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Special Issue on 'Valuing Tourism' Guest editors:
Carina Ren, Morten Krogh Petersen and Dianne Dredge

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Guest Editorial: Valuing Tourism

Carina Ren, Morten Krogh Petersen and Dianne Dredge

Bifurcated Values in Tourism Research

Why should a reader of this journal care about valuation as social practices in tourism? As special issue editors, we could try to convince you to carry on reading by stipulating that tourism is the world's biggest industry. Statements such as this highlight the worth of tourism in the global marketplace and are reproduced in research papers, reports, conferences, symposia and meetings, from global to local levels. Importance is given to how tourism generates billions of dollars per year in foreign exchange earnings and that it is among the largest of global export industries. Concomitantly, by reproducing this argument about the global economic size and value of tourism, the worthiness of our own tourism-related research within an increasingly competitive research marketplace would also be instantiated. Interestingly, two very different and dominant strands of tourism research—defined here as a managerial approach and a critical approach—take such statements concerning the size of the economic worth generated by tourism as their points of departure.

In the managerial approach to tourism, valuing tourism is seen as a technical matter with a focus on valuing the economic benefits of tourism for the destination. Visitor nights, occupancy rates and expenditure are all measured. Methods and devices such as satellite accounting and cost–benefit analysis are employed to determine

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foreign and inter-regional exchange earnings, employment generation and investment attraction (e.g. Dwyer and Forsyth 2006). In the last two to three decades this managerial approach has broadened in an attempt to position tourism as much more than an economic activity. The argument here has been that tourism can contribute to sustaining and enhancing social, cultural and environmental goals, sentiments captured by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO):

> An ever-increasing number of destinations worldwide have opened up to, and invested in tourism, turning it into a key driver of socio-economic progress through the creation of jobs and enterprises, export revenues, and infrastructure development. (UNWTO 2015: 2)

As a result, a wider variety of tools and techniques have emerged to 'get the facts right' by also measuring the social value of tourism. Attempts to measure tourism's impact on the millennium development goals, on poverty alleviation, education, health, welfare and gender empowerment, illustrate this broader view of the value and values of tourism (Bricker et al. 2013).

While approaches to valuing the effects of tourism have undoubtedly allowed for an appreciation of values in tourism beyond the economic, the managerial focus has its limitations. Managerial discussions tend to focus on an overarching solid and singular notion of value, where a blunt economic value (or worth) is pitted against an equally blunt notion of the social or cultural value of tourism. Also, facts as well as values are understood as already 'out-there', ready to be captured and capitalized upon.

One prominent response to this economy-driven approach to 'the world's biggest industry' has been the rise of critical voices from anthropology and cultural studies (MacCannell 1976; Smith 1977) and the emergence of critical tourism studies (e.g. Ateljevic et al. 2007). In this body of research, valuing tourism is concerned with describing the social and cultural implications or impacts of tourism. As with the managerial approach, the starting point is an understanding of tourism as a sizeable economic phenomenon. What differs, however, is that tourism is not seen as a driver for the positive development of social or cultural issues. On the contrary, issues of commodification of local culture have been problematized (Greenwood 1989), and global forces of (economic) power and dominance delineated and chronicled (Urry 1990; Hollinshead 1999; Cheong and Miller 2000). From the earliest attempts at establishing an anthropology of tourism, impacts on the social fabric and local culture were depicted as more or less disastrous (Turner and Ash 1975; Smith 1977; Boissevain 1996). Such studies were often carried out using ethnographic or cultural analytical methods, turning ethnography and qualitative inquiry into the preferred valuing devices. Regularly—if not

habitually within this critical approach—were these ethnographic and qualitative valuing devices coupled with normative presumptions of authenticity, power and identity and how these were and should (not) be shaped.

Maybe, dear reader, you recognize this branching out of a field of research into two distinct strands from your own field of research? What about food studies? Like tourism, food might be seen as a forceful economic phenomenon that has spurred intellectual interest not only from researchers, but also funding bodies and educational institutions. And perhaps you would not need to dig very deep into the field of food studies before you encounter two strands similar to the ones found within tourism studies, a managerial and a critical approach? An indication that this might be the case is found in Frank Heuts and Annemarie Mol's contribution to an earlier issue of the present journal. In their paper, Heuts and Mol ask: "What is a Good Tomato?" Drawing upon interviews with different tomato actors—chefs, growers, gardeners and more—Heuts and Mol answer their question through five registers of valuing, signalling that the question of what is a good tomato is, indeed, a tricky one (Heuts and Mol 2013); perhaps trickier than a field operating with just a managerial or a critical approach can grasp.

Health care studies might constitute a second example. Drawing again on an earlier contribution to the present journal, Teun Zuiderent-Jerak and Stans van Egmond also take a bifurcated field of research as their point of departure in their article 'Ineffable Cultures or Material Devices: What Valuation Studies can Learn from the Disappearance of Ensured Solidarity in a Health Care Market (Zuiderent-Jerak and van Egmond 2015). Zuiderent-Jerak and van Egmond take up the leapfrog debate concerning culture or materiality; which one drives or should drive history? Taking a recent transformation in the Dutch welfare-based health care system from 'fairness' to 'competition' as their empirical case, the two authors "call for a more historical, relational, and dynamic understanding of the role of economists, market devices, and of culture in valuation studies" (Zuiderent-Jerak and van Egmond 2015, 45). Other recent examples of reshuffling value positions can be drawn from fields such as innovation studies (Hyysalo et al. 2016) and taxation studies (Boll 2014).

