of the research reveals the destinations, productions/celebrities and audiences that have received the most attention. Table 2 contains data on the top seven countries in each case, as these are the countries that research in this field has largely focused on. In relation to the country of origin of the audiovisual productions, it is important to bear in mind that many are co-productions that may involve an

Figure 1. Chronological evolution of the research

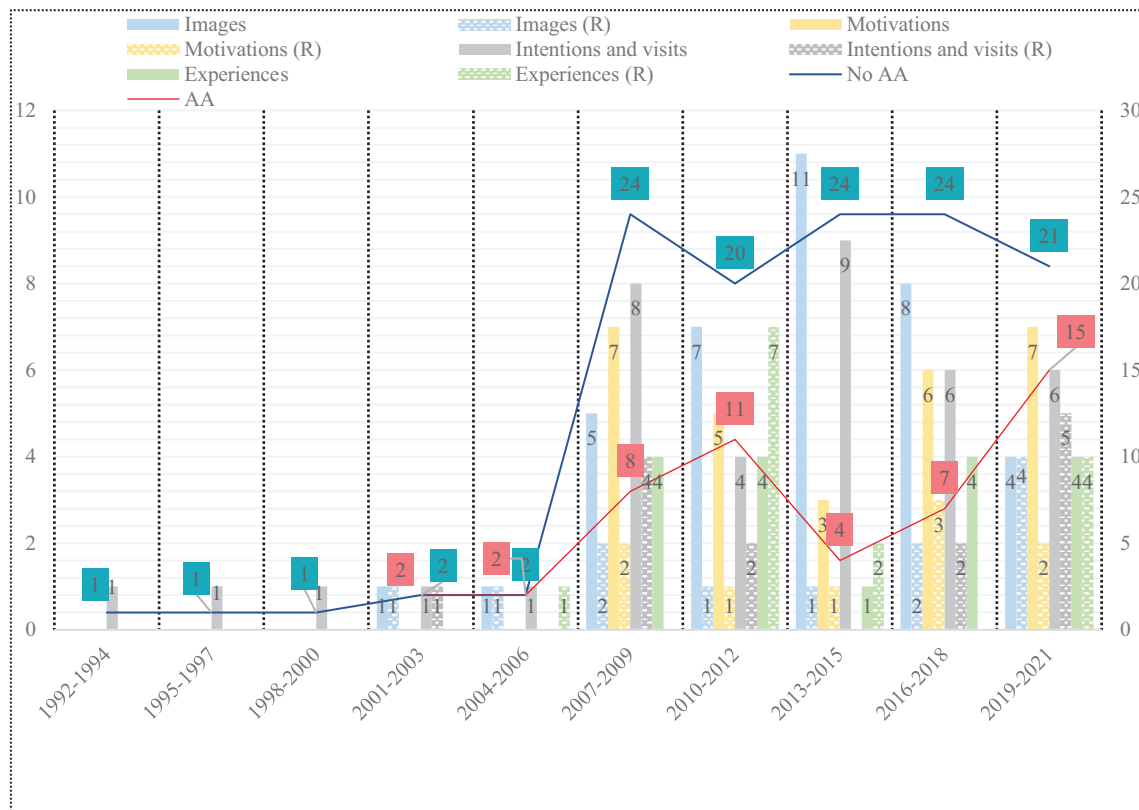


Table 2. Research by country

Country of production/ celebrities		Country of destination		Country of audiences/tourists	
South Korea	28	South Korea	28	China/Hong Kong	16
United Kingdom	23	United Kingdom	12	Taiwan	15
United States	22	United States	9	Japan	12
France	6	Spain	5	United States	10
India	5	Japan	5	Thailand	9
Japan	5	China/Hong Kong	4	United Kingdom	7
Turkey	4	Turkey	4	India	4

uneven participation on the part of the countries involved. This question is not addressed in this study, which merely assigns the productions to countries based on the data published in IMDB.

The largest number of audiovisual productions on which the studies are based are South Korean, followed by British and US productions. These are also the top three destination countries. In terms of the home countries of the audiences, the studies focus most on China/Hong Kong, Taiwan and

Japan. Non-Western countries account for significant percentages of productions (45.2%), destinations (62.1%) and audiences (76.7%), indicating that these countries dominate the research, at least in relation to destinations and audiences. This somewhat undermines assertions by authors such as Ng & Chan (2020) that the bulk of research in this area focuses on Western nations.

However, it is important to stress that this review only considers research on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism



from the perspective of the effect of audiovisual productions on audiences/tourists. A review of research adopting other approaches may yield quite different results. Moreover, this data is based on a global analysis of the corpus; an analysis considering time periods or categories of research objectives could reveal different patterns of countries that have been the most prominent in research at different times or with different objectives.

## The Adoption of Audience Studies

As is the case with their objectives, studies grounded in audience analysis may also adopt a range of different theoretical propositions. Most of these articles draw on theories about the interaction between spectators and texts, such as audience involvement theories (present in 16 of the 33 articles). Other papers explore interaction with texts from the perspective of cultural studies (2) or narrative transportation theory (2). The second most common set of theories is related to the cultural diversity of the audiences. Notable among these are theories on intercultural reception, particularly cultural distance or proximity (5) and fan studies (4). Many other studies take audience diversity into account but do not use it as a theoretical foundation. Examples of this include the studies by Hudson et al. (2011), Busby et al. (2013) and Michael et al. (2020).

### Empathy and icons (antecedents)

Prior to the consolidation of research on the effects of audiovisual fiction on tourism in 2007, there were a few studies that drew on concepts related to the spectator's interaction with audiovisual fiction productions, such as the notions of "vicarious experience", "empathy" and "icons" (Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Hyounggon Kim & Richardson, 2003; Riley et al., 1998; Beeton, 2016).

Hyounggon Kim & Richardson (2003) explain the effect of *Before Sunrise* (Linklater, 1995) on the perceived image of Vienna by means of the notion of "vicarious experience". According to these authors, the presence of a destination in a film represents a kind of experience of the location for the spectator, an experience mediated by the empathy the spectator establishes with the characters. Empathy is an emotional response to information on other people's circumstances, and to their bodily expression of emotional experiences and behaviours (Zillmann, 1991). Empathy plays an important

role in our affective response to media and could in itself be considered a vicarious feeling given that it does not necessarily arise from our own experience.

Another important concept with implications for audiences is the notion of the "icon" described by Riley et al. (1998). Icons are tourist attractions that acquire an importance that goes beyond their own inherent characteristics due to associations with concepts, subjects or feelings resulting from the location's interaction with different elements of the story and from the spectator's involvement in it. In some cases, these associations may have existed prior to their use in the film or series; as an example, Riley et al. (1998) point to the association for US viewers of the plains of South Dakota with Native American cultures in *Dances with Wolves* (Costner, 1990). Others, however, may be established by the audiovisual production itself.

Many of the associations identified by Riley et al. (1998) are what Barthes (1985) refers to as connotations. The sources of connotations are the text, intertextuality and the broader cultural context. In the case of the text, the mise-en-scène, framing and editing can evoke connotations, regardless of whether the profilmic space—what the camera shows us—is already imbued with symbolic meanings. For example, another case discussed by Riley et al. (1998), the romantic connotation of the covered bridges in Winterset, Iowa, in *The Bridges of Madison County* (Eastwood, 1995), is the product of the text itself. Intertextuality, particularly on the level of genre, contributes to the dissemination of symbolic meanings. Some connotations have acquired a certain level of consolidation due to their appearance in multiple films. The romantic connotations that Switzerland has for Indian tourists thanks to certain Bollywood pictures (Josiam et al. 2014) constitute an example of this. And connotations may also be related to the spectator's cultural background. The association of the South Dakota plains with Native American cultures in *Dances with Wolves* would probably be much stronger for American spectators than for viewers from other countries who do not share their "cultural codes".

The notion of the icon in its connotative sense entails extra work for spectators as it requires them to go beyond the literal meaning of a text and explore its symbolic meanings. Moreover, because cultural background plays a role in the recognition of icons, they are affected by the diversity and contextualised reception of audiences. Sangkyun Kim & Assaker (2014) argue that icons result from the positive evaluation of the attributes of audiovisual productions (subject,

story, characters and settings) and from a high level of spectator involvement (emotional, behavioural and referential). This evaluation and involvement is always a contextualised act on the part of the spectator. The transformation of a location into an icon, in addition to enhancing its image, transforms it into a pull factor (Singh & Best, 2004).

### *Involvement and narrative transportation*

A particularly productive concept in research on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism is the notion of involvement developed in audience analysis, applicable both to audiovisual fiction productions and to the celebrities featured in them. Involvement refers to the level of a spectator's engagement with a film or series. Sood (2002) argues that involvement has five dimensions, which can be grouped into two general categories: parasocial interaction (affective, cognitive and/or behavioural involvement) and reflection (referential and/or critical).

Research on parasocial interaction has explored the different attributes of audiovisual productions, such as storylines (Sood & Rogers, 2000; Sood, 2002), but especially characters. In this respect, two types of relationships have been identified: spectator attitude towards the character (positive or negative inclinations) and parasocial attachment or a feeling of familiarity resulting from the audience's repeated access to the character (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Russell & Stern, 2006). According to Sood (2002), cognitively engaged spectators become intimately familiar with the characters, plotlines and other attributes of the media production. Spectators with a high level of affective involvement identify strongly with the characters and with other production attributes. Behavioural involvement refers to behaviours triggered by the audiovisual production, ranging from talking about its attributes to organising a schedule to view the program or searching for more information related to the celebrities featured in it.

Referential reflection is defined as the degree to which spectators relate the content of the audiovisual production to their personal experiences (Sood, 2002). Spectators may appropriate characters' ways of thinking or acting to use them in their own lives. They may also reflect on their own experiences to better understand, interpret or enjoy films and series. Finally, critical reflection is the degree to which spectators distance themselves from the attributes of the production. This entails the evaluation of the content of the film or

series. Sangkyun Kim & O'Connor (2012) define attributes as narrative/storyline, themes, characters/celebrities, locations and settings, production values and music, although they group these into the two dimensions of "story and character" and "locations and aesthetic effects". Frost (2010) and Macionis (2004) consider some of these attributes, such as characters, scenery and storylines, to be tourism-inducing factors.

