REVEALING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF OUTRAGEOUS BEER TOURISM

Ana María Munar

(amm.int@cbs.dk)

November 2012

CLCS Working Paper Series

Copenhagen Business School

Center for Leisure & Culture Services

Department of International Economics and Management

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is often linked to ideas of escapism and release from everyday duties and obligations. Modern societies are characterized by highly complex systems of social and cultural control, and citizens of these societies find forms of liberation in travel (Jafari 1987). Tourism destinations act as magnetic spaces of leisure and relaxation that can be visualized as the realm of 'touristhood'– a theatrical arena in which individuals adopt different masks and conduct themselves according to expectations and norms that differ from those that rule their everyday lives. The consumption and enjoyment of alcoholic drinks constitutes a relevant element of the scenery of touristhood. In touristic spaces the beer product is socially transformed and constructed; tourists enact beer tourism through drinking practices and rituals performed at the destination.

Alcohol, and in this case beer consumption, is constitutive of socio-cultural traditions in many national cultures (such as those in Northern Europe). National and local beer cultures are however being transformed and re-shaped in tourism destinations. This study examines the interrelation of beer cultures, more specifically German beer culture, and tourism. It examines how beer culture, combined with touristhood, produces extreme and novel forms of consumption transforming both tourism practices and the world of beer.

Tourists get attracted to places due to a sense of anticipation of intense pleasures (Urry 2002). These pleasures are characterized by being out of the ordinary, either by taking place in an activity at a different scale (not only drinking but binge drinking) or involving different senses (having a beer garden experience wearing swim clothes on a hot summer night). Tourists experience and dream of embodied experiences where all senses, not only the visual, are stimulated (Munar and Ooi 2012). Other scholars, such as Larsen, Urry and Axhausen (2007), show the importance of the social element in tourism. For example, enjoying being with others (family, partners, locals or other tourists) is a key motivation to travel to sun and beach destinations (Prebesen, Skallerud, and Chen, 2011). The way in which beer is consumed and enjoyed also has a strong social component. Some tourists dream of drinking and having fun with others.

As this article shows, fantasies of the tourism experience include the promises of pleasures related to enjoying extreme forms of alcohol consumption in safely controlled and familiar environments. While Jafari (1987) and Urry (2002) suggest that the attractiveness of tourism lies in the power of novelty, other scholars, such as Prentice (2004), have reflected on the attraction of the

familiar. Tourists often find their experiences richer when they confirm their expectations and see familiar aspects of the attractions they visit (Jackson 2005). The authentic in most cases presupposes getting to know the local culture and interacting with the residents of the destination. This also includes the purchasing and consumption of local products such as gastronomic delicacies or alcoholic beverages. However, in some cases this immersion in the local environment is not perceived as necessary or even desirable by the tourists. As indicated by Aramberri (2001), tourists may want 'the host to get lost'.

It is not usually the primary aim for beer tourists travelling to Spain for a German tourism experience to get to know Spanish culture and traditions. They want to enjoy traditional German beer in a Spanish beach scenery. This lack of interest in the local culture is not a novel phenomenon. The view of mass tourists as consumers that are satisfied by having superficial experiences of other peoples and other places has been prevailing for decades (MacCannell 1999). But to which extent does the lack of local awareness constitute a superficial and unauthentic experience? In the specific form of beer tourism examined in this chapter, the reality lies between these two different academic positions. Tourism experiences are often a complex mixture of the familiar and the novel, and tourists often display versatile behaviour (Ooi 2002). Mature destinations melt and blend national traditions. This study shows that touristic places, often criticized as 'touristic ghettos' or described as 'tourist bubbles' (Jacobsen 2003), can be highly complex and hybrid cultural systems that invite to out-of-the-ordinary forms of entertainment, escapism and sojourn. Tourists often lack the local knowledge to be able to differentiate between what may be original, restored or totally artificial aspects of the destination. This artificiality may not even matter for the quality of the experience. As Prentice (2004) suggests, tourists may just as well prefer to be 'fooled' into the 'authentic' experience. Drinking beer and enacting beer tourism play an important role in the creation of these 'artificial' destination environments.

By focussing on Bierstrasse on Majorca, this study shows the critical importance of performance, place and the drinking environment for the understanding of beer consumption. Its main objective is to present a critical reflection on how the beer product is enacted and transformed through tourism. Insights of this study highlight the intensity of the experience of beer tourism, an experience rooted in alcohol consumption and hybrid staged national cultures, and reflect upon its attractiveness as an exercise of social joint affirmation, masculinity and pleasure.