We suggest that the attention to valuation as a social practice championed by this journal may aid us in tending to such reshufflings. Let us leave food studies, health care studies and other fields behind and discuss how the bringing together of valuation studies and the field of tourism studies might help us go beyond the managerial and the critical approach. Through an empirical example we will also discuss why this may be especially pertinent today.

Entanglement of Tourism and Valuation

As we have shown above, the managerial and the critical approaches to tourism are very different in terms of the valuing devices employed, and subsequently in how tourism as a phenomenon is studied and assessed. However, and importantly, the two approaches share an understanding of the values of tourism as relatively stable entities and as being independent from attempts made at measuring or describing them. While the managerial approach assumes that such relatively stable and independent value and values can be measured and, subsequently, furthered, the critical approach assumes that they can be described and, subsequently, critically addressed. Whereas the two predominant strands seem to work from rather clear-cut distinctions between 'the economic' and 'the cultural', between 'the technical' and 'the social', and between 'hard numbers' and 'soft values', much work in the area of valuation studies is marked by cultivating a more agnostic and performative approach (Callon 1986) to questions of valuing and values.

In this approach, values are not understood as determining valuation but are rather the effects of specific and situated valuing practices and devices. It questions our departure point in 'tourism as the world's largest industry', seeing such a claim as an effect of specific and situated valuing practices (see also Latour 2013). To bring tourism research into conversation with the field of valuation studies destabilizes and blurs distinctions between managerial and critical tourism research (see also Ren et al. 2010). It might also lead us to sorting attachments (Jensen 2007) in new ways.

With an attention to valuation as a practice, tourism value and values are seen as the effects or achievements of—rather than reasons for—concrete and situated tourism practices. While statements of tourism size and worth might serve well as political and academic window dressing, we could instead follow the intentions of the current journal, and engage in valuing tourism as a social practice (Helgesson and Muniesa 2013; Kjellberg et al. 2013). Such an approach offers an opportunity to simultaneously unpack what we understand by 'tourism' (Jóhanneson et al. 2015) and to tend to its value and values beyond its being the world's biggest industry. We might, in other words, engage with the "goodnesses" (Mol 2002, 166)—and badnesses, one might add—of tourism in a far more nuanced manner.

To do so—to attend to the goodnesses and badnesses of tourism more carefully—seems timely, as tourism seems to become ever more entangled. To an increasing degree, tourism is managed and performed in ways that are not separate from, but that connect with, a jumble of everyday practices and concerns (Cartier and Lew 2005). This implies that the value and values of tourism turn into something which never stands alone, but is always negotiated in relation to and co-enacted along with other elements and concerns. In that way tourism may be

said to exemplify what Boltanski and Esquerre have termed 'the economy of enrichment' (Boltanski and Esquerre 2015). Increasingly, tourism is valued by being connected to actors and elements we would not traditionally think of as belonging to the sphere of 'tourism proper' (see also Jóhanneson et al. 2015). As we become increasingly aware that tourism is more complex and entangled than previously assumed, we need to address how its effects are more intensively distributed in, for instance, regional development, city planning, education, innovation and cultural imaginaries, or—as we tend to in the present—in everyday practices. Through the complex linking of many different actors and elements we wish to look into new ways to describe, understand and interfere with the ways in which tourism comes into being and comes to matter.

To illustrate these points concerning the entanglement of tourism and how this calls for a closer collaboration between tourism studies and valuation studies, let us offer an example of how values connect to 'the social' in the everyday life practices of tourism drawing on insights from ongoing research in Greenland.

Towards the Study of New Value Tensions

In March 2016, Nuuk, the capital city of Greenland, will be hosting the Arctic Winter Games (AWG), the largest event in the island's history. During the event week, the streets of the city of 17,000 inhabitants will be swarming with 2200 young performers and cultural representatives, as well as spectators and journalists from around and beyond the participating circumpolar continents. To prepare for this event, a secretariat was created in 2014, financed by the Greenlandic home rule and the local municipality of Nuuk. Their work has consisted in planning the event, joining together sponsors, partners and the necessary 1500 volunteers to enable the hopefully smooth running of this event. Leading up to the event, the national airline will be gathering its air vessels to transport the thousands of participants and guests under difficult Arctic conditions. City schools will be closed down to lodge the many visitors, and the kitchens of catering businesses will be running full steam to feed them.

AWG illustrates how tourism enters everyday life in a number of powerful ways. Not only when the AWG actually takes place but through the year-long process of planning the event. During that time, connections are forged and requirements are articulated through collaborative efforts of the event actors. Through collaborations with and between civic organizations, educational institutions, the art and music scene and others, new social and public–private configurations are enacted such as citizens-as-volunteers, NGOs-as-partners and companies-as-sponsors. The question is how to make sense of and

value these emerging realities, which are no longer confined to being singularly *about* events or tourism?