Narrative transportation theory also focuses on spectators' interaction with narrative texts. In particular, it analyses how viewers immerse themselves in the stories and the changes that this immersion gives rise to. Immersion results in a temporary loss of the notion of our surrounding reality. Gerrig (1993) describes it as a journey: the spectator leaves the ordinary world behind, accepts the rules of the narrative world and experiences it in a way that requires a suspension of disbelief and the substitution of truth for verisimilitude, before finally returning to the ordinary world transformed.

The pleasure experienced depends on the degree of narrative transportation, which is in turn subject to potential interferences in the situation of reception, the capacity of the narration to construct a plausible world and elicit empathy for its characters, and the conditions under which the spectator views the production. Among these aspects, the research has highlighted the spectator's familiarity with the story, either through knowledge of the genre or because of shared cultural features, the propensity to be transported and demographic variables such as gender and age (Van Laer et al., 2014). One key point that has implications for research on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism is the fact that the degree of narrative transportation is completely unrelated to whether the narrative world is pleasant or uninviting.

Immersion involves an expansion of the viewer's horizons by experiencing situations and actions without the risks they would entail in the real world, and empathising with the characters (Green & Brock, 2000). This leads to identification, which, according to Cohen (2001), involves the temporary replacement of the spectator's own consciousness with cognitive and emotional connections to the character. Taking on the character's experiences as our own helps us establish a strong bond with the character, an illusion of intimacy, as researchers of parasocial interactions describe it (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

Immersion in a story results in pleasure for spectators and in cognitive, affective and behavioural changes in relation to their reality (Green et al, 2004). A significant number of

studies have focused on narrative persuasion and on differentiating it from argumentation. While arguments normally require the receiver's evaluation, narrative transportation does not involve any such assessment because the arguments are generally implicit. Moreover, narrative persuasion is more emotional and its effects are potentially longer lasting (Green et al., 2004; Green et al. 2008). Along the same lines, various studies have analysed the consequences of audience involvement for persuasion. The parasocial relationships that spectators establish with television characters make them especially prone to their influence (Russell & Puto, 1999; Russell & Stern, 2006), a point that is obviously relevant to advertising in the form of product placement (Russell & Stern, 2006). However, the degree of involvement that spectators have with an audiovisual production will vary depending on the situation in which they are acting as spectators, as well as their particular social, cultural and psychological traits (Sood & Rogers, 2000).

As will be discussed below, the use of narrative transportation and involvement theories in research on the effects of audiovisual fiction on tourism has introduced the question of the mediating effect of the interaction that spectators establish with texts. In other words, the type and intensity of the tourism-inducing effect varies depending on the importance of the different dimensions of involvement and the degree of narrative transportation.

### *Cultural proximity and fans*

All of the studies include demographic descriptions of their samples. In some cases, the samples are taken from very specific populations: university students, domestic tourists, foreign audiences/tourists of different nationalities, etc. However, very few studies take into account that the type of spectators has an impact on reception and effects. This is especially important given that most of the articles analyse the effects on foreign spectators of fiction films and series produced in the countries of the tourist destinations.

Some studies draw on theories of geographical, political, historical or cultural distance or proximity. Cultural proximity is based on the degree of affinity between the identities of different communities. It implies a certain level of commonality between two cultures in terms of value systems, lifestyles, religion, ethnicity, economy, history, and in some cases language (Singhal & Svenkerud, 1994). Cultural proximity theory has underpinned various media studies

(Burch, 2002; Straubhaar, 1991, 1997; Su & Chen, 2000) with findings that suggest that audiences tend to prefer local or domestic productions because of their higher level of cultural affinity with them (Straubhaar, 1991; Antola & Rogers, 1984; Rogers & Antola, 1985).

However, researchers of the effects of audiovisual fiction on tourism have acknowledged a number of problems with cultural proximity theory. First of all, it does little to explain the success of South Korean series in Arab and African countries, which have social, cultural and religious values that are very different from those of the source country (Sangkyun Kim et al., 2009; Sangkyun Kim, 2012a). Secondly, cultural proximity is not necessarily positive for tourism. While proximity results in familiarity with the destination, Mackay & Fesenmaier (1997) argue that image and intention to visit require a limited level of familiarity. According to McIntosh & Goeldner (1990), the bigger the cultural distance is between the tourist's home and the destination, the more likely it is that the tourist will want to travel to that destination to experience the difference. Thirdly, it is not clear which variables define cultural proximity and the weight that each variable should be given. This conditions the tourism-inducing effect of audiovisual fiction.

Research founded on fan studies considers the motivations and unique aspects of their tourist experience. These include pilgrimages to the locations of favourite films and series (Couldry, 2003), a close relationship with film and television locations that prompts fans to re-enact scenes and actions there or visit them dressed up as their favourite characters, an element of social interaction that finds its ultimate expression in fan conventions (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012), and textual production, in many cases on social media, depicting the tourist experience as a form of devotion and at the same time a source of enjoyment. However, the possibilities that the analysis of fan culture can offer research on the effects of audiovisual fiction on tourism, particularly in terms of experience, have hardly been explored, at least in the sample analysed. There have also been very few studies on the potential connections between specific tourists and fans.

## **Destination Images**

### *Perception and representation*

A significant number of the studies reviewed explore the changes to the perception of a destination's attributes

resulting from viewing certain films or series located or set at that destination. All of these studies confirm a relationship between the representation of the destination (projected image) and the changes to the attributes perceived by spectators. In their analysis of the perceived image of Tokyo based on *Lost in Translation* (Coppola, 2003), Hahm & Wang (2011) find that the cognitive attributes that are evaluated more positively (“quality accommodations”, “hospitable people” and “cultural heritage”) are directly related to how the film presents the city. Along the same lines, Josiam et al. (2014) argue that Spain is perceived by Indian tourists who watch Bollywood films as a fun destination because of the parties and tourist experiences depicted in *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* (Akhtar, 2011).

The question of the connection between representation and perception raises the problem of the effects on destination image of a negative representation. This issue is addressed by Shani et al. (2009) and Hudson et al. (2011) in their examinations of the effect on the image of Latin America of *The Motorcycle Diaries* (Diarios de motocicleta, Salles, 2004), a film that makes no attempt to gloss over issues of poverty and social injustice in the region. In their study, Shani et al. find that the film reinforces the prior cognitive image that survey respondents had of Latin America, in both negative and positive terms. However, it has a detrimental effect on affective image, which receives a more negative evaluation. On the other hand, they also find that viewing the film has a markedly positive impact on intentions to visit the region. For these authors, the most important of the three elements of tourism-inducing films defined by Macionis (2004)—place (exposure to scenery), person (characters, celebrities), and performance (plot, theme)—is exposure to scenery. This is in consonance with the more positive evaluation of attributes related to nature and natural heritage and the high level of exposure of these elements in the film.

Correia Loureiro & Barbosa de Araujo (2015) argue that the negative impact on the image of Rio de Janeiro conveyed by *City of God* (Cidade de Deus, Meirelles & Lund, 2002) is due to the fact that the bleak story is not compensated for by exposure to any of the city’s attractions. These authors add that the relationship between the film’s fictional story and reality (the violence depicted and the problem of crime in the *favelas* of Brazil) also has a negative effect on the city’s image. Itoo & Nagar (2017) confirm the importance of the presentation of scenery in their analysis of the effects of the

film *Haider* (Bhardwaj, 2014) on the image of Kashmir and on intentions to visit the region. The media have projected a negative image of Kashmir due to the violence and terrorism that has afflicted this disputed region on the Indian-Pakistani border. Although the film does not ignore these circumstances, the presentation of the scenery and the way the storyline is articulated effectively enhances Kashmir’s image and intentions to visit.

Despite the clear relationship between representation and perception, very few studies analyse how tourist destinations and attractions are represented in films and series (Nieto-Ferrando et al., 2021). Dung & Reijnders (2013) consider this type of analysis to be essential and compare their findings with the effect on audiences. These authors find a close connection between the romantic, fashionable, multicultural and exotic image of Paris held by Chinese tourists and the films they have viewed the most. However, as Gkritzali et al. (2016) suggest, in opposition to this stereotypical image of Paris associated with romantic comedies is another image of the city as a dark and dangerous place, as it is depicted in spy films, for example. Americans who have not visited Paris tend to have the stereotypical romantic image of the city, as this is the predominant one in numerous popular culture products. Gkritzali et al. conclude that the more films set in Paris spectators have seen, the more powerful this stereotypical image is.

The findings of Gkritzali et al. suggest that different genres project different images, with equally diverse effects. This is in consonance with the findings of Beeton (2016), Hahm & Wang (2011), Roesch (2009) and Quintal & Phau (2014), among other authors. Bieńkowska-Gołasa (2018) finds that comedy in all its varieties is the genre with the greatest tourism-inducing capacity. Shani et al. (2009), citing Frost (2006), highlight the potential of films that deal with historical events or figures. However, although his study does not involve an analysis of perceived image, Redondo (2012) is one of very few scholars who explores the relationship between the genre preferences of audiences and their interest in visiting different types of destinations. His conclusions include the discovery of a significant positive correlation between a preference for adventure and suspense films and beach destinations, and between the comedy, suspense and drama genres and urban destinations, as well as a negative correlation between musicals and beach destinations, and between family and adventure films and urban destinations.

## Familiarity

The presence of the destination in a film or series represents a kind of experience of the location for spectators, mediated by the sympathetic relationships they establish with the characters. This experience will have an impact on the destination's image, creating familiarity with the location and reducing the potential tourist's perception of risk (Hyounggon Kim & Richardson, 2003). Some researchers go further and argue that viewing is a kind of prior consumption of the destination (Corbin, 2014; Gibson, 2006; Bencivenga et al., 2015), enhanced by the spectacular presentation of attractions and the meaning given to them through their relationship with the stories.

