Live like a local:
Culture and Cultural Heritage
in Thematic Travel Writing on Cyprus

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Changes in travelling habits

• Post World War II prosperity
• Technological advances (transportation and infrastructures)
• Low-cost airlines
• Invention, expansion and widespread use of the internet
• Independent travelling replacing package holidays
Travel Writing

- a hybrid, fluid and “highly adaptable form” (Thompson, 2016, p. 196); as such, hard to define
- May include *travel guidebooks, personal essays, travel magazines, travel brochures, journal entries, newspaper and magazine travel articles, travelogues, travelers’ reviews, coffee table photobooks, memoirs, novels, travel TV shows, amateur travel videos and documentaries*
Travel Writing in the 21st century

- Greater degree of mobility than ever resulting in the current boom in travel writing (Holland and Huggan, 1998)
- Internet as a catalyst
- Travel eBooks and eMagazines
- “born digital” travel writing: social media posts, travel blog posts, travel website articles, travel podcasts, travel vlogs
ReTraPath

Re-inventing Age-Old Travelling Paths of the Levant in the Digital Era: the Example of Cyprus

- Research on published and electronic travel texts on Cyprus (15th c. to the present day)
- Comparative analysis of the old rare travel books and the new forms of travel writing
- Examination of different aspects of the Cypriot cultural heritage
- Diversity of the voices examined
What is meant by "cultural heritage"?

The term cultural heritage encompasses several main categories of heritage:

- Cultural heritage
  - Tangible cultural heritage:
  - movable cultural heritage (paintings, sculptures, coins, manuscripts)
  - immovable cultural heritage (monuments, archaeological sites, and so on)
  - underwater cultural heritage (shipwrecks, underwater ruins and cities)

- Intangible cultural heritage: oral traditions, performing arts, rituals

- Natural heritage: natural sites with cultural aspects such as cultural landscapes, physical, biological or geological formations

- Heritage in the event of armed conflict
Scope of this paper

- Examination of general and thematic travel writing from 1960 to 2021
  (including travel books, travel blogs and vlogs, newspaper and magazine travel articles, travel websites, travel podcasts, travel documentaries, travel TV series)

- Emphasis on thematic travel writing and its relationship with different cultural heritage categories
General Travel Writing on Cyprus

- Cultural heritage of utmost importance for travel writers since 1960
- 1960s-1980s: travel writers interested in both ancient and recent history monuments
- Since the 1980s: travel writers interested primarily in Cyprus' ancient past
Thematic Travel Writing

- Thematic travel writing dating back to the 19th century
- Steady increase in thematic travel writing in the 21st century, to cater to the individual needs of the growing and diverse body of travelers
- Traveling parameters: personal interests and hobbies, budget, length of stay, means of transportation, travel companions
Parameter I: Length of stay
a) short stays in Cyprus
Parameter I: Length of stay  
a) short stays in Cyprus

- Travelers limited to the city and surrounding area
- Wise choices – despite time limitations, they visit lots of places of interest
- Mostly interested in museums & galleries, Byzantine churches, castles & fortresses, harbours & marinas, restaurants & bars
Parameter I: Length of stay

b) longer stays in Cyprus
Parameter I: Length of stay
b) longer stays in Cyprus

- Travelers tour around the island
- More having fun and being on the road approach
- Scarce interest in the cities and their attractions
- Places of interest: beaches (esp. Agia Napa and the surrounding area), well-known archaeological sites (i.e. Tomb of the Kings, Choirokoitia Neolithic settlement), natural heritage sites (i.e. Aphrodite’s Rock, sea caves, salt caves)
Parameter II: Budget

a) Budget-conscious travelers
Parameter II: Budget

a) Budget conscious travelers

- Travelers make the most of the money they have
- More adventurous, constantly on the move
- Enjoy nature the most (i.e. mountains, gorges, cliffs, caves, walking trails) and indulge in physical activity (i.e. hiking, cycling, swimming, snorkeling)
- Not much interest in museums, archaeological sites, and restaurants
Parameter II: Budget

b) Luxury travelers
Parameter II: Budget

b) Luxury travelers

- Not much into physical activity
- Make refined – and usually expensive – choices
- Still, a rather puzzling group of diverse interests/open to all categories of cultural heritage → probably because their choices are not affected by money/time restrictions
- More research needs to be done
Parameter III: Travel companions

a) Families with children

- Travel with one or two kids (usually babies and toddlers)
- Frequently visit amusement and theme parks
- Avoid wild nature and other potentially dangerous sites
- Not much interest in restaurants
- Frequently visit open-air archaeological sites, very rarely visit museums
Other categories of thematic travel writing

- Agrotourism, eco-tourism, and nature exploration
- Wellness, body, and mind
- Sports and extreme sports
- Means of transportation (rental cars, motorbikes, public transportation, boats, walking holidays)
- Food, wine, and local produce
Thank you!!

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