Here we turn to a paper entitled ‘Matter-ing: Or How Might STS Contribute’ (2004) by sociologist John Law. In the paper, which explores how the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) performs specific kinds of value and values, Law deploys the notion of ‘modes of mattering’ as a specific way of “making realities that matter. Handling matters of concern” (Law 2004, 3; see also Latour 2004). One of the helpful points made is that different modes of mattering configure the relationship between facts and values differently. Let us see how this works for our present case. How would a tourism slash valuation studies researcher go about making sense of and valuing the emerging realities of AWG 2016?

Although the AWG event had not yet taken place at the time of writing, voices of concern in political debates and in the media are being raised about the costs and outcomes of this event. Crudely speaking, the questions raised around the AWG are organized around two concerns, or two kingdoms, as proposed in Law (2004): that of *facts* and that of *values*. Focusing on the kingdom of facts, the mode of mattering entitled puzzle-solving seeks to find the missing piece in the jigsaw. It asks: What is the missing (technical) fact? What is the fact that is missing since concerns about the costs and outcomes of this event are being raised? This mode of mattering, puzzle-solving, does not engage in discussing the values of AWG, but is merely concerned with facts: what will this cost, what will we gain, is it worth it—and how to measure all of this in the best possible way?

A second mode of mattering, that of critique, is not so interested in the facts. Indeed, facts are taken to be more or less clear. Critique is interested in values. And it states that the present values have gone wrong. To attempt to matter through critique in the case of AWG would then mean to question the political motivations and power issues related to the event. An example is how government investments related to AWG benefits the interests of the capital city over more marginal areas.

The focus on (missing) facts in the case of puzzle-solving, and on values (gone wrong) in the case of critique, correspond with recognizable fault lines between the two dominant research positions of management studies and critical studies (See Tribe et al. 2015) in tourism research as outlined above. We also stressed how newer studies within both the managerial and the critical approach seem to recognize that economic and cultural concerns must somehow be balanced or transcended. We need, in other words, a better overview of things—how economic and cultural concerns relate. This corresponds with the third of Law’s modes of mattering, that of balance. What matters within balance is “the making of balance between things that won’t add up in a nice convergent way, that refuse to be located within

a single calculus of *either* facts *or* values" (Law 2004, 4, emphasis in the original).

This is a concern of the event secretariat, turning their work into the preferred sites of the researcher attempting to matter through balancing. In their planning work, the project managers and workers are fully aware of the controversial state of the event regarding its potential as a valuation device in itself. As stated by the general manager: How to make the best of this, when it is due to happen anyway? How do we use this as an occasion to do things, which need to be done anyway? Their words display a constant working in and with tensions, a balancing act between raising facts (i.e. how can the secretariat conduct surveys of what the sponsors get out of it?) and of enacting values (i.e. how can the secretariat better connect the event to sports and health issues in schools?). How that balancing act turns out, which values it produces, and how these are assessed as factual accomplishments, remain to be seen.

The three above modes of mattering—puzzle-solving, critique and balance—all speak of absences, Law posits, "the absence of good values for critique; the absence of just the right piece needed to solve the problem in the case of technical puzzle-solving; or the absence of an overall view in the case of balance" (Law 2004, 5). In bringing to the fore such absences, and in pointing to ways in which these absences may be handled or even turned into presences, the researcher can come to matter in ways that are recognizable across various sites, institutions, organizations, etc. But there are other possible modes of mattering.

While the three previous modes of mattering all assume a somewhat stable reality 'out-there', and keep up a commonsensical distinction between facts and values, interference as a fourth mode of mattering "washes away the singularity of the real" (Law 2004, 5) and erases the clear-cut distinction between facts and values. It does so in three steps. It says, first, that realities are done. Second, these realties are non-coherent and, thus, in interference with one another. The third and last step follows from the first two: if we, as researchers, recognize that realities are done differently in different practices, then we can "interfere and make a difference" (Law 2004, 5). This is what Annemarie Mol has termed ontological politics (Mol 1999).

In the case of AWG 2016 then, the question is: how do the researchers come to matter through interference? And how do they become engaged in ontological politics? We are not sure. It may simply be too early to ask such questions. More research is needed. Research, which does not take a straightforward distinction between facts and values as its point of departure, but as a distinction to be explored empirically. How does the distinction between facts and values come into being in the tourism practices studied? And how might we, as researchers, interfere in this continuous performance of the distinction between facts and values?

Contributions

Using insights from previous studies about valuation when tending to tourism (and other fields of research as suggested above) enables us to think about how we should and would like to come to matter. The four contributions of this special issue all grapple—in very different ways—with this. They can be read as experiments in how to come to matter through interference as well as through other and more easily recognizable modes of mattering—puzzle-solving, critique and balance. The idea is not to choose between different modes of mattering, but rather to broaden the palette.

In the first contribution, Morten Krogh Petersen and Carina Ren analytically bracket the public understandings of the (lack of) values of the Eurovision Song Contest held in Copenhagen in 2014, which resulted in a huge and scandalous publically financed deficit. Following Mauss (1925 [2011]), Petersen and Ren propose seeing the event not as an activity, which neatly fits with economic and cultural evaluation devices, but rather as a *total social phenomenon*, or Potlatch. As they show, actors attribute value to the mega-event along different and interfering project logics and thereby seek to enact different sets of values.