From the perspective of tourist studies, Milman & Pizam (1995) associate familiarity with previous visits, while Prentice & Andersen (2000) suggest that the media and interpersonal communication facilitate the development of a certain level of familiarity without a direct experience of the destination. Numerous studies consider familiarity to be essential to destination image and intentions to visit (Baloglu, 2001; Hu & Ritchie, 1993; Prentice & Andersen 2000). However, as noted above, Mackay & Fesenmaier (1997) argue that destinations benefit from an optimal level of familiarity, which involves a balance between the known and the unknown.

Ozretic-Dosen et al. (2018) demonstrate the importance of optimal familiarity, which they associate with the level of knowledge about the destination. These authors argue that Croatians who are familiar with Turkey as a result of a visit have a good image of the country, while Croatians whose knowledge of Turkey is derived from the media do not always have such a positive image. If the only source of information on the country is its soap operas, the image is positive. But if people are exposed to other media texts giving them a more in-depth knowledge of the country, the saccharine image projected by such series is balanced by an understanding of the country's political and social issues. The authors thus conclude that a high level of knowledge/familiarity can be detrimental to a destination's image, as it makes people cognizant of its problems.

## Involvement and image

The adoption of audience analysis has made it possible to consider new variables in the study of perceived image, such

as the effect of different levels of viewing and engagement with audiovisual fiction (Wen et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2021), the pleasure spectators receive from viewing (Yang et al., 2017), or their assessment of the audiovisual productions in question (Wong et al., 2021).

This has helped offer a new perspective on issues such as the impact of a negative representation on perceived image. Yang et al. (2017) question the causal relationship posited between representation and perception, drawing on narrative transportation theory to analyse the effect of the romantic comedy *Lost in Translation* and the violent action film double *Kill Bill: Vol. 1 and 2* (Tarantino, 2003–2004) on viewers' cognitive and affective images of Tokyo. The authors suggest that regardless of whether the subject matter is violent, romantic or comical, all films and series elicit pleasure from the spectator. It is not so much the representation as the pleasure that can influence destination image. The intensity of the pleasure is associated with the level of immersion in the fiction film or series. A higher level will result in a more powerful vehicle of persuasion (Green & Brock; 2000; Green et al., 2004). According to Yang et al., violent films require greater spectator involvement for their effects to be comparable to those of a romantic film.

The findings of Yang et al. (2017) are valid when the connection between the audiovisual fiction production and the present or past reality is limited and the destination image previously projected by the media and other fiction films and series is positive. When this is not the case, such as with *City of God* (Cidade de Deus, Meirelles, & Lund, 2002), the level of immersion and pleasure do not seem to prevent the production from having a negative effect on the image, as suggested by the findings of the study by Correia Loureiro & Barbosa de Araujo (2015).

The overall evaluation of an audiovisual production or its attributes can also have an impact on perceived image. Wong et al. (2021) suggest that a positive spectator assessment is beneficial to destinations due to the halo effect, as this concept is defined by Nisbett & Wilson (1977), whereby a positive attitude towards productions spreads to other aspects related to those productions, such as the celebrities who star in them or the locations featured. However, examining the question further, these authors find that a positive evaluation of a film enhances the cognitive image of a destination if its storyline is poor, and conversely, a negative evaluation of a film can enhance the cognitive image of a location if its storyline is considered strong. Wong et al. also conclude

that the popularity of the celebrities is more important for cognitive and affective image when the film they star in is evaluated positively.

### *Audience diversity and image*

The analysis of involvement has also been applied to studying the effect of celebrities on destination images. Lee et al. (2008) analyse whether Japanese fans' interest in Korean celebrities enhances their familiarity, cognitive and affective image and intentions to visit South Korea. Their findings confirm the relationship between involvement, enhanced familiarity and visiting intentions. However, they were unable to link involvement with the celebrity to a better cognitive and affective image of the country. This relationship is indirect, as involvement enhances familiarity and this is correlated with image. The authors attribute this to the unique qualities of the Japanese audience and their geographical and cultural proximity to South Korea. The proximity of the destination makes for greater familiarity with it, which results in a clearer destination image (Prebenson, 2007). Involvement has less of a direct effect on the celebrities' ability to shape a consolidated image, but this effect increases when audiences have limited exposure to the destination.

Cultural proximity also limits the effects of *The Motorcycle Diaries* (Diarios de motocicleta, Salles, 2004) on Spanish spectators' intentions to travel to Latin America (Hudson et al., 2011). In their analysis of the effect of cinema on the image of Paris perceived by Chinese tourists, Dung & Reijnders (2013) identify cultural difference, which is already evident in the films, as a pull factor.

It is also important to note that the variables that define cultural proximity have different levels of importance, which likewise conditions the effect. In their analysis of Japanese viewers of South Korean series and their effect on the change to the country's image and on motivations to visit it, Seongseop Kim et al. (2007) take into account the complex political and cultural relations between South Korea and Japan and the age of the tourists. The authors conclude that a positive attitude towards Korean TV dramas results in a bigger change to the country's perceived image and intentions to visit it among older Japanese viewers. This older generation experienced the historical tensions between the two countries, and therefore their initial image of South Korea tends to be more negative. The significance of a shared

troubled history thus gives K-dramas a more powerful effect on a specific age group.

Some authors, however, reach quite different conclusions in relation to cultural proximity. Su et al. (2011) draw on cultural proximity theory, parasocial interaction theory and balance theory to analyse the perception that fiction series give Taiwanese viewers of South Korea. The basic premise of balance theory is that when individuals perceive a set of elements as connected, they will make an effort to balance their attitude towards them (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955). This tendency towards alignment is especially strong if the relationship between the two individuals is intense and the object in question is important to one of them (Davis & Rusbult, 2001). Su et al. find that spectators who are culturally proximate to the series balance their attitude towards the destination with that of the characters in the story, provided that their attitude and (especially) their attachment to those characters is strong. Similarly, Busby et al. (2013) assert that cultural similarities can have an effect on destination image and motivations to visit. The authors analyse the effect of the actor Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ, characterised as the "modern Turkish man", on spectators of Middle Eastern ethnic origin. They find that aspects of identity are significant and can enhance the actor's influence.

Other variables used to differentiate audiences are gender and age. Sangkyun Kim, Seongseop Kim & Han (2019) explore these in their analysis of the effect of celebrity involvement on Chinese audiences' perceived image of South Korea and on their behavioural intentions, in terms of both purchases and tourist visits. The authors find no significant effects on the different types of involvement, image and behavioural intentions based on gender. This finding contradicts the perception that women tend to get more involved in South Korean TV dramas, and the claim asserted by Sangkyun Kim & O'Connor (2011) and Sangkyun Kim (2012a) that women have a greater interest in film and television tourism. However, differences were found based on age in all aspects analysed. More specifically, older spectators buy more South Korean celebrity-related products, probably due to their greater purchasing power. Age is also taken into account in studies of the effect on destination image by Seongseop Kim et al. (2007), Hahm et al. (2008) and Zaini et al. (2020).

### *Motivations to Visit*

Most of the studies on the effects of audiovisual fiction on motivations to visit adopt the division proposed by

Dann (1977) between push factors, which originate with the tourists themselves, and pull factors, which are related to the destinations.

Macionis (2004) links internal motivations to the type of film tourist, which she categorises as “specific”, “general” or “serendipitous”. Other authors propose different categorisations of film tourists, but most of these resemble Macionis’s classification (Croy, 2011; Croy & Heitmann, 2011; Couldry, 1998; Sangkyun Kim et al., 2009; Mordue, 2009; Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Fernandez Young & Young, 2008). The “specific” tourist, whose objective is to visit destinations or attractions viewed in fiction films and television series, is motivated by ego enhancement, self-realization, pilgrimage, identity, status/prestige, or nostalgia; the “general” tourist, for whom a film attraction is enjoyable but not the primary purpose of travel, the motivations are escapism, novelty, education and nostalgia; and the “serendipitous” or accidental tourist is motivated by social interaction and novelty.

In a later study, Macionis & Sparks (2009) found that specific tourists make up less than 5% of the total, suggesting that the direct impact of audiovisual fiction on tourism is very limited. They also specify the internal motivations related to film tourism as novelty, prestige, and the personal connection with the location. Novelty is associated with the desire to escape the everyday environment and experience something unique or unusual, in this case related to visiting places shown in films or television series (Couldry, 1998, 2000; Suni & Komppula, 2012). Prestige refers to the treatment of the film or television location as a status symbol and is associated with certain behaviours such as taking and sharing photographs of the location (Beeton, 2016; Pan & Tsang, 2014). Personal connection entails a desire to engage emotionally with the location where the story is set (Chang, 2016; Seongseop Kim & Sangkyun Kim, 2018). Other authors propose nuances or additional categories to this list of internal motivations. Chang (2016), for example, adds “fantasy”, understood as the desire to relive the story from the perspective of the characters, while Michael et al. (2020) identifies experiencing the filming location, the settings and their hidden details as a motivational factor.

In relation to pull factors, Macionis (2004) suggests that audiovisual fiction enhances the appeal of the destinations by displaying scenery framed with spectacular mises-en-scène, storylines/themes and characters (often portrayed by celebrities). On this point, Bolan et al. (2011) distinguish between film location tourists (motivated by the scenery

displayed), film setting tourists (motivated by the storyline and characters) and film location and setting tourists (motivated by scenery, storyline and characters).

A number of studies have sought to determine which internal motivational factors are the most important in relation to destinations and their relationship with audiovisual productions. In their analysis of the effect of audiovisual fiction on tourism to Seville, Oviedo-García, et. al. (2016) only identify novelty as a significant motivational factor. They argue that this is due to the fact that the city has not taken advantage of the films that have been made there, many of which have been box office successes, by publicising them with promotional epitexts. The authors recognise that novelty is not a motivation inherent to film or television tourism; in fact, although audiovisual fiction may have a particular influence on the other motivations, only personal involvement and fantasy are inherent to it.