TOURISM BEER CULTURES

Alcohol consumption and tourism has been the theme of many different studies throughout the years. Tourist drinking behaviour is often examined in four ways. Firstly, tourists use their drinking habits and choices of alcohol as identity and socialization tools. Alcohol consumption can be seen as a lifestyle marker, and increasingly independent and highly reflexive tourists may demand high quality brands or locally produced beverages at the destination. Secondly, alcohol consumption related tourism experiences may be perceived as more or less authentic. Novel forms of special-interest tourism such as wine tourism in La Rioja or beer tourism in Bavaria are often described as being closer to the 'real' culture of the host community. Thirdly, alternative forms of tourism can bring opportunities to the destinations in the form of the development of alcohol related provision facilities and attractions, for example through the creation of routes, festivals and educational activities (Quadri-Felitti and Fiore 2012). Finally, tourist alcohol consumption is seen as an abnormal activity that reflects extreme forms of behaviour. This latest perspective combines both a sociological tradition that looks at alcohol consumption as a social problem to be dealt with (Hanson 1995 cited in Gee 2012; Gee and Jackson 2012) and a stream of research in tourism studies that examines disruptive and problematic forms of tourist behaviour (for example, studies in binge drinking and child prostitution) (Andrews, Roberts and Selwyn 2007).

Lifestyle, socialization and identity

In countries where the population has traditionally consumed beer, such as Germany, Belgium and Denmark, the choice of brand and the way in which beer is consumed act as lifestyle markers. German tourists bring their lifestyle and drinking practices to the destination. The encounter between tourists and residents can result in the adoption of tourists' behavioural and consumption (in this case, drinking habits) by the local population. In tourism studies this phenomenon has been labelled 'the demonstration effect' (de Kadt 1979) and is the topic of a vast array of different studies (Fisher 2004). Changes in drinking cultures have been a substantial indicator of the impact tourism development has had on host communities. Moore (1995) in his study of alcohol use in a Greek tourist town shows how the patterns of drinking by the locals have been altered by their exposure to tourists' preferences. For example, in the case of the Greek destination of Arachova this exposure resulted in an increasing beer culture that eventually supplanted the traditional drinking

regime based on locally produced wine and ouzo-like liqueur (ibid). There may also be changes in drinking behaviour among the two genders. According to Moore (1995) the bars and discos that opened to cater for tourists allowed the local women to drink and interact with men more freely. While acting as tourists may seem attractive to local populations it is also possible to find host communities that develop antagonistic behaviour towards tourists. Residents of mature Mediterranean destinations , such as Majorca, often manifest anti-touristic attitudes and opinions (Aguiló Pérez and Rosselló Nadal 2004). The cross-cultural meeting can also foster a sense of identity, a discovery of the satisfaction of being local as opposed to sharing the culture of the 'foreigners'. In the case of the Greek destination mentioned above, the increase in beer consumption resulted in locally produced alcoholic beverages such as wine becoming a sign of local identity for the residents (Moore 1995).

Food and drink are culturally rooted and central elements of social activities and public life. Leisure time is often related to drinking traditions (Pettigrew and Charters 2010). In many Western societies alcohol consumption is used as a symbolic marker of the shift from work to leisure time (for example, the Friday evening beer tradition in Danish workplaces marks the beginning of the weekend) or from 'duty' time to free, private time (such as drinking when arriving home after a long day at work). The beer gardens in Germany or public houses (pubs) in the United Kingdom are public leisure spaces but, most importantly, they constitute a frame of reference for the set of practices that constitute a beer culture – rituals, traditions, social interactions, symbols and specific aesthetics. Larsen (1997) presents pubs as places that shape a public sphere centred on beer where people can connect with each other and escape from the pressures of work and an increasingly individualized lifestyle (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Studies have also suggested that in venues such as bars and pubs the social interaction is in some cases more important than the actual alcohol consumption (Pettigrew and Charters 2010).