In the second contribution, Lauren Wagner starts in well-known empirical terrain for the field of valuation studies, namely the dynamics of markets. More specifically, Wagner sets out to investigate how the right price is found in the Marrakech bazaar. She draws together insights from recent studies on financial markets, and the market devices that help bring these into being in specific ways, with older, primarily anthropological, studies focusing on marketplaces and on the individuals that conduct trade. Wagner aims not to fixate individuals (as seems to be the case in newer studies) or technologies (as seems to be the case in older studies). Instead, she shows how all entities come into being through negotiations of the value of the artworks sold and the ethnonational category of 'Moroccanness'.

In the third article, Vasiliki Baka takes an historical and performative approach to place-making and places-valuing. Accounts and ratings of travel experiences spanning from the diaries and travelogues of the Grand Tour era, to the guest comment cards found at many hotels from the 1990s, and onwards to the user-generated content and algorithmically produced ratings found on TripAdvisor are understood as valuing devices, which partake in the making and the valuing of places. Baka suggests that although earlier valuing devices have evoked place-making in various ways, the rise of UGC (user-generated content) websites has converted the travel experience into a constant negotiation process whereby the value of places and the value of valuing devices are contested.

In the fourth article, Henrik Merkelsen and Rasmus Kjærgaard Rasmussen unpack the organizational effects of nation brand ranking,

advancing the argument that the flexible nation branding logic offers an almost unlimited potential for producing organizational effects. Using a case study of a recent nation-branding initiative in Denmark, the authors show how the bureaucrats in charge of the nation-branding initiative successfully translated fuzzy political goals into understandable numerical objectives so that they fitted into their existing bureaucratic practice. This translation allowed for bureaucratic expansion as it continuously maintained and reconstructed problems solvable by the initiation of more nation-branding initiatives and more bureaucratic activity.

Concluding Remarks

In the foregoing, we have proposed that taking an agnostic and performative approach to how value and values are enacted into being and ordered in tourism challenges current managerial preoccupations with, and critical concerns over, the worth of tourism. This take asks us to give up any premature, analytical distinction between managerial and critical perspectives. The distinction is no longer an analytical starting point, but what has to be researched. Its continuous becoming is what we need to describe and understand. As we tend to the dynamic valuing of tourism as it takes place in the everyday micro-practices of the tourism marketplace, we are made more aware of how it is reproduced and institutionalized in mundane or strategic activities.

These insights call for new registers to be developed by which we can describe, understand and interfere with the ways in which tourism comes into being through the complex linking of many different actors. This can be done, we argue, by minutely tracing how tourism is made to matter in different contexts, according to different registers in multiple and often opposing ways. Here the emerging field of valuation studies provides a new lens to explore and understand the social practices of valuation in tourism; and by making these valuing practices explicit, we also make them more open and accountable to scrutiny (Doganova et al. 2014). We hope that this issue will pave the way for many more attempts to tend to tourism values and valuation.

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"Much More than a Song Contest": Exploring Eurovision 2014 as Potlatch

Morten Krogh Petersen and Carina Ren

Abstract

As economic and budgetary scandals reached Danish front pages in 2014 over the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) held that year in Copenhagen, many bystanders questioned the sense of the event, proclaiming it a massive waste of public money. In this article, we introduce the concept of "potlatch" to explore the valuation and values of this event, seeing it as a "total social phenomenon" in which more than merely economic matters are at stake. Framing Eurovision as a cross-sectoral innovation project, we show how a wide array of actors from the public and private sector collaboratively sought to turn the event into "much more than a song contest." This "much more" is investigated by describing the partnering actors' arduous work to create value through different project logics. Where other valuations of the event put little work into bringing forth values which transgress the realm of the economic and quantifiable, we argue that a more caring engagement enacts non-economic event outcomes usually made invisible or, at best, perceived as "intangible."

Key words: cross-sectoral collaboration; innovation; project logics; events; potlatch; controversy

Introduction: The Meaningfulness of ESC 2014

In May 2014 the city of Copenhagen hosted the Eurovision Song Contest 2014 (ESC 2014). Held annually since 1956, the ESC is the longest running TV song competition in the world. The participants are, primarily, the member countries of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). Approximately six months after the Austrian winner left

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the stage, the official price tag put on the mega event by government auditors read €45 million. Many researchers, commentators, journalists and politicians who we have encountered and talked with during our inquiry into the organizing and valuing of ESC 2014 agree: The hosting of ESC 2014 was *very* expensive and, also, *too* expensive. As local politician Lise Müller put it: "Wow, that's incredibly expensive —that it cost nearly €46 million for a round of glitz and glitter. It's totally out of all proportions and decency. It violates my sense of justice."[1] On top of this, the ESC 2014 also generated a budgetary scandal. While the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR)—responsible for producing the show—stayed on budget (€27 million), the Project Company responsible for preparing the venue for the show overran their budget by four times, the costs totaling €18 million.[2] As journalist and commentator Georg Metz asked in wonderment:

> How does one get away with this, without someone waking up in the system? Is it because Eurovision, the city and DR are corrupt—or stupid? And isn't it illegal what they have done—or rather not done? And why did politicians not react? Because there are votes to gain from this depressing crap? Or what?[3]

In this article, we question the dominant understanding of ESC 2014 presented in the above as a mere waste of money by exploring the potential sense of the ESC 2014. We do so by starting "in the middle" (Latour 2005, 27), as proposed by Latour, in order to query the specificities of the event as set forward by its central actors. What distinguishes the 2014 event from last time it was held in Denmark, in 2001, is how this time around it was organized and executed across traditional, sectoral borders as a public–private innovation project. Talking to the actors involved in this cross-sectoral work allowed us to appreciate how such work enabled them to create what one interlocutor described to us as "much more than a song contest." The cross-sectoral setup, in other words, was to generate value beyond the event proper. Questions are, however, what this novel cross-sectoral setup entailed for the meaningfulness of hosting ESC 2014 and for the ability to generate and display value and values. What did this setup produce beside the show itself?