Chan (2007) analyses both push and pull factors, arguing that South Korean series increase knowledge of and familiarity with South Korea, enhance the country’s image and boost intentions to visit among regular viewers in Singapore. This author finds that when K-dramas have an effect on intentions to visit, the main motivations are the scenery shown, the storylines, and to a lesser extent the characters and celebrities. In relation to push factors, she argues that the main motivation is to confirm in real life what viewers have seen on screen. This sometimes results in dissatisfaction due to the overcommercialisation of South Korea’s television attractions and to a lack of authenticity, referring to the correspondence between what is shown on screen and the reality. In terms of tourist types, most Singaporeans influenced by South Korean series are general television tourists.

### *Involvement and motivations*

The adoption of theories of audience analysis in studies of motivations has also offered a new perspective on the research. Sangkyun Kim & O’Connor (2012) and Sangkyun Kim (2012b) suggest that rather than the scenery, the storyline or the characters (to which they add the production values and music), it is the perception and evaluation of these attributes that can be considered a motivational factor. This perception and evaluation is not universal but subject to the cultural context in which the spectators live. Riley et al. (1998) suggest that another motivational factor is the

symbolic value that spectators assign to the attractions due to their role in the representation and narration of the film or series.

A noteworthy exploration of internal motivations can be found in the study by Liu & Pratt (2019). These authors adopt the framework of Sangkyun Kim & Wang (2012), who synthesise the five dimensions and two categories of involvement proposed by Sood (2002) into three dimensions: “emotional involvement”, “behavioural involvement” and “referential reflection”. Liu & Pratt correlate these with the motivations of “prestige”, “personalization” (personal connection with the location), “fantasy” and “novelty” (Beeton, 2016; Macionis & Sparks, 2009) to visit Highclere Castle, the filming location for the series *Downton Abbey* (Neame, 2010–2015). They also relate these motivations to the outcome of the experience. Their findings suggest that all three dimensions of involvement affect prestige, while emotional involvement influences personalization, referential reflection and behavioural involvement influence fantasy, and emotional involvement and behavioural involvement significantly affect novelty. Their study also found that personalization is the only motivation that affects the outcome of the experience.

From a different perspective, Reijnders (2016) studies the role of space in the recollection of stories (both audiovisual and literary) and the associations that readers and spectators establish between the narrative space and places of importance in their everyday lives. On this basis, he posits four internal motivations that inspire tourists to visit a destination. The first is to put themselves in the shoes of the character in the story, which Reijnders associates with the processes of identification triggered while watching or reading the stories. The second is to identify the creative process of the writers or directors and its relationship with the locations. The third is to experience the connection between location and story from the perspective of the values they share with the latter. As an example of this motivation, Reijnders mentions a tourist who wants to visit Villa Villekulla in southern Sweden because he shares a similar world view to that of the protagonist in *Pippi Longstocking* (Pippi Långstrump, Hellbom, 1969). Another example is the visits to the filming locations of the James Bond series made by tourists who share a similar conception of masculinity, at least on the level of fantasy, as that projected by the famous secret agent (Reijnders, 2011). The fourth motivation identified by Reijnders is to give free rein to their imagination

and memory in the location of the story, which sometimes entails re-enacting the scenes they remember.

It is worth noting that the motivations inferred by Reijnders have points in common with the dimensions of personal connection, fantasy and experience of the filming location proposed by Chang (2016), Seongseop Kim & Sangkyun Kim (2018) and Michael et al. (2020). Also evident in his study is the relationship between these motivations and the different dimensions of receiver involvement in the story, and especially with “referential reflection” as this concept is defined by Sood (2002).

### *Motivations and audience diversity*

Some of the studies mentioned in the section above consider the importance of audience diversity. Chan (2007) explores the effect of South Korean TV dramas on motivations to visit South Korea among female spectators in Singapore, based on Rubin’s (1985) assertion that women constitute the target audience for these productions. Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai (2015) identify different influences of motivational factors associated with audiovisual fiction between men and women. However, as noted above, Sangkyun Kim, Seongseop Kim & Han (2019) point out that there are very few studies that take the gender variable into account without resorting to stereotypes. Similarly, studies that include audience age as a variable generally do so on the understanding that the target audience of the audiovisual productions concerned is defined by this variable. This is why Ng & Chan (2020) analyse the effect of South Korean series and their celebrity stars on motivations to visit South Korea among youths in Hong Kong. Notable among such studies is the article by Connell & Meyer (2009) analysing the reasons for visiting Tobermory on the Isle of Mull in Scotland, the filming location for the children’s program *Balamory* (Jameson, 2002–2005).

Among the studies that consider cultural aspects of audiences, Michael et al. (2020) identify differences in internal motivations to visit the locations shown in audiovisual fiction productions between Indians living in the United Arab Emirates and native Emiratis. The authors evaluate novelty, fantasy, personal connection, prestige and the location of the story, finding that novelty is a motivator common to both groups, and therefore independent of culture. The other motivators also appear in both groups, but in different proportions. Michael et al. attribute this diversity to the cultural



differences between the two groups, such as the more conservative character of Emiratis, but they do not explore this question further.

Among studies that explore cultural proximity, Chang (2016) confirms that South Korean series motivate Taiwanese tourists to visit South Korea, but that cultural proximity only has an influence on spectators with a high level of involvement in the series. However, the motivational differences are clearer when the tourists are domestic and the audiovisual productions are from their own country, as demonstrated by Meng & Tung (2016), whose study focuses on Chinese visitors to Hengdian World Studios. The authors identify three types of motivations. The first is the desire for “serendipitous experiences”, such as running into celebrities or seeing film crews in action. This desire is more intense among specific tourists with strong connections to film and television, such as film studies students. In their case, the serendipitous experience is accompanied by the motivation to learn. Given that this motivation generates expectations, these tourists will be dissatisfied if the serendipitous moment never occurs. The second type of motivation is immersion in the stories evoked by the sets of audiovisual productions at the studios. This motivation is also particularly important for tourists/spectators with high levels of involvement in the films and series in question. The third is exclusive to domestic tourists and is also related to productions that make use of the kind of historical iconography that Hengdian World Studios specialize in: the comparison of the Hengdian scenery with the Chinese heritage sites they represent. Meng & Tung suggest that this motivation is the product of the high level of cultural familiarity that tourists have with these locations. They conclude that the motivations of domestic and international tourists are different; instead of the desire for novelty (a common motivation for travelling), domestic tourists are motivated by the desire to reaffirm what they already know.

References to the particular traits of fans are more common in studies of motivations. The specific film tourists described by Macionis (2004) and Macionis & Sparks (2009) have more in common with fans than with other types of tourists, and they are characterised by unique travel motivations and experiences of film and television attractions. Roberson & Grady (2015) identify five travel motivations for film fans: (1) to interact with the film creators (conventions being the privileged space for such interaction); (2) to visit the film locations or settings; (3) to interact with other fans with shared interests; (4) to purchase merchandise related to the

film; and (5) to recreate scenes and interact with the settings. In their analysis of the Shawshank Trail, a route associated with the film *The Shawshank Redemption* (Darabont, 1994), the authors suggest that the dominant motivational factors are to visit the locations and to recreate scenes. However, when travel distance is included as a variable, they find that one of the most important motivations for fans who travelled both the shortest and the longest distances was interaction with other fans.

## Tourist Experiences

### *Experience and meaning*

St-James et al. (2018) argue that audiovisual fiction helps vest the tourist experience with meaning. These authors adhere closely to the propositions of the experience economy posited by Pine & Gilmore (1999), who maintain that immersion in the experience makes it memorable. This immersion entails the elimination of the distance between the experience and the consumer, and consists of three operations: nesting, which allows the consumer to identify familiar elements in the experience; investigating, which requires the consumer to explore other less familiar activities that can enrich the experience; and stamping, whereby the consumer assigns the experience a unique, subjective meaning. Through these operations, appropriation theory considers the consumer a co-creator of the experience.

According to St-James et al., audiovisual fiction productions—and the media in general—effectively nest the destination by creating its image and certain expectations that render it familiar. This reduces the distance when the tourist arrives at the location. During their experience at the destination, tourists explore the possibilities of a deeper connection with the characters, storylines, and the relationship between the real and fictional locations. These authors suggest that interferences in the investigation process—the absence of guides to help connect setting, character and storyline, excessive staging or big differences between the real and fictional locations—can frustrate the experience. The investigation stage does not end with the visit, as the visit itself may stimulate tourists to view the films or series again on returning home, thereby extending the tourist experience.

Finally, St-James et al. suggest that there are two types of stamping or creation of a uniquely personal experience. The first is through unexpected occurrences, which are given

meaning with reference to a film or series. The authors offer the example of a visitor to Barcelona who one night unexpectedly ends up singing songs in the streets with other tourists of different nationalities. This visitor gave meaning to this experience by establishing a parallel with one of the most famous scenes in *L'auberge espagnole* (Klapisch, 2002). The second type of stamping involves questioning or redefining the relationship between story and location. This can happen when the contrast between the expectations created in the nesting stage and the reality or results of the investigating stage produce an unsatisfactory outcome.

Reijnders (2011) also explores how audiovisual fiction productions can redefine locations. Together with the spectator, these productions create what he calls “places of the imagination”. The symbolic meanings of places of the imagination are consolidated by repetition in films and series and are closely related to characters and storylines. Places of the imagination offer film or television tourists the opportunity to have a transcendent experience between two worlds: the imagined and the real. But the tourist experience is affected by other stimuli and interferences that strain the relationship between the fiction and the reality of the location, with the fiction ultimately winning out. This sometimes results in disappointment.