Tourism time is social time. What to drink and how to drink become strong symbolic practices which convey social messages to friends, partners and significant others. Without the pressure of everyday duties tourists can indulge in drinking as a social activity. Social rituals differ from habits due to the strong social compulsion associated with them, in that participants are made to feel obligated to join in the rituals and are penalized if they do not carry them out. An example of a ritual in drinking cultures is the buying of rounds in Britain. Drinking rituals can also act as rites of passage into manhood (or adulthood). Social practices create a sense of community and are vehicles to express shared values, meanings and interests, but these practices can be used to block

access to other social groups (Habermas 1989). Drinking rituals and traditions act as mechanisms of social inclusion and exclusion. This division can reflect gender differences – public leisure spaces for heavy drinking were often dominated by men – and also the traditional visitor-host divide in tourism (Larsen 1997; Moore 1995).   A study of the Majorcan tourist resort Magaluf (Andrews et al. 2007) shows a link between heavy drinking and a general magnification of sexual sensibilities. Sexual and pornographic images and other references to sexual intercourse are abundantly displayed in tourist venues and souvenir shops. In the case of Magaluf, drinking rituals appear to be closely related to sexual gratification:

> One feature of hotel entertainment, for example, is a game involving male contestants having sangria poured down their throats until they can swallow no more, and challenge to kiss as many people in the audience as possible within 45 seconds, and then a demand that they show constraint by gurgling water whilst in the process of singing a nursery rhyme (Andrews et al. 2007, p. 257).

Staged and existential authenticity

Tourists areas characterized by extreme alcohol consumption and outrageous tourist behaviour such as that exhibited on Sunny Beach or in Magaluf can make these destinations comparable to social ghettos ruled by different cultural norms which are kept isolated from the host communities. Jacobsen (2003) indicates how tourism destinations in the Mediterranean often adopt the structure of a 'tourist bubble'. The staging and isolation of tourism is also suggested in MacCannell's theory of staged authenticity. He uses Erving Goffman's theory of social structural change (1999, pp. 92-96) to explain how tourists increasingly 'act out reality'. This conceptualization of tourism as 'theatre' and 'role playing' is also present in Jafari's (1987) idea of the destination as a stage. According to MacCannell tourism consumption is essentially performative. This performance includes a front (the staged show for the sake of tourists) and the back (where the residents' intimate and real lives unfold). The front is a fake or pseudo representation of the 'true' reality of place and culture (the back). However, experiences perceived as fake by residents or cultural experts may still constitute an authentic experience for the tourists.

Tourists do not only pursue objective authenticity such as that disclosed in cultural canons, but invest time and money searching for a symbolic authentic experience (Wang 2000) as anticipated in their imagination. Extreme forms of alcohol consumption can be despised by

residents and still be perceived as individually and existentially authentic by tourists. Some of these extreme forms of touristic behaviour are often related to feelings of liminality, a state of mind that leads people to behave differently away from home by, for example, being more adventurous or adopting uncharacteristic or 'anti-self' attitudes.

A review of studies in the field of beer tourism indicates a strong link between identity, gender and beer consumption (Alonso 2011; Gee 2012;Larsen 1997). Some tourist attractions have been developed to cater for gender-specific desires, for example the sexual needs of male tourists in sex tourism regions (Wearing, Stevenson and Young 2010). Gee and Jackson (2012) in their interesting study of the New Zealand beer Speight's advertising campaigns show how beer consumption appears to be one of the latest bastions where masculine identity and a confirmation of male power and brotherhood are embodied and encouraged. A similar observation has also been made in sport studies (Jackson and McKenzie2007 cited in Gee and Jackson, 2012) and by Pettigrew and Charter (2010) that the use of promotional girls hired to wear uniforms branding imported beer and mingle with the drinkers was now a common sight in Hong Kong venues. Besides gender, age, educational level and marital status, demographic features can also have an impact on tourists' drinking habits (Jingxue, Liping, Morrison andLinton 2005). Alcohol consumption is a symbolic act that not only encourages stronger social ties but helps to communicate our status in a specific social setting (Gee and Jackson 2012).

Developing the tourism destination

Alcohol consumption is a means to revitalize or foster the economic development of touristic areas (Pechlaner, Raich and Fischer 2009). This is mostly obvious in the case of wine tourism, where whole regional policies have been developed in order to cater for the increasing demand for wine consumption and wine related activities among tourists (examples of this include La Rioja in Spain or the Barolo region in Italy). Although more seldom, beer tourism development is becoming increasingly relevant (Alonso 2011). Tourism organizations in Bavaria, Germany, have actively pursued to strengthen the collaboration between tourism and the beer industry, aiming to transform beer services into attractive aspects of the destination (Pechlaner, Raich and Fischer 2009). These cases are examples of the touristification and staging of traditionally non-touristic agricultural and industrial settings – the back stage is moving up front. Duarte's (2011) study of beer tourism development in Alabama, USA, explores how micro-brewing and beer tourism are opportunities to

enhance visitors' travel experiences. Tourists perceive craft beer culture as being unique and authentic in opposition to commercialized, mass-produced beer. Other scholars have also suggested a relationship between the growth of micro-breweries and a renewed taste for craft beer and a stronger feeling of community and identity in the host communities (Duarte 2011;Larsen 1997). In the case of Majorca, the feeling of identity in the local communities is related to the extensive development of wine tourism that has taken place on the island during the last two decades. The development of this new tourist product has been led by entrepreneurs who, while pursuing financial success and an increased number of visitors, have also engaged in what Ateljevic and Doorme (2003) call 'the active reaffirmation of the local'.