As we argue in this article, cross-sectoral innovation projects require that public administrators, event organizers, researchers and the many other stakeholders involved in the making and valuing of such activities to address, rethink or broaden the outcomes of

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[1] Retrieved from http://www.dr.dk/Nyheder/Kultur/Oevrig_kultur/2014/10/07/170203.htm, accessed Nov. 18, 2014.

[2] Retrieved from http://www.dr.dk/Nyheder/Kultur/Oevrig_kultur/2014/10/07/170203.htm, accessed Nov. 18, 2014.

[3] Retrieved from http://www.information.dk/502210. Accessed Nov. 18,.2014.

organizing and executing events and to rethink how such outcomes might be detected and valued (Agha et al. 2012; Li and McCabe 2013). Within the events industry and tourism management at large, the rising complexity of the organizational setups of events increasingly blurs sectoral and institutional boundaries, challenging the establishment of transparency and accountability (Dredge and Whitford 2011; Jóhannesson et al. 2015). This challenge is faced not only by event planners and managers, but also more generally by actors working within cross-sectoral organizational setups, for instance within science and innovation projects (Elgaard Jensen 2012; Jespersen et al. 2012).

As stated by Kjellberg et al. (2013), one of the central avenues which can be explored through valuation studies is how "[…] macro-level trends underlie current changes concerning the ways in which value and values are produced and transformed: Such factors as neoliberalism, the rise of new public management, the spread of meritocracy, consumerism or ICT developments are evoked" (Kjellberg et al. 2013, 13). Although we do believe that the tendency to conflate value with profit within neoliberalism and new public management needs to be challenged, our goal here is not to offer a critique of a regime in which public/private collaboration is deployed as yet another tool toward efficient and streamlined governance and whose accountability tools are unable to go beyond profit as *the* outcome to be valued. Our contention is rather that "[p]ractice is larger, more complex, more messy than can be grasped within any particular logic" (Law, 2002, 32) and that bringing such messiness to the fore might be a way to engage more productively with how value and values are made present and absent (Law and Singleton 2005) in public/private collaborations and their valuation.

In the following attempt to unravel the taxing work of organizing ESC 2014 and the even more demanding work of detecting and describing its outcomes and their value, we first introduce the concept of potlatch (Mauss 1925 [2011]) as a way to explore ESC as a "messy" endeavor or, as Mauss terms it, a *total social phenomenon*. We then present the field material on which we draw and describe the challenges in working up and working with this material to show how we came to protect and care for rather than debunk ESC 2014 (Latour 2004, 232). We then proceed to the analysis, in which we explore the cross-sectoral innovation project of ESC 2014 as a total social phenomenon. In preparing a discussion of event values, we delineate three prominent project logics (cf. Law 1994), through which our empirical material has been structured and analyzed: One enacts and evaluates the project of ESC 2014 through *a business logic*, the other *a creative logic* and the last *a public logic*.

Following the notion of total social phenomenon and drawing on our fieldwork, we last discuss how the two dominant tools used for

valuing ESC—that of impact detection and that of media analysis—had difficulties with identifying other than economic values. In the official evaluations of the event in the dramatic aftermath of ESC 2014, values beyond the monetary almost disappeared, for instance in the impact analyses and media reports, reiterating the idea of anything lying outside of economy as irrelevant, worthless or, at best, "intangible." This conflicts with the identified project logics and the related practices of valuing, which were not (only) about generating a monetary surplus but also, as mentioned, about creating "much more than a song contest." We point to how the inability to account for different types of values may be alleviated through a more engaged and caring approach (Heuts and Mol 2013) and how different values may come to matter and interfere in new ways.

Forms and Functions of Exchange in ESC 2014

The above heading paraphrases the subtitle of *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (1925 [2011]), first published by Mauss in 1925, in which the French sociologist explores the phenomenon of reciprocity and gift exchange in archaic societies. While the idea of exploring "forms and functions" might resonate as somewhat antiquated to contemporary social science researchers, we believe that many useful lessons may be retrieved from revisiting this classic piece when setting out to explore the organizing and valuing of ESC 2014.

In his work, Mauss explored the realm of contract and the system of economic exchange in archaic societies. According to him, archaic societies were not discrete, since in these societies "each phenomenon contains all the threads of which the social fabric is composed" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 1). As such, archaic social phenomena are *total*, meaning that "all kinds of institutions find simultaneous expression: religious, legal, moral, and economic" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 1). Empirically, Mauss analyzed gift giving and exchange as total social phenomena by way of examples from historical and "primitive" societies and was especially interested in the potlatch of North American Indians.

The potlatch refers to a ritual feast practiced by indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast of Canada and the United States, which as a locus of gift giving also functioned as the primary economic system. Potlatch, originally meaning "to nourish" or "to consume" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 3) is the practice of *prestation*, in which "things or series of things are given freely or obligatorily as a gift or in exchange; and includes services, entertainment, etc. as well as material things" (Mauss 1925 [2011], xi).