Tourists who are motivated by audiovisual fiction may seek to adapt the reality to the meaning they have conferred on the places based on fiction films or series. In their analysis of the effect of films on Chinese tourists' image and experience of Paris, Dung & Reijnders (2013) suggest that the expectations about Paris created by the films are tested against the real-life experience. The tourists look for signs of their “real Paris”, constructed based on the audiovisual fiction productions they have seen and the stereotypes those productions employ. Their level of satisfaction is greater when the tourist experience meets the expectations set by the stereotypes. Justus et al. (2018) support this idea in their analysis of the stereotypical image of the Maasai in films, the expectations created by that image and the level of dissatisfaction felt by tourists when the reality fails to live up to them. The disconnect between expectations and experiences has negative repercussions on tourist satisfaction.

### *Satisfaction*

Another key issue in the analysis of the effects of audiovisual fiction on the tourist experience is satisfaction, which is

associated with tourists' perception of the location's authenticity, the tourist experience and the degree to which their expectations are met.

In tourist studies, authenticity is defined as the degree to which a place is perceived as genuine (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). A distinction is also made between objective and subjective authenticity. While objective authenticity is determined by the original character of a location, subjective authenticity relates to the tourist's perception, and may in turn be broken down into “constructed” authenticity and “existential” authenticity (Wang, 2000; Shen et al., 2014). Constructed authenticity refers to the tourist's perception of a location, regardless of whether that location is objectively authentic. Existential authenticity refers to the perception of the tourist experience as genuine (Castéran & Roederer, 2013).

Audiovisual fiction strains the notion of authenticity. In relation to objective authenticity, many films and series are shot in places (locations) that are manipulated (settings) or used to simulate other places. This can cause disjunctions between tourist expectations and reality, especially when, as Bolan et al. (2011) point out, the main pull factor of audiovisual fiction productions is the scenery they show. Tooke & Baker (1996) argue that tourists will choose to visit the filming location when the setting is a fictitious, non-existent place (and the setting is therefore non-referential). However, when the setting is referential but not the same as the filming location, tourists will tend to visit the setting instead. An example of this would be the tourist visits to the beaches of Normandy induced by *Saving Private Ryan* (Spielberg, 1998), a film actually shot in Ireland.

Moreover, audiences/tourists can speculate about the places that inspired fiction films and series, attributing different levels of authenticity to them based on their capacity to obviate the absence of a confirmed relationship between them and the story they become associated with. This is what Lovell & Thurgill (2021) argue in their analysis of the urban legend that associates The Shambles (York, England) with Diagon Alley in the Harry Potter novels and films, suggesting that local residents and tourism providers can contribute to the confusion of real-life locations with fictional settings through staging.

Beyond objective authenticity, in their analysis of the film tours related to *The Lord of the Rings* (Jackson, 2001, 2002 & 2003), Buchmann et al. (2010) suggest that general and specific film tourists recognise places as authentic when they consider them to be anchors between fiction and reality.

Rittichainuwat et al. (2018) find that specialist tourists consider equivalence between the settings (props, scenery, etc.) and what is shown on the screen as a sign of authenticity. In other words, what they value is not the authenticity of the relationship between the settings and the reality represented, but the authenticity of the relationship between what they have seen on the screen and what they see in the real world.

In film and television tourism, satisfaction is also the result of comparing the reality against the expectations about the destination created by the film or series. Carl et al. (2007) analyse the comparisons made by tourists between the fictitious scenery of Middle-earth and the real landscapes of New Zealand in *The Lord of the Rings*. The authors find that tourist satisfaction is inversely proportionate to the amount of information about the destination and the tourist's level of engagement with the films. While generalist film tourists have their expectations exceeded, specific tourists are harder to please because they are so well-informed. Carl et al. highlight the role of guides in tourist satisfaction, as they help tourists relate the real scenery more clearly with what appears on screen. Satisfaction is associated with the film tourist's recognition of the fictional settings in the real world and the type of film tourist concerned.

Other studies identify different types of experiences related to film tourism. Sangkyun Kim (2012d) classifies tourist experiences at the Dae Jang-geum Theme Park in South Korea, where the series of the same name (Hyun, 2003–2004) was made, based on three dimensions: “novelty and prestige” (the excitement of experiencing the settings and locations in person), “beyond screen experience and re-enactment” (learning more about certain aspects shown in the series, such as Korean cuisine, history or customs, or its specific television production process), and “intimacy and memory” (recognising the settings, familiarity with the locations or remembering the story and scenes from the series). All three are associated with the tourist's internal motivations. Kim argues that “intimacy and memory” has the biggest influence on intentions to visit the park again, followed by “novelty and prestige” and “beyond screen experience and re-enactment”.

### *Involvement and experience*

In other studies examining the Dae Jang-geum Theme Park, Sangkyun Kim & Wang (2012) and Sangkyun Kim (2012b, 2012c) associate the three aforementioned dimensions of the

tourist experience with the audience's involvement and evaluation of the attributes of audiovisual productions.

Sangkyun Kim & Wang (2012) reduce audience involvement to three dimensions: “emotional involvement”, “behavioural involvement” and “referential reflection”. They find that the number of episodes that tourists have seen of *Dae Jang-geum* has a significant impact on all three dimensions and on their experience in the theme park. The more emotionally, behaviourally and reflexively involved the spectators/tourists are with the series, the more positive they rate their experiences at the filming location. Specifically, behavioural involvement contributes substantially to experiences related to “novelty and prestige”, while emotional involvement contributes to those associated both with “intimacy and memory” and with “beyond screen experience and re-enactment”.

Sangkyun Kim (2012c) correlates the evaluation of the audiovisual production attributes “story and character” and “locations and aesthetic effects” (see 3.2.2) with tourist experiences, finding that tourists' perception of production values while viewing the series significantly affects their experience. In particular, he highlights the influence of “story and character”, which he relates to television production conditions and genre characteristics, focusing more on characters and plotline than on spectacular settings. Finally, making use of the same case study, Sangkyun Kim & Assaker (2014) review these previous articles and correlate involvement in the series, evaluation of its attributes and the tourist experience. They conclude that evaluation has an effect on involvement and that evaluation and involvement also have a positive effect on the tourist experience. In this way, evaluation influences the experience both directly and indirectly.

### *Experiences and audience diversity*

The studies by Sangkyun Kim (2012a) and Sangkyun Kim & Wang (2012) on the Dae Jang-geum Theme Park identify significant differences in the three dimensions of the experience (“novelty and prestige”, “beyond screen experience and re-enactment” and “intimacy and memory”) depending on whether the tourists are Chinese, Japanese, Taiwanese or Thai, due to the particular cultural traits of each group. However, the patterns of audience involvement in *Dae Jang-geum* are similar for all four nationalities (Sangkyun Kim & Wang, 2012). These studies expose the weaknesses of cultural proximity/distance theory: if we consider Chinese,

Japanese, Taiwanese and Thai people to be culturally proximate, the findings for audience involvement confirm the theory, but the tourist experience does not. Conversely, if we decide that the four groups are culturally different, their different tourist experiences would confirm the theory, but their similar levels of involvement would not.

Some studies analyse the effects of audiovisual fiction on more specific groups such as “diaspora tourists” or “roots tourists” (Timothy, 1997; Timothy & Teye, 2004), although they analyse their experiences without isolating them from other areas. For these spectators/tourists, viewing films or series from a particular country and travelling there has implications for their identity. From this perspective, recognising the influence of film and television on the construction and maintenance of cultural identity, Bandyopadhyay (2008) analyses the effects of Bollywood films on the image of India and on the motivations (both intrinsic and extrinsic) and visiting intentions of this particular type of tourist. In a study that falls just outside the time-frame set for this review, Nanjangud & Reijnders (2022) find that audiovisual fiction can feed the imagination of India for Dutch people of Indian origin. Taking into account the particular qualities of Bollywood cinema, this involves the creation of an idealised, familiar image that can motivate spectators to visit. When they do visit India, many of them seek out locations they recognise from the films they have seen. Their tourist experience is thus related more to cinema than to the search for their personal roots. Moreover, the differences between the expectations created by films and the reality they find can generate dissonance and frustration.

In addition to motivations, fan studies have also taken an interest in experiences. Reijnders (2010) analyses the tourist experiences of fans of the James Bond saga. These experiences combine investigation of the locations and the calculation of their “reality quotient” by comparing them to the films, photographs replicating the *mise-en-scène* of the shots filmed at the locations (taken from the same angle) or acts of mimicry, reproducing the movements and postures of the characters in the scene, either playfully or in a serious tone. Reijnders infers a number of factors that motivate the fans to visit the filming locations, such as replicating the character’s actions. He also highlights the fact that the experience is not limited merely to the visit, as it is subsequently remembered by repeatedly reviewing the photographs taken and by sharing them online.

Following Couldry (2003), Reijnders describes fans’ travel experiences as “media pilgrimages” similar to religious pilgrimages as defined by Turner and Turner (1978). In this sense, they represent a physical and symbolic journey that reduces the distance between the ordinary world and the media world, which for the fan means being able to distinguish between the two while at the same time believing that the boundary between them can be crossed. For Beeton (2016), the similarity between the fan pilgrimage and other types of pilgrimages lies in the sacred quality that the destinations acquire, and in the powerful emotion resulting from the visit to a place where something truly important took place, on either a mythical or real level. Applying the same approach, Waysdorf & Reijnders (2019) draw similar conclusions as Reijnders (2010). However, the fact that fans of *The Prisoner* (McGoohan, 1967) have been making pilgrimages to Portmeirion, Wales, ever since the series ended in the 1960s, including participation in conventions and other activities, enhances both the sense of belonging to a community of fans and the familiar connection with the destination. Among the travel motivations that could be inferred is the opportunity to share the passion for the series with other fans.

### Intentions and visits

The first studies of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism provide data on the increase in visitor numbers to the destinations shown in films and series based on visitor records, hotel reservations, information published in the media, the statistics of destination promoters, etc. (Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Tooke & Baker, 1996; Riley et al., 1998). This data is used to confirm the importance of the effect of audiovisual fiction on tourism.