Outrageous tourism

Scholars have also analysed tourists' alcohol consumption as a symptom of irresponsible touristic behaviour. Often this 'bad' behaviour is seen as a consequence of forms of mass tourism while alternative tourism represents another more responsible form of tourism. Wheeller denounces a "spate of articles and books advocating the ethics of the new tourism and urging the tourist to behave correctly" (2003, p. 230). Charter tourism is often related to alimentary and alcoholic excess, an image that is cultivated by tour operators (Andrews et al. 2007). Visual explorative studies of drinking destinations show alcohol related behaviour resulting in exaggerated camaraderie, sexuality and house party-like familiarity (Stringer and McAllister 2012). In the Spanish media these forms of tourism have been described as *drunken tourism*. Drunken tourism is often associated with erotic or sexual experiences (Andrews et al. 2007). Tourism marketing is found to often portray women as sex objects and a line of research adopting feminist or critical theory perspectives has suggested a dominance of a masculine bias in tourism experiences (Wearing et al. 2010;Wearing, Stevenson and Young 2010). The association of the exotic and the erotic in tourism helps reproducing and enhancing specific gender stereotypes (Aitchison and Reeves 1998).

BIERSTRASSE

Bierstrasse is located on the Spanish island of Majorca. Majorca, situated in the Mediterranean Sea, is a mature holiday destination area visited by people from many countries and social strata. From the 1960s onwards, Majorca embraced what is commonly known as 'the sun and sand tourism

model' (Knowles and Curtis 1999). In 2012, Majorca received more than 12 million tourists, over 9.9 million being international arrivals and over 3.6 million coming from Germany; 99.6 per cent of German tourists are leisure and holiday travellers (Conselleria de Turisme i Sports 2011). The vast growth of the tourism industry in the Balearic Islands was made possible not only by hundreds of Spanish entrepreneurs, but also by relationships with foreign tour operators who carried out the promotion and sales necessary to capture the European market (Amer i Fernàndez 2006). Holiday packages supplied by tour operators have been the typical option for Majorca's international holidaymakers. Some of the most important tour operators are major players in the German travel market, such as TUI.

The origin of the area is also related to the birth and development of some of the most important Spanish hospitality firms (such as Sol Meliá and Barceló), which began their entrepreneurial activity there. But after the golden period of the first decades, Palma Beach experienced an increasing decay during the 1990s. The competitive model of charter travellers and sun and sand tourism was being increasingly challenged by the emergence of new destinations like Thailand or Bulgaria and by the offering of new tourism products such as spa and wellness tourism. At the millennium, however, the destination of Majorca saw a change in its competitive strategy. The island has since seen a considerable increase in independent tourists. This is partly owing to the expansion of scheduled air services to the island. The airline Air Berlin, for example, established a hub in the airport of Palma de Majorca expanding the availability of direct flights between German cities and the island.

Moreover, Majorca has experienced diversification among accommodation suppliers, an increased variety of tourism products (including spa and wellness centres and golf) and an expansion of second home ownership. It was however proven to be difficult to change the product offering of Palma Beach. Transformations in the tourism market have resulted in an increased awareness by the destination management organizations as well as the local entrepreneurs and during the first decade of the millennium the Balearic Government and local authorities developed several initiatives to restore and improve the quality of this destination.

Palma Beach is one of the oldest tourism destinations on the island. This area in partcular, traditionally a place characterized by its fishing harbours, large beach and small houses where the local population of Palma and the nearby village of Lluchmajor spent their summer holidays, experienced a fast tourism development in the late 1960s and 1970s. Large hotels were built at the seafront and restaurants, bars and other types of services were established to cater to the needs of a