At first glance, the potlatch with its conspicuous consumption and mass destruction of wealth resembles a meaningless ritual and hence, its sense and value was severely challenged by outside (Western)

bystanders. By seeing it as a total social phenomenon, Mauss was able to identify a range of intricate internal and situated logics and negotiations of exchange, status, power and domination. Before him, the potlatch had been studied as a specific kind of contract, but to Mauss it is more than a legal phenomenon. It is also religious, mythological, shamanistic, aesthetic, economic, etc. Most importantly, the potlatch inscribes itself into a continuous circuit of contract, exchange and reciprocity in which status, credit (in both meanings of the word), "face" and honor are established, maintained or lost.

Mauss's novel understanding of exchange institutions as forming one of the bases of social life does not limit itself to archaic or primitive societies. To him, "the same morality and economy are at work, albeit less noticeable, in our own societies" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 2). As an analytical resource, the potlatch is therefore suitable for probing the "forms and functions" of the ESC 2014 and also invites us to take with us a few lessons. The *first lesson* is how ESC 2014 can be studied as a *total social phenomenon* or, to quote Mauss, as an example of "fairs in which the market is but one element and the circulation of wealth but one part of a wide and enduring contract" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 3). By digging into the event and its cross-sectoral setup, ESC 2014 can be explored as a hybrid collaboration, which requires and is based on exchange. The *second lesson* tells us that as a contract of reciprocal commitment between several social actors, ESC is realized through *different and intersecting logics*. This, we argue, lead to it becoming "much more than a song contest", but also makes it difficult to organize and as shown further on, to valuate—at least with the existing tools. Here, we can also gain a *third lesson* from Mauss, in his insistence that even today "there are a series of institutions and economic events *not* governed by the rationalism which past [utilitarian, eds.] theory so readily took for granted" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 73, emphasis added). By looking at an event such as ESC 2014 as a total social phenomenon, we are forced to address "the complex notion that inspires the economic actions we have described, a notion neither of purely free and gratuitous *prestation*, nor of purely interested and utilitarian production and exchange; it is a kind of hybrid" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 70). Later, we will explore how the three project logics can help us appreciate ESC 2014 as a total social phenomenon. First however, we turn to how we related to the field and to the materials generated through this engagement.

Methodology and Materials: Caring for ESC 2014

What does it mean to care about and for the ESC 2014 as opposed to debunking the event? Here we take our cue from recent work with the field of post-ANT (Actor-Network Theory) studies, extended to the

field of valuation studies, which connects caring with valuing. Asking, "What is a good tomato?" Frank Heuts and Annemarie Mol have recently suggested that "[c]aring is an activity in which valuing is implied—both caring about and caring for have a "good" on their horizon. At the same time caring indicates efforts that are ongoing, adaptive, tinkering and open ended" (Heuts and Mol 2013, 130). Taking inspiration from this way of connecting caring and valuing, our fieldwork on ESC 2014 sought to grasp what a "good" ESC 2014 might be and how this "good" was to be achieved in the practices of organizing, managing and, later, valuing the event. This, of course, is not an innocent approach (Haraway 1991). Rather, it is an interventionist endeavor on our part in which we seek to take into account and understand, but also go beyond conclusions which reduce the event to a mere waste of money, end of discussion. As presented above, to understand ESC 2014 as a total social phenomenon, ANT is the primary conceptual tool utilized to achieve this. As cross-sectoral innovation projects become increasingly popular, a caring approach to ESC 2014 may be seen as a trial balloon from which to draw new learnings on interfering with such projects. In the following, we explain how this approach was undertaken.

In December 2013 the first contact was made with the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR) and the project company, Host City Company (HCC). The latter company in charge of ESC had been created and was owned by the local destination management organization of Wonderful Copenhagen and financially supported by Wonderful Copenhagen itself, the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Copenhagen. Our aim was to learn how this collaboration was meaningful to these partnering organizations as links were made between the event and tourism development, branding initiatives of the city and regional commercial development. Through the following fieldwork, we undertook qualitative interviews with the project company, the destination management organization of Wonderful Copenhagen, the City of Copenhagen and the Refshale Island property company.

Further, to explore emerging issues we also monitored media and social media for ESC relevant issues and discussions and read through evaluation reports and other official documents related to the event and the project. Several times, we visited the venue, which was reconstructed to fit the event purpose. Following the holding of the song contest in May 2014 and our initial analysis, we invited the partnering organizations for a seminar on value creation in ESC 2014 and cross-sectoral innovation projects more broadly at our university. Here, we introduced our caring approach to ESC 2014. Through examples generated from the fieldwork material, we presented a preliminary version of the project logics and their possible interferences and used the following round table discussions and

feedback to further sharpen the analysis. Apart from putting our preliminary analysis, the project logics and their possible interferences *at risk* by inviting and enabling feedback from the partnering organizations through our presentation (see Stengers 1997; Latour 2004), our aim with the seminar was to underscore that we see the partnering organizations as knowledge collaborators rather than mere informants. The seminar, whose outcomes will be presented and discussed in further detail below, received participation from the City of Copenhagen, Wonderful Copenhagen, Visit Denmark, Refshale Island as well as DR and the Capital Region of Denmark.