These early studies also offered some intuitive explanations for the phenomenon. Tooke & Baker (1996) suggest that the increased number of visitors to places shown in films and series is associated with the longer exposure time of the attractions compared to conventional advertising, the way they are presented, and their interaction with characters/celebrities and with the story. Riley et al. (1998) argue that the main tourism-inducing factor is the conversion of the locations shown in audiovisual fiction into “icons”, as defined in subsection 3.2.1 above. Riley & Van Doren (1992) suggest that audiovisual fiction offers a prior experience of the destinations (without the risks associated with the

real-life experience), enhanced by the special circumstances created by films and series. Audiovisual fiction thus mediates between destinations and audience, and its unique characteristics triggers the capacity of destinations to act as pull factors.

As noted above, many of these ideas have been developed extensively in subsequent studies, particularly those related to destination image and tourist motivations. However, apart from articles seeking to affirm the existence of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism, research focusing on increased tourist numbers has been rare, due to at least three problems: the fact that it is impossible to distinguish the effect of audiovisual fiction from that of other events or marketing initiatives promoted by the destinations; the difficulties associated with obtaining hard data given that many attractions do not keep visitor records, or if they do they do not release them; and finally, the risk of assuming that all visitors to a location shown in a film are film tourists. There has been far more research conducted on intentions to visit related to the effects of audiovisual fiction on destination image.

Nevertheless, there have been a number of attempts to conduct a rigorous analysis of increased tourist numbers resulting from audiovisual fiction (Toma et al., 2009; Balli et al., 2013; Tkalec et al., 2017). Toma et al. (2009) measure the impact over time of the novel and film *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (Eastwood, 1997) on Savannah, Georgia, by analysing the taxes paid by hotels for rooms rented. The authors also take into account the potential negative impact of Hurricane Floyd (1999) and the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. However, their analysis fails to overcome the first and third problems mentioned above.

The third problem, i.e., distinguishing tourists influenced by audiovisual fiction from other tourists, has been a focus in numerous studies. With a few exceptions, studies that analyse the types of tourists who visit attractions shown in films and series estimate the proportion of tourists influenced exclusively by audiovisual fiction at only around 5% (Busby & Klug, 2001; Croy, 2010; Macionis & Sparks, 2009; Di Cesare et al., 2009; Fernandez Young & Young, 2008). However, Busby & Klug (2001) claim that despite the limited number of specific tourists, 60% of visitors to Notting Hill have been influenced in one way or another by the film of the same name. Hudson & Ritchie (2006b) present the results of a survey conducted in 2004, finding that 80% of Britons considered holidaying at a tourist destination based on its presence in a film.

From this it can be inferred that audiovisual fiction has more of an influence on the decision-making process before the visit than on the visit itself (Di Cesare et al., 2009). However, the unique qualities of tourist attractions and destinations, their exotic and enigmatic nature, the limited range of experiences they offer and the connections they establish with a particular film or series (which sometimes constitutes one of the few ways of promoting the location) may help explain the marked increase in tourists attracted exclusively by audiovisual fiction productions. This is the conclusion of Connell & Meyer (2009), who estimate the proportion of specific tourists to the Isle of Mull for the series *Balamory* (Jameson, 2002–2005) to be as high as 69%.

There are far more studies of the effect on intentions to visit, as these complement the research on destination image. The same is true of studies of loyalty in relation to the experience. Li et al. (2021) use the case of Dubrovnik to analyse the relationship between authenticity and loyalty to the destination. Thanks to *Game of Thrones* (Benioff et al., 2011–2019), this Croatian city now has a dual identity: as a well-known destination on the Adriatic coast and as King's Landing, one of the main settings of the series. The authors find that the constructed authenticity of Dubrovnik and King's Landing has an impact on its existential authenticity, and that this is associated with destination loyalty. However, their analysis of the direct effect on objective and constructed authenticity found that their relationship to loyalty is positive in relation to Dubrovnik, but insignificant in relation to King's Landing. Li et al. explain this different effect by suggesting that while fiction can induce some tourists to visit a destination, only its real attributes can elicit their loyalty.

### *Involvement and intentions to visit*

Since the publication of the studies in which Kim took part in the early 2010s, the adoption of audience analysis has led to the widespread use in research in this field of terms such as “involvement” and “engagement”, although their theoretical foundation is not always made clear. This is also observable in articles that analyse intentions to visit, many of which are associated with other fields of research.

One example of this is the study by Wong & Lai (2015), which analyses film and television celebrity attachment and place attachment and their effects on destination image and visiting intentions. These authors define attachment as the emotional bond that people develop with locations, which

has a positive relationship with behavioural intentions (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Lee & Shen, 2013; Lewicka, 2008) or with celebrities, in this case through emotional involvement in parasocial relationships. Given that consumers who are emotionally attached to a celebrity display a positive attitude towards products or brands associated with that celebrity (Ilicic & Webster, 2011), the authors conclude that celebrity attachment can be a catalyst for intentions to visit locations associated with them, specifically, those shown in series that they are featured in.

The studies by Teng & Chen (2020) and Seongseop Kim & Sangkyun Kim (2018) have a stronger theoretical foundation. Teng & Chen analyse the role that celebrity attachment plays as a mediator between experiential authenticity and loyalty. They argue that constructed authenticity has an effect on existential authenticity, but only existential authenticity (not constructed authenticity) directly influences destination loyalty. They also suggest that both constructed and existential authenticity are associated positively with celebrity attachment, and that celebrity attachment also has a positive effect on destination loyalty. Constructed authenticity would thus influence loyalty indirectly through its effects on both existential authenticity and celebrity attachment.

Seongseop Kim & Sangkyun Kim (2018) go a step further and explore the effect of emotional attachment on intentions to visit. They draw on the studies of Sangkyun Kim & Assaker (2014) to correlate Chinese tourists' evaluation of attributes and involvement in South Korean series with behavioural intentions in connection with film tourism options in South Korea. In keeping with previous studies, they classify the series attributes using three categories: "character and celebrity" (casting, attractiveness of main characters, star power); "message" (generally assumed ethical or moral values, symbolic meanings, topicality) and "beauty of backdrops" (natural scenery and elements of mise-en-scène). They also break audience involvement down using the categories of "emotional involvement", "behavioural involvement" and "referential reflection".

However, they find that none of the three dimensions of perceived series attributes has a significant positive direct effect on behavioural intentions. In relation to involvement, they observe that referential reflection and behavioural involvement have an impact on intentions, but that emotional involvement does not. In view of their finding that "message" has an effect on "referential reflection", while "character and celebrity" and "beauty of backdrops" have

an effect on "behavioural involvement", and that both "referential reflection" and "behavioural involvement" influence behavioural intentions, they conclude that the effect of these dimensions of evaluation on intentions is indirect. But their main finding is that a direct relationship cannot be established between emotional involvement and behavioural involvement in relation to tourism, although such a relationship is identified in the studies by Lee et al. (2008) and Wong & Lai (2015). Seongseop Kim & Sangkyun Kim conclude that involvement in a television series is complex, and that emotional involvement may be an important factor when it is accompanied by referential reflection and behavioural involvement.

From the perspective of narrative transportation theory, Irimiás et al. (2021) analyse the relationship between television series viewing, escapism, immersion in a fantasy world and travel intentions in the specific case of *Game of Thrones* (Benioff et al., 2011–2019). The concepts of escapism and immersion are connected, but the latter requires a higher level of cognitive and affective engagement with the fiction narrative (Ryan, 2001; Green et al., 2004), as it is an advanced state of the narrative journey described by Gerrig (1993). The authors conclude that intentions to visit the locations of the series are linked to the kind of high level of engagement that is characteristic of immersion.

### Audiovisual Fiction and Other Media

The effect of audiovisual fiction productions on images, motivations, experiences or intentions is conditioned by their relationship with other media texts, whether informative or persuasive, autonomous (e.g., created by social media users) or induced (created by tourism promoters), based on Gartner's original classification (1994). Ever since Walter Lippmann's landmark work (1922), it has become common in research on media effects to assume that in contemporary society practically all information coming from outside our small everyday environment is provided by the media, and that therefore much of our reality is a mediated (and media) reality. This can be seen clearly in experimental studies analysing the impact of audiovisual productions on destination image. In the absence of previous personal experience and "word-of-mouth" information, our evaluation of the cognitive and affective attributes of a destination prior to viewing an audiovisual production can only be based on the media depiction of the place in question.

The audiovisual fiction text acts on the basis of an image constructed out of other media texts, which it may complement or contradict. Audiovisual fiction is one of the information sources that potential tourists turn to before making a decision, along with other media sources, word-of-mouth information and their own experience, and audiovisual productions also normally give rise to epitexts. Spears et al. (2013) suggest that by order of importance, tourists get travel ideas from recommendations by friends and family, television networks specialising in travel, tourism websites, Hollywood movies, social media, travel magazines and travel guides. These are the same sources of information they turn to once they have chosen a potential destination.

Epitexts are additional texts associated with an audiovisual production, which create expectations during the production process and support the production's distribution and exhibition. They may be of great importance for identifying filming locations when the stories are not referential and even enhance the tourism-inducing effect of the film or series. Some of these texts, particularly those created by social media users, can be valuable sources of information for research.

Some authors argue that the effect of audiovisual fiction on tourism is inversely proportionate to the level of attention the destination receives from other media. Films and series can raise awareness about the existence of previously unknown destinations and attractions (Croy, 2011; Frost, 2006; Iwashita, 2006), but their effect is reduced when their exposure in other media is high (Croy & Heitmann, 2011).

In any case, different media sources can act to reinforce the images projected by the others. Some studies of perceived image and motivations examine film, television, literature, news media, advertising and travel guides all together. Iwashita (2006), for example, analyses literature, television fiction and films to study the relationship between the projected stereotypical image and perceived image of the United Kingdom. Similarly, Reijnders (2016) explores the travel motivations of tourists influenced by fiction without distinguishing between literature and audiovisual fiction, referring to the phenomenon generally as “media tourism”. Lovell & Thurgill (2021) adopt the same definition in their analysis of the effects of literary and film fiction on the tourist experience.