rapidly growing tourist population.Bierstrasse is an iconic destination located at the centre of the bay. It was created and developed by Mallorquin entrepreneurs during the 1970s. Bierstrasse comprises both a single street and a larger geographical area that stretches for one kilometre along the seaside. I have chosen to use the concept of 'destination' for the whole area of the Bierstrasse and the concept of 'tourist attraction' for its most important venues and sites. The destination has four main attractions and several touristic and spatial markers. The attractions are Schinkestrasse, which includes the Bierköning, a large and very popular beer venue, the surroundings and facilities of a large open-air discotheque ' Mega Park' (popularly known as 'The Abbey' because its aesthetic resembles that of a Gothic church), the iconic beer street and the beach promenade where the 'balnearios', open-air bars situated on the beach, are located. The Bierstrasse area comprises the space between balnearios five and seven; the most iconic and symbolic of the balnearios being the one at the centre of the area: 'Balneario Six'. The number, pronounced as 'sex' in German, gives this Balneario a very specific connotation (see Figure 1). Balneario 'six' is also the name of a controversial German TV documentary which describes extreme forms of tourist behaviour in the Bierstrasse area.

Figure 1: Balneario Six on Palma Beach

Study methods

This chapter examines beer tourism and how this phenomenon transforms tourism practices and the world of beer. A case study approach was considered appropriate to undertake this task. Case studies are used to investigate complex contemporary phenomena where the organizational or

socio-cultural context is relevant (Veal 2006; Yin 2003). Case studies allow for gaining insights into specific and complex social phenomena. Limitations of case studies include a lower level of generalization when compared to other methodological approaches. This study does not aim to provide a general or global overview of beer tourism but to present a rich and detailed analysis of the complexities of a socio-cultural phenomenon in a specific tourism setting. This case analysis is used as a springboard to critically reflect upon the theories that structure the knowledge field of drinking/alcohol tourism.

Based on the literature review and the researcher's knowledge of the topic several different destinations were identified as drinking destinations. Some examples in Europe include Sunny Beach in Bulgaria, Magaluf in Majorca, Playa del Inglés in Gran Canaria and Lloret de Mar and Calella in Catalonia. Bierstrasse in Majorca shares many similarities with these destinations such as attracting young holidaymakers, being located on the seaside and offering drunken circuits. Bierstrasse was considered to be an appropriate case for this study because its history, aesthetics and drinking culture are traditionally linked to beer consumption.

The methods used for the examination of the case were fieldwork and observation. Extreme drinking, vandalism and rowdy behaviour may be considered as tourism activities that lie on the margins of conventional, accepted morality. In these types of situations observation is likely to provide more information than traditional interviews or focus groups (Veal 2006, p. 178). People are unlikely to reveal to researchers their extreme forms of behaviour, however choosing observation as a key method poses questions about the ethical use of the data and the right to privacy of those observed. All the audiovisual material was recorded in public venues and to avoid identification no personal data on the tourists has been included. Furthermore, to gain broader knowledge on the management of the destination the researchers conducted an in-depth interview with Immaculada de Benito, a crucial planner of the area. In the spring of 2012, de Benito was the manager of the Mallorca Hotel Business Federation. This organization represents 26 hotel associations and a total of 859 hotel firms. She was previously the manager of the Palma Beach Hotel Association and was responsible for the regional governmental initiative to develop the destination. Other forms of empirical data were gathered using a documentary analysis of the destination management organization's reports.

To identify differences between low and high season patterns at the destination the field work took place during two periods of time, at the beginning of April – the low season – and at the end of July and beginning of August, the period with the highest tourist demand on the destination. The

observation consisted of repeat visits to the Bierstrasse area, visual data collection in the form of photographs and videos and brief interviews with eight service providers. These interviews consisted of short questions to gain insights into the issues of host-guest relationships, alcohol offering and tourists' drinking behaviour. The researcher approached the service providers at their workplaces and the interviews were not recorded in order to allow for a feeling of familiarity. The majority of these interviews were conducted in Spanish. Service providers on Bierstrasse included, among others, waitresses, hotel receptionists, taxi drivers and public relations. The lack of recording may be seen as a limitation to the reliability of these data, but the comments and answers were immediately written down after the interviews had taken place. The researcher collected visual data of the spatial and functional use of the attractions and different sites at the destination. These included photos of venues, alcohol providers, tourism provision (hotels, shops and so on), recreational spaces, signs and tourists. Short videos were recorded to document the level of noise in the area and specific behavioural patterns of drinking tourists, such as loud singing/shouting, and to gain a general overview of the atmosphere at the most important attractions.