On these grounds, our following attempt to bring to the fore and enact three different project logics of ESC 2014 take in the attempts of the partnering organizations to organize and valuate ESC 2014 in a way that is meaningful to them. Hence, we seek to appreciate ESC 2014 as a trial balloon for what is to come in terms of cross-sectoral collaboration rather than merely a one-off song contest. As we hope to demonstrate, ESC 2014 is a continuously changing, unsettled and sensitive object of study and with our choice of methodology we strive to appreciate it as such.

What is ESC 2014?

Right from the start in 1964, the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) was a hybrid phenomenon; its actors and interests were many and diverse. One expressed first wish was to bring together the EBU member countries in a war-torn Europe through a light entertainment program, another to technologically experiment with linking countries in a wide international network before satellite communication, meaning that it could also be viewed as a technological development project. Today, it is one of the most watched non-sporting events, drawing together up to 600 million global viewers. As a consequence of this explosive growth, it has also become a highly commercial event, an important economic factor and a way to promote the host countries as tourist destinations. Along the years, it has also had many different geopolitical implications, such as changes in visa requirements in the Ukraine in 2005 and is at the root of more than a few controversies.[4] The complex nature of the ESC can even be experienced within its own expanding field of research (Raykoff and Tobin 2007).

In spite of its multiplicity, one thing is certain in the ESC: The organizers of the yearly Eurovision event series are not privileged with extended deadlines. Unlike many other mega events, which are often planned years in advance, the country hosting the upcoming Eurovision is only known a year to the day, when the Eurovision winner is elected and their home country is awarded the honor (or

4 See http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/completelist/0,29569,1896688,00.html.

duty, to some) of hosting the upcoming event. Hence, it was only in May 2013 when Dane Emmelie de Forest won the ESC 2013 in neighboring Sweden that Denmark became the host of ESC 2014. In June 2013 DR, responsible for everything connected to the running of the TV show, invited Danish cities to bid on hosting the event. The difficulties which followed of choosing a venue for the contest had already given an early warning of the controversies to come, as Copenhagen and several provincial cities aggressively and publicly wooed DR to choose their locations for the contest. In September 2013, eight months before the song contest was to take place, Copenhagen was awarded the rights to host the ESC 2014. The Copenhagen bid, prepared in a consortium consisting of Wonderful Copenhagen, the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Denmark, was supported by a vast and diverse group of public and private organizations and companies: The Öresund Region, the Region of Zeeland, Odense Municipality, Copenhagen Airport, the Copenhagen Metro company, Malmö City, Roskilde Festival, Copenhagen Fashion Festival, Copenhagen Cooking, Copenhagen Jazz Festival and Distortion Festival. DR's choice fell on an unusual and highly surprising venue: The old assembly halls of Burmeister & Wain (B&W), a former shipyard situated on the semi-deserted Refshale Island, close to the city center. In a later report by the Project Company we learn that:

> Already from the beginning it was recognized by all involved parties that the Refshale Island was an experimental choice or—as it was expressed by the managing director of DR—"a creative obstruction." But at the same time it was the B&W Halls which were able to turn ESC 2014 into something exceptional and that could give the marketing of Denmark an edge and punch internationally —which also proved to be the case. (Statement, Wonderful Copenhagen, July 2014)

Our interest in undertaking this research was spurred not only by the choice of venue and the short deadline, a challenge in itself, when choosing a dilapidated former industrial area for a glitzy show, but also by the organizing Project Company made up by public, semi-public and private organizations. This organizational setup was radically different and a far more complex way of collaborating and organizing the event in comparison with 2001, when Denmark also hosted Eurovision. We wondered if this cross-sectoral project organization could say something more general about the role and challenges of public–private collaboration in tourism development and elsewhere. The cross-sectoral setup of ESC 2014 allows us to engage critically with the trend toward more public–private collaboration, which we not only see within events, but also science and innovation policy and practices (Elgaard Jensen 2012; Jespersen et al. 2012).

By inquiring into ESC 2014 as a *potlatch*, in the sense of a *total social phenomenon*, we were able to focus on how the cross-sectoral setup did not perform one *coherent* innovation project comprising a single dominant logic but rather contained multiple project logics. Our notion of project logics is developed with inspiration not only from Mauss, but also from John Law's notion of "modes of ordering" which describe "ordering arrangements, expressions, suggestions, possibilities or resources" (Law 1994, 20; see also Law 1996; Law and Moser 1999). Law, one of the key contributors to the field of post-ANT studies, suggests that such modes of ordering describe logics that are imputable to "the bits and pieces that make up the networks of the social" (Law 1994, 21). Taking a British laboratory and its management in the era of Thatcherism as his empirical field, Law further states: "I *think* I see certain patterns in the ordering work of managers, and its effects. I *think* that if I conceive of these patterns in this way, then I can say that these are being partially performed by, embodied in, and helping to constitute, the networks of the social" (Law 1994, 21, emphasis in original).

In the following, we outline three different and empirically situated ESC 2014 project logics: The creative logic, the business logic and the public logic. We do not wish to propose that these three project logics are exhaustive—more project logics could have been developed. We are, however, saying that we think these three projects logics are imputable to and might help us understand and interfere caringly with the social networks of ESC 2014 and, broader, the organization and valuation of current cross-sectoral innovation projects.

Business Project Logic

Understood through a business logic, ESC 2014 is one event in a long succession of events hosted by the city of Copenhagen and Wonderful Copenhagen. The increasing understanding of the role of events as being catalysts for city branding and city tourism development (Richards 2000; Ren and Gyimóthy 2013) has led to Copenhagen becoming a central international player in this market. This was emphasized and exemplified in the bid on hosting the ESC 2014, in which the majority of photos used came from earlier, international events held in Copenhagen, such as the MTV European Music Awards in 2006, the IOC Congress in 2009 and the UN Conference of the Parties (COP15), also in 2009.

The business logic focuses on the economic potential of ESC 2014. Most clearly—but not exclusively—potential linked to tourism. The ESC 2014 was seen as creating positive effects on media coverage, marketing and branding Copenhagen and Denmark as attractive to tourists and investors. This would attract tourism, hence increasing local and national tourism-generated revenues. Connected to this, the

single show was extended into nine under ESC 2014, including dress rehearsals, "family shows" and two semifinals. Also, the event was stretched out in duration and space through an elaborate one-week outreach program in the center of Copenhagen. According to the event manager and outreach coordinator at Wonderful Copenhagen, the ESC 2014 outreach scheme draws on Wonderful Copenhagen's year-long experience with "putting in some values and activities so that [the event] gets a more popular appeal and message" (interview, Wonderful Copenhagen, Event Director, February 17, 2014). According to him, the unfolding of an extended outreach program outside of the televised show displays a huge development compared to 2001, where "to my best knowledge, there was nothing, as in absolutely nothing going on apart from the show" (interview, Wonderful Copenhagen, Event Director, February 17, 2014). Now, however, tourists and visitors as well as locals were invited to take part in ESC 2014 celebrations (and consumption) among music stages, food and beverage stalls and sponsor booths (Mordue 2007).

As mentioned, tourism was not the only industry included in the business-oriented parts of the organizational setup. During interviews with representatives from the Refshale Island property company and the City of Copenhagen, references were made to the works of Richard Florida (see, for instance, Florida 2002) and it was made clear that ESC 2014 was seen as a promising platform for attracting businesses to Copenhagen. By allowing for activities such as the outreach scheme, which spread out across several squares and the main pedestrian mall traversing the city, the city authorities displayed willingness and ability to comply with demands from the tourism sector. According to a special consultant at the business administration of the City of Copenhagen, the procedures for engaging with cultural and business events had changed radically over the last ten years. Where requests for using public spaces for event activities were previously turned down automatically and needed to go higher up to the board of the administration to be authorized, it was now the opposite. A request only needed to "travel upwards" if it was turned down, in which case the highest committee within the city administration was to provide an explanation for the refusal (interview, City of Copenhagen, March 6, 2014). The engagement of the city, the destination management organization and private developers and sponsors in the ESC 2014 displayed how the event was not only engaged with as a song contest, but was also organized and managed through the ordering pattern of business. However, creative project logic can also be imputed to the early coverage of and statements from ESC 2014, as we shall now see.

Creative Project Logic

From the outset, DR had the ambition to create a show that not only honored the traditions of the ESC, but also pointed toward the future.

In a press release, DR executive producer of the show, Pernille Gaardbo, stated:

> With the choice of the B&W Halls at the Refshale Island we are well on the way to unfold the most innovative arena ever. It is our ambition to renew the show in both form and content, so it becomes a stylish update with respect for tradition. The B&W Halls at the Refshale Island give us the opportunity to create a unique show, because we can shape the framework inside. The Halls give us some creative options that match our ambitions.[5]

By performing ESC 2014 as a creative project, the aims and purpose of the show could revolve around pooling together the creative and innovative skills and resources needed to turn the B&W Halls and the surrounding areas into a suitable venue for the event and its guests. According to the Head of Planning and Rental at Refshale Island, Claus Hovmøller, the project was about getting a muddy place with no infrastructure ready for stilettos and also, through this creative process, to surprise foreign spectators and television viewers with our, implicitly Danish, ability to transform an ugly and dilapidated site into an awe-inspiring event platform (interview, Refshale Island Property Company, January 30, 2014). For DR, this entailed building a high-technology stage and underscored the importance of lighting, sound and filming. The costly removal of some centrally positioned stanchions inside the B&W Halls, which later played a key part in the ESC aftermath, were in this light perceived as a minor problem, adding positively to the creative obstruction, which DR and the Project Company had set for themselves.

The creative take on the show led to the slaughtering of a few holy cows, one of them being the 40-second TV-postcard of each national contestant before their arrival on the stage. Each postcard originally featured the singer/band having fun or otherwise engaging with local sights, attractions or icons, such as the Little Mermaid in 2001. In order to "get closer to the artist",[6] as stated by DR, the decision was made to replace the postcards with footage of the artists as they ingeniously visualized their national flags in a homeland setting using paint, sea shells, dominos, umbrellas, people, etc. This move, which (also) received substantial media coverage, was criticized by many tourism actors, who lamented what they saw as a loss of branding opportunity. The director of the new TV-postcards disagreed in arguing in a media interview that the flag concept is very Danish: "I will humbly say that it is a good idea, and that is what we as Danes will be living off. We are