From the perspective of audience analysis proposed by cultural studies, and specifically the propositions of Hall (1980), Mercille (2005) studies the relationship between the

projected and perceived image of Tibet with reference to films, travel guides and *National Geographic*. In view of the homogeneous nature of a projected image founded on stereotypes about Tibet, the author concludes that this image is generally in line with the perceived image. However, he also identifies tourists' negotiations with the projected image, as there are aspects of that image that many do not accept. Mercille attributes these differences to the fact that the reception of messages is always a contextualised act that differs to some extent depending on the social and cultural characteristics of the receiver.

The need to analyse audiovisual media (including fiction texts) as part of an interconnected media system in which consumers have the ability to create and disseminate content is the starting point of a study by Mansson (2011), who analyses the creation of multimedia content on social media by tourists in relation to Rosslyn Chapel, an important setting for *The Da Vinci Code* (Howard, 2006). She observes how users are transformed into promoters of the tourist attraction through their evaluations, recommendations and descriptions, combining the advantages of “word-of-mouth” information (recognised as the biggest tourism-inducing factor) with the potential to disseminate mass media messages. Many of these descriptions reflect the iconic nature—as Riley et al. (1998) uses the term—of the attraction for tourists influenced by audiovisual fiction, given the tendency to fuse the mythical image created by the film with the real one.

Audiovisual fiction can arouse an interest in seeking out more information about the destinations represented (Di Cesare et al., 2009). Mitev et al. (2017) argue that the recurring presence of tourist attractions in *Game of Thrones* (Benioff et al., 2011–2019) creates an affective bond with the spectator that stimulates a search for more information, and with that search, intentions to visit the location in question. However, this reinforcement can also occur in the opposite direction, as the tourist experience may lead to a search for information in different media about the destination and even to the viewing of audiovisual fiction set there. Chan (2007) argues that tourists who evaluate their tourist experience in South Korea positively are more likely to watch South Korean series again, as this allows tourists to relive the memory of their trip or to alleviate a feeling of nostalgia in relation to the holiday destination. For St-James et al. (2018), re-watching is a way of prolonging the tourist experience.

The relationship between different media sources can also have counterproductive effects. Rittichainuwat &

Rattanaphinanchai (2015) suggest that information on destinations comes from diverse sources that do not always project the same image. In their analysis of the effect of cinema on the image of Paris perceived by Chinese tourists, Dung & Reijnders (2013) identify contradictions with other information sources, such as social media, which highlight the “dark side” of the city.

The level of media exposure of the destination and the nature of the projected image are essential factors to consider when determining the impact of a film or a series on its image. A positive image projected by audiovisual fiction productions can compensate for negative images projected by news media, but the latter may also eclipse the effect of the former (Ertz et al., 2021). Ozretic-Dosen et al. (2018) find that the level of information that a person has about a country and the diversity of sources of that information will have different effects on the country’s image: more information results in a more negative image. Ito & Nagar (2017) argue that although the media may project a negative image of a destination, the way it is depicted in audiovisual fiction, showing its scenery and integrating it into an appealing story, can improve that image and even foment intentions to visit.

## Discussion and Future Research

This study has analysed previous research exploring the effects of audiovisual fiction on tourism. The objective has been to outline the current state of research in this area and to analyse how audience analysis theory has been applied to it. To this end, the studies have been classified according to four basic areas of research, subdivided into a total of 12 categories: [A] **Images:** (1) awareness and information; (2) overall perceived image; (3) cognitive perceived image; (4) affective perceived image; [B] **Motivations:** (5) internal motivations; (6) external motivations; [C] **Experiences:** (7) expectations and experiences; (8) behaviour and experiences; (9) satisfaction; and [D] **Intentions and Visits:** (10) intentions and decisions; (11) visitor numbers; (12) loyalty. .

The previous research is notable for the absence of an important area that should perhaps even take precedence over the areas analysed: the effect of audiovisual fiction on spectators’ memory of destinations and attractions. This may not be relevant when a production shows only one or a few destinations, but it is of great importance in films and

series that feature numerous locations, such as the James Bond films or *Game of Thrones* (Benioff et al., 2011–2019). Moreover, the analysis of the effect on spectators’ memory of the exposure of tourist attractions in audiovisual fiction may help explain whether the intention to visit a particular type of attraction can evoke a tourist’s memory of viewing similar attractions, which in turn may contribute to the choice made by that tourist.

The different types of memories of products and brands placed in series and films have been explored extensively (Gupta & Lord, 1998; Nelson, 2002; Russell et al., 2004), but no studies have been found from the perspective of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism.

*Proposal 1.* Analyse the effect of audiovisual fiction on the tourist’s memory of destinations and the relationship between memories, attitudes and areas analysed in this study. It would be important to study the different types of memories, their characteristics and duration. To this end, it is necessary to identify what the analysis of product and brand placement could contribute to research on audiovisual fiction-induced tourism.

Research on the effect of audiovisual fiction on destination image demonstrates a relationship between representation (projected image) and perception. The authors who have analysed this relationship argue that a negative representation can have a detrimental impact on a destination’s image unless certain aspects are emphasised to neutralise that representation—for example, beautiful scenery contrasting with violent action (Correia Loureiro & Barbosa de Araujo, 2015). However, narrative transportation theory questions the notion of a direct connection between representation and perception. Rather than the nature of the representation, it is the degree of narrative transportation that can influence a destination’s image (Yang et al., 2017).

It is clear that further research is needed on the effect of negative depictions on destination image. It would appear that this effect differs depending on whether the audiovisual fiction has a connection with the reality of the location—especially if that reality is troubled—and on whether there are other media texts that project a different image. Obviously, whether the spectators/potential tourists only see the negative depiction of a location or are also exposed to more positive representations is an equally relevant factor.

The relationship between representation and perception also affects the analysis of the effect on motivations and experiences. Studies of motivations differentiate between



push and pull factors. Pull factors include the representation of the scenery, storylines and characters portrayed in audiovisual fiction productions. However, some studies exploring the interaction between spectators and texts conclude that the evaluation of these attributes by the spectator—rather than the attributes themselves—are what constitute a pull factor (Sangkyun Kim & O'Connor, 2012; Sangkyun Kim, 2012b).

Despite the evident relationship between representation and effects on tourism, very few studies adopt audiovisual fiction text analysis as a step prior to the analysis of effects.

**Proposal 2.** Connect the analysis of the effect on audiences to audiovisual text analysis. This objective can be achieved by means of the proposal of Nieto-Ferrando et al. (2021) in relation to research on the effect of audiovisual fiction on destination image, but expanding it to include the analysis of motivations, experiences, intentions and behaviours. This is essential whether a strong relationship is assumed between representation and perception of motivation, or whether it is argued that the relationship is mediated by the degree of narrative transportation or the spectator's evaluation of production attributes.

Research on the effect of audiovisual fiction productions on destination image also analyses the degree of familiarity they establish. There appears to be some debate about the importance of familiarity, with some authors arguing that a high degree of familiarity can improve a destination's image (and other dimensions of tourism) and others suggesting that it can in fact harm the image. There is more agreement on the point that audiovisual fiction has a more significant effect, whether positive or negative, on the image of unknown (i.e., unfamiliar) destinations.

A successful production set in an unfamiliar setting effectively places the location on the mental map of its audience. But for a destination to become familiar to spectators, it may need to appear repeatedly in other films and television series or in other media texts. Intertextuality and epitextuality also help reinforce the association of symbolic meanings with certain locations.

Cultivation theory can enhance our understanding of the effect of repeated representation of a destination on its perception. According to Gerbner et al. (2002), intense, cumulative long-term television exposure can produce shared imaginaries between groups of heavy TV viewers, which can shape spectator perceptions and behaviours, because television maintains certain constant patterns for

representing reality. Gerbner et al. (1980) also discuss the "resonance effect", when audiovisual content has certain parallels with the spectator's experience, which enhances its impact. The resonance effect helps explain why tourists assign meaning to locations and to the tourist experience, enhancing their satisfaction when they encounter these parallels. St-James et al. (2018) offer examples of this. The resonance effect can also help to better understand the effects of watching or re-watching films and series associated with the destination after the tourist experience. If this resonance is perceived by the spectator/tourist, watching the production again would help to anchor the outcome of the experience and/or to increase nostalgic feelings related to the experience.

The problem with cultivation theory, or at least its traditional version, is that it assumes a very close relationship between representation and perception, compared to the more complex interaction assumed by other theories. It also adopts a conception of the spectator as an isolated subject who is therefore immune to other stimuli that might undermine the effect.

The tourism-inducing capacity of audiovisual fiction depends on the level of media exposure that the destination receives. Some studies suggest that the more unknown a tourist destination is, the greater the potential effect of audiovisual fiction will be (Croy, 2011; Croy & Heitmann, 2011; Frost, 2006; Iwashita, 2006). But the level of familiarity of a destination depends on the audience and the context in which they act as such: for example, a Taiwanese spectator would probably be more familiar with a Chinese destination than a French spectator (although this may not always be the case). Moreover, the image projected by non-fiction texts (whether informational or persuasive) interacts with those of fiction texts to create a complex and sometimes contradictory perceived image.

If adapted appropriately, agenda-setting theory can help to explain the relationship between the level of media exposure and the effect of audiovisual fiction. It is important to understand the place a destination has in different types of agendas (individual, interpersonal, media, public or institutional), the duration and frequency of news stories about the destination on the media agenda, the homogeneity or diversity of the perspective offered in different stories and different media formats, and the receiver's level of susceptibility to all this information, which may vary depending on their personal involvement with the location, its geographical

proximity or the level of credibility given to the source, among other factors.