ENACTING BEER TOURISM

The server and the served: Staged nationalism and performed masculinity

To enter Bierstrasse is like entering a stage. MacCannell (1999) mentions that tourism attractions are characterized by the dialectics of authenticity. These dialectics are represented by attractions having a front and a back stage, the front being where tourists are catered for and the back where the locals have their lives and display their 'real' socio-cultural traditions. On Bierstrasse the front is the overall, dominant reality and the back is absent. In the spatial area of the destination residual elements of 'the back' can be seen in only a few traditional Spanish summer houses – lonely representations of another era that are now trapped between large hotels and drinking venues – and in the few spaces reserved for the service providers. Beer culture and German beer brands provide the theme for staging the experience. The attractions of the destination use breweries as sponsors and their logos and signs are ubiquitous in the area. There are beer names on the signs of bars and leisure venues and the design of the furniture and facilitating goods resemble those used in traditional beer gardens in Germany. Drinking venues are characterized for having 'open-kitchen' facilities and there are only minor physical divisions between the environment of the workers and

that of the tourists. Beer tourism servers are immersed and perform on-stage. Servers dress and look like customers in casual summer clothing (such asT-shirts and shorts) or disco outfits (for example public relations wearing short 'sexy' dresses). It is often difficult to differentiate between the servers and the served.

The mimetism between server and served is also present in the form of communication. Workers at the drinking venues will often approach new customers in German instead of Spanish. It was also observed that German was in most cases their mother tongue while some had a poor basic knowledge of the local languages (Spanish or Catalan) and if the tourist did not speak German most preferred to communicate in English.

Language is a cultural marker and the use of German in the service provision indicates that beer tourism personnel are culturally closer to the tourists than to the host community. It is a German drinking experience staged and played by 'German-like' servers. Language dominance draws a cultural border around the 'tourist-bubble' (Jacobsen 2003). This dominance is also prevalent on menus, displays giving information of beer offerings at restaurants, and signs on discotheques, nightclubs and souvenirs shops. De Benito characterizes Bierstrasse as:

> a type of outdoor leisure model [...] based on beer consumption, but not only that type of consumption, and food. It is German food and drinks. It reproduces the German model of leisure [...] They like to sing and dance outdoors and this German model has prevailed [...] Locals go there as spectators, because there is a language barrier. The waiters speak in German, the menus are in German [...] also the music is not the music repertoire that is used in the Spanish discotheques.

Staged nationalism

As suggested by Prentice familiarity is an important element of the tourism experience. Communication and signage as well as the design of the beer venues on Bierstrasse are developed to provide German tourists with a feeling of being at home away from home (see Figure 2). The use of German beer culture also extends to the music and food offered at the venues. German popular music is mixed with the latest summer hits. Sausages and other forms of traditional German food are offered on menus and photographic displays and are combined with a few well-known Spanish gastronomic dishes such as paella, but there are no Mallorquin specialities offered in the area.

German flags hang at the entry of drinking establishments, sometimes alone and sometimes combined with Spanish or European flags. Drinking venues have large TV screens displaying sports events broadcasted by German TV channels. In the summer months thousands of German tourists gather in the Bierstrasse area to see their national football team competing in the European or World Championships. At the time of the observation, the venues were broadcasting the performances of German athletes in the London Olympics.

Figure 2: Signage at Bierstrasse

The beer tourism of Bierstrasse is very different from those of the cases of Bavaria or Alabama introduced in the literature review (Pechlaner, Raich and Fischer 2009; Duarte 2011). It does not enhance feelings of community or identity among the residents and it is not linked to the touristification of beer production settings. On the contrary, its 'raison d'être' is to promote feelings of community and identity among the visitors. By combining drinking, leisure and sport the destination provides the scene to celebrate German nationalism. De Benito mentions that the model of tourism developed in the 1960s that lies at the origin of Bierstrasse did not aim to provide experiences of otherness or authentic local cultures, but was established to imitate tourists' national cultures by, for example, replicating beer gardens in Palma Beach or British pubs in Magaluf (see Figure 2). However, beer tourists in Majorca are not only seduced by the familiar (as suggested by Prentice (2004), drinking tourists seek novelty, excitement and a different experience from their daily lives at home. They obtain these not by approaching the world of the residents, as suggested by Jafari (1987) or MacCannell (1999), but by experiencing their own cultural background being transformed in a theatrical and excessive way thanks to touristification.

In beer tourism the dialectics of authenticity are not to be found in the destination but between the destination and the rest of the island. The dialectical relationship of host-guest culture is instead a staged consensus; the bubble is an immersing experience in which both the served and the servers are embedded. The host and the guest look alike, the difference being the leisure-work divide, while the 'real host' – that is the Majorcan local community – is absent in the staging of the experience. The host in this type of destination is an 'abstract' host and it is present in two forms: in the form of ownership –the entrepreneurs owning the venues on Bierstrasse are Spanish (personal communication, Imma de Benito), and in the form of the environmental and socio-cultural background of the island. The 'back' is mostly to be found elsewhere on the island (for example in some neighbourhoods in the city of Palma, traditional service providers or in small mountain villages). The local community and culture is absent in the spatial and aesthetic organization of the beer tourism destination. The front represents a stage and the show that is being performed every summer night is the enactment of beer drinking tourism. The locals, as de Benito mentions, become 'spectators' in their own home.

Performed masculinity

There is a clear exception to the mimetism between servers and served and the distinction is gender and sex based. As Moore suggests in his study of alcohol consumption, in beer tourism there is also a relationship between drinking practices and gender and sex. While waiters, public relations workers and other service providers mingle with the crowd, the go-go/dancing girls dressed in 'sexy' underwear are displayed on top of big beer barrels (see Figure 3). This specific display sets the stage for one of the social practices of beer tourism. Groups of young male tourists, often only dressed in swim clothes, drink and sing around these barrels (see Figure 3). The dancers will change barrel after a while and tourists will take turns climbing on top of the barrel to be photographed by the rest of their peers while touching or hugging the dancer. The abovementioned practice is linked to a historical male dominance of public leisure spaces for heavy drinking (Larsen 1997).

Figure 3: Male tourists and go-go girls in the Bierköning

The tourists' act of hugging half naked young women appears as an exercise of masculinity and 'manhood', resembling the imaginary and fantasies of the last bastions of masculinity described by Gee and Jackson (2012) in their study of Australian beer or the use of beer promotion girls in Hong Kong venues (Pettigrew and Charters 2010). Beer tourists do not only 'enact' masculinity, they memorialize it. Beer tourists' photographing of masculinity is a social act. Tourists stand and pose for an audience. Beer tourism entails 'out of the ordinary' social performances of masculinity and heterosexuality. Sex and alcohol consumption are closely related in the aesthetics of the destination. Souvenir shops offer T-shirts and beach towels with slogans such as "Majorca Triathlon: Eating, drinking, fucking" that may be offensive for the residents.

Similar to the findings of Andrews, Roberts and Selwyn (2007), the relevance of sex for the Bierstrasse experience is obvious in the display of pornographic images and sexual references in the inventory of souvenir shops (such as lighters depicting penises). Prostitution is often mentioned as one of the problems of the area by de Benito, and close to the main attractions there is a large number of night clubs offering striptease or other sexual performances. While tourist females can be seen in the beer venues, they are a minority. There are no male dancers addressing heterosexual women and the venues do not include gay or lesbian performances either. Beer tourism is an exercise of staged masculinity. The activities observed in the Bierstrasse venues have a clear masculine bias (Wearing et al. 2010) which may help to reproduce and enhance specific gender stereotypes and forms of tourism that present women as sex objects and keep attractions as a male-dominated ghetto.

Group drinking, ritualization and joint affirmation

Another important ritual of beer tourism cultures is related to group drinking practices. Larsen (1997) suggests how drinking spaces are frames of reference for the making of rituals, traditions, symbols and specific aesthetics. On Bierstrasse group drinking is a central touristic ritual. This form of alcohol consumption is characterized by groups of tourists sharing the same drink and drinking from a single large mug or bucket. Group drinking is an extreme form of alcohol consumption and often entails excessive/binge drinking. It transforms traditional drinking habits of beer consumption and drastically changes the scale and aesthetics of traditional German beer gardens. In a touristified environment taken-for-granted societal values are suspended and exchanged by a novel set of rules. Tourists on Bierstrasse go through a touristic socialization and education. They learn to codify and make sense of a new norms and rituals of alcohol consumption.

The alcoholic offering, pricing and service provision of the Bierstrasse area is adapted to this extreme form of drinking. The supply of alcoholic beverages in the area is characterized by a mix of traditional German beer, which is still the dominant alcoholic drink with a large majority of German beer brands available such as Krombacher, Veltins and Oberbayern, international cocktails (mojitos, cosmopolitans and so on) and specific offers that cater to group drinking tourists. The latest offering, which can be seen in Figure 4, is one of the destination's most popular products.

Figure 4: Group drinking in Mega Park

While group drinking provides tourists with large amounts of alcohol at low prices, this could also have been achieved by consuming alcohol on an individual basis. What makes group drinking especially relevant in the context of tourism practices is that it entails an exercise of joint affirmation, social enjoyment and trust. Tourists sit close to each other or in circles and, using long colourful drinking straws, drink from a common jug or plastic bucket. The long drinking straws are displayed as decorative elements in the venues, used and played with by the tourists (for example using them to make funny hats) and are a symbolic element of this specific drinking culture.