**Proposal 3.** Explore the interaction between audiovisual fiction and other types of media content, given that it can condition the effect on all the aspects analysed. There are three reasons for this proposal. Firstly, it could help to identify the particular features of audiovisual fiction that distinguish it from other tourism-inducing sources. A key to this objective is offered by narrative transportation theory, which argues that the persuasive power of narrative discourse (particularly fiction), as opposed to argumentative or expository discourse, is by nature affective. Secondly, it could shed some light on the impact of redundancy or contradiction in terms of their combined effect on audiences/tourists. Thirdly, understanding the effect of the projection of a destination in other media texts could help to correlate the audience's prior knowledge about that destination with the effect of audiovisual fiction productions, given that this knowledge conditions their tourism-inducing capacity. Theories such as cultivation theory and agenda-setting theory can help to explore these issues.

Audiovisual fiction productions also give rise to different types of epitexts that can boost their tourism-inducing effect. News, reviews, interviews and marketing initiatives related to films and series can transform their filmed locations into a film or television destination, as can be inferred from the study by Oviedo-García et al. (2016).

In addition, epitexts—particularly those created by social media users—constitute a source of information that researchers need to take into account. With the appropriate methods and recognising their limitations, such epitexts can provide useful information on the effects of audiovisual fiction on destination image. The studies by Mansson (2011), Meng & Tung (2016), Bolan & Kearney (2017), Mellinas (2019), Du et al. (2020) and Gómez-Morales et al. (2022) all consider these essential information sources.

**Proposal 4.** Analyse the capacity of epitexts associated with audiovisual productions to promote audiovisual fiction-induced tourism. Alternatively, if they are assumed not to serve a tourism-inducing function, researchers could explore their potential as a source of information for researchers.

Although the analysis of the methods adopted in the studies is not an objective of this review, the method chosen can have significant theoretical implications. One example of this is the habitual use of surveys with an experimental

group and control group to measure the effect of audiovisual fiction on destination image. Such surveys are used by Hyounggon Kim & Richardson (2003), Hahm et al. (2008), Shani et al. (2009), Hahm & Wang (2011), Soliman (2011), Correia Loureiro & Barbosa de Araujo (2015), Itoo & Nagar (2017) and Yang et al. (2017). Experiments like these tend to overlook the natural situation in which spectators act as spectators, and the fact that the attitude towards an audiovisual production can condition its effect. Choosing a film or series to devote time to—a choice that is not generally made freely in experimental and control groups—usually results in a positive attitude towards the chosen production, which can have an effect on the spectator's interest in its locations and settings. Hyounggon Kim & Richardson (2003) and Yang et al. (2017) recognise these limitations.

Moreover, in some studies the audiovisual productions are edited down to fit the time restrictions of the experiment (Hahm & Wang, 2011; Itoo & Nagar, 2017). This effectively ignores a basic principle of audiovisual fiction text analysis: because each element of the story has meaning on its own and in relation to the other elements of the story, it is very difficult to analyse the effects of an audiovisual production without considering it in its entirety (Nieto-Ferrando et al., 2021).

These issues do not arise in the analysis of motivations or experiences, which normally involve surveys at the location of the tourist attraction. Some studies analysing the effect of audiovisual fiction on destination image also use this method in natural viewing contexts, such as film theatres (Rodríguez Campo et al., 2011).

**Proposal 5.** Prioritise data collection in real audiovisual fiction viewing situations, in view of the consequences that these have on spectator attitudes towards the films and series viewed. Spectators' attitudes towards productions can condition their interest in the locations featured in them.

Only 33 of the 106 articles in the sample make use of audience analysis theories. This constitutes a problem in a field of research that is necessarily interdisciplinary. Audience studies began being adopted in this research field at the end of the first decade of this century, but it was not until the period 2019–2021 that the number articles published in this area that draw on audience analysis has come close to those that do not. Significant differences in this respect are also observable between the areas analysed.

In any case, the adoption of narrative transportation and involvement theories have changed the research. First of all,

these theories have contributed to a better understanding of the complexities of the effect of audiovisual fiction on tourism, which is now recognised as being dependent on the degree of spectator involvement and engagement with the film or series. Conversely, many of the texts that do not adopt a theoretical conceptualisation based on audience analysis assume that the effect is strong and direct. However, narrative transportation and involvement theories display a problem that is characteristic of all psychological perspectives on reception: the centrality they give to the individual in understanding, interpreting and enjoying audiovisual fiction productions. To overcome this problem, Van Laer et al. (2014) point to the value of returning to Fish's (1980) notion of "interpretive communities", i.e., groups of individuals who make use of similar interpretive strategies that mediate between the objectivity of the text and the subjectivity of the receiver.

**Proposal 6.** Explore different theories that focus on the interaction of spectators with texts. Beyond recent developments in research on the processing of narrative texts (Walter *et al.*, 2018; Valkenburg & Oliver, 2019), and particularly on the receiver's involvement in the story and identification with the characters (Igartua, 2007; Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009; Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Tal-Or & Cohen, 2015), theories related to the enduring nature of spectator responses to fiction or to the pleasure they elicit (the latter sometimes related to the theory of uses and gratifications) may provide some particularly interesting contributions. Notable among the former are the studies by Oliver & Bartsch (2010) on the "lasting impression" and by Slater, *et al.* (2018) on "retrospective imaginative involvement", referring to reflections on the story subsequent to reception. Research on the pleasure elicited includes Oliver & Bartsch's (2010) categorization of different pleasures and Raney, Oliver & Bartsch's (2019) differentiation between hedonic and eudaimonic pleasure (the latter being associated with negative emotions). Studies of this kind could contribute to the analysis of pleasure associated with the level of narrative transportation and the effects of a negative depiction on perceived destination image. It is clear that all these contributions would introduce audience analysis from the perspective of reception more fully into studies of audiovisual fiction's effect on the different dimensions of tourism. It might also be interesting to explore the cognitive schema theory advocated by Bordwell (1990), analysing audiovisual narration as the outcome of a collaboration between spectator and text. Taking into account the stereotypical nature of most of these schemata, they could

be helpful for explaining how audiovisual fiction actually contributes to creating or reinforcing stereotypical images of destinations. However, given that this theory focuses on the individual, formulas should be sought that can balance the psychological dimension with the sociocultural dimension.

One way to explore the sociocultural context in which spectators act as spectators is to consider the multifaceted nature of audiences beyond their basic socio-demographic features. Previous studies have often differentiated between types of spectators/tourists. However, there are hardly any studies that explore how these differences affect the spectator's understanding, interpretation and enjoyment of audiovisual fiction, and the effects they have on the four areas of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism analysed.

This review has identified various reasons for prioritising the attention given to audience diversity. First of all, the transformation of a tourist attraction into an icon depends at least partly on the cultural background of the receiver. A symbolic meaning attributed to a location is unlikely ever to be universal; it is also highly improbable that it could ever be exclusively individual. Secondly, tourists' prior knowledge about destinations, on which an audiovisual fiction production can act, is never universal either, but depends on numerous factors, such as geographical proximity, access to content about the destination in different media formats, prior individual experience, etc. Thirdly, there are groups of specific tourists, such as fans, whose motivations and tourist experiences may be very different from those of other tourists.

It is also important to note that most studies analyse the effect on foreign audiences/tourists of audiovisual fiction produced by the country where the destination is located. Despite this, the only references to transcultural reception are cultural proximity theories, which can do little to explain spectator interest in films and series in contexts that are very different from those of their production. The evolution of audiovisual content platforms points to a growing need to reconsider the supposed preference of audiences for culturally proximate content. These problems associated with cultural proximity theory also affect tourist studies, where there is also a debate about whether tourists want to experience the familiar or the exotic.

**Proposal 7.** Explore what the various theories that consider audience diversity, most of which are associated with cultural studies, can offer the analysis of the tourism-inducing effect of audiovisual fiction. At the very least, transcultural reception, studies of fan culture and gender studies need to

be considered. Gender studies in particular, which are very important for reception analysis, are practically absent from this field of research.

## Conclusion

Research on the effect of audiovisual fiction on tourism requires an interdisciplinary approach, as it involves both tourist studies and media studies, and particularly research on audiences. The main conclusion drawn from this review is that the development of a comprehensive understanding of audiovisual fiction-induced tourism requires a reconsideration of the relationship between audiovisual texts and their effects on audiences. With this in mind, based on the results and the discussion above, the following directions for future research are proposed:

1. Text analysis.
2. Analysis of text-spectator interaction, based on narrative transportation, involvement and other studies that consider how spectators receive texts.
3. Analysis of tourist destination exposure in different media.
4. Analysis of epitexts.
5. Analysis of audience diversity based on studies of gender, fans, intercultural reception or other aspects among the wide range of possibilities offered by cultural studies.
6. Analysis of tourism-inducing effects, which should include the effect on memory, image, motivation, experience, intentions and behaviours and subsequent viewing of audiovisual productions related to the tourist experience.

## Limitations

This study has analysed the effects of audiovisual fiction on tourists and potential tourists from the perspective of

audience analysis. It could be complemented with specific reviews of each of the areas analysed, comparing them with the conceptualisation of consumer attitudes, motivations, experiences and behaviours characteristic of marketing studies. Other useful possibilities include reviews of studies analysing the effect of audiovisual fiction on specific types of tourists such as fans (who exhibit unique traits in relation to their viewing of and involvement in film or television productions and their audiovisual fiction-induced tourist experiences), or reviews of the methods used in the research, exploring new possibilities for data collection. Methodological reviews are especially important, as the use of particular methods, samples and information sources can have theoretical implications, as has been shown above.

As tends to be the case for reviews of this kind, the volume of research in this field is much larger than the review sample, which has been limited to 106 articles. This limitation has been compensated for with frequent references to book chapters and books in the critical conceptual sections.

Finally, this study considers research on one specific aspect of the relationships between audiovisual fiction and tourism. However, audiovisual fiction-induced tourism is a much broader phenomenon that requires further reviews to establish the current state of research. Among many others, two aspects worth highlighting are the effects of film and television tourism on destinations and their residents, and the policies of tourism promoters and film and television promoters and the relationship between the two.

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### Corresponding author

Jorge Nieto-Ferrando  
University of Lleida, Spain  
[jorge.nieto@udl.cat](mailto:jorge.nieto@udl.cat)

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