Similar to the culture of buying 'rounds' in the British pubs, group drinking shows how beer tourism creates a stage where people connect with each other and where modern and post-modern individualistic lifestyles (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) are replaced by communality and social interaction. The success of the Bierstrasse is that it provides a public sphere where this exercise of joint affirmation and escapism can take place. Drinking tourism performativity is authentic, not as an objective cultural authenticity related to the local environment, but as a symbolic authentic experience (Wang 2000) nurtured by tourists' fantasies and imagination. It is an experience that involves all senses, and is not only to be gazed upon (Urry 2002), but enacted and embodied.

Group drinking has a dark side and is a problematic form of tourist behaviour. Tourists drinking on Bierstrasse are often despised by the local residents. This type of extreme alcohol consumption often results in health problems for the tourists and there are several medical centres providing services 24 hours alongside the drinking venues. Local authorities complain about the expenses and inconveniences related to heavy drinking and the destination is actively involved in public campaigns to encourage responsible drinking behaviour (personal communication, Imma de Benito, 2012). An example of how authorities try to embellish tourist drinking behaviour can be seen in Figure 5. The campaign tries to discourage tourists' from group drinking and leaving garbage on the beach.

Figure 5: Campaign to prevent group drinking on the beach

Vandalism and rowdy behaviour are also observed in the area. Music is not allowed in open-air facilities after 12 p.m., however during the field work service providers such as hotel receptionists complained that they experienced loud behaviour and music until 4-5 p.m. Heavy drinking is also closely related to novel forms of extreme tourist behaviour such as 'balconing' – tourists trying to jump between hotel balconies or from the balconies to the swimming pool – which has resulted in the death of several tourists in Majorca. While beer tourism brings tourists to the destination and has proven to be a highly resilient and successful form of tourism, it is not desired or endorsed by regional authorities. The success of drinking tourism is seen as a problem that has a negative impact on the tourism demands of families or seniors in the area. According to Imma de Benito excessive drinking behaviour in the destination:

> is really deplorable. This is people that drink for the sake of drinking. There are even competitions on the Internet on how much one can drink. However, it is also true that there are venues that promote this with very cheap prices and offer very cheap alcohol [...] This results in 'balconing' which is an effect of heavy drinking. They destroy the rooms of the hotels, throw the furniture in the rooms out the windows [...] Furthermore they share it on social media and as a result the image of the destination really suffers, and it is very difficult to come out of this situation.

Extreme drinking practices and rituals become strong symbolic practices which convey social

messages to friends and nurture the expectations and dreams of other tourists. The theatrical display of German drinking culture provides tourists with a familiar environment, but it also establishes a visual divide between 'them' and 'us' (the local population versus the tourists).

CONCLUSION

The motivation behind this study was to critically explore the relationship between beer consumption and tourism. Through the lens provided by the Bierstrasse case , this chapter shows that beer cultures have the potential to be at the center of the making of a highly resilient and attractive tourist destination, but also to foster a kind of problematic tourism with negative consequences for the local communities. For more than four decades, Bierstrasse has staged tourism experiences for different generations of German tourists. It has become an iconic destination made from the fantasies, imaginations and wishes surrounding beer tourism.

Beer consumption is transformed and magnified by tourism. Tourism as an activity that promises out-of-the-ordinary experiences reshapes beer cultures into extreme staged beer related performances. The beer drinking venues resemble large theatrical arenas; the tourists on the stage perform drinking scenes and games that follow rituals and scripts of social performance. These scenes are broadcasted for physical and virtual audiences. The local people are both spectators of these extreme drinking shows and administrators that benefit economically while still trying to maintain some kind of control over and monitoring of a 'wild' form of tourist behaviour. Beer tourism is a very intense form of experience, one that immerses the tourist in a state of release and liberation of the constraints often imposed by modern societies, but it is also a form of escapism and ego-centric practice which is grounded in a lack of personal accountability and an irresponsible attitude towards the local culture and the wellbeing of the residents.

This study shows that alcoholic products become alive and get their value and meaning not only from the functional or aesthetic features related to beer production (or the single beer product), but increasingly through the enacting and embodiment of drinking cultures. It is through the social interactions, the sensual and embodied activities of leisure spaces, and the drinking rituals that the beer product becomes alive and realizes its value potential, not just as a simple alcoholic drink but as a catalyst for socialization, staged masculinity, nationalism and sensuality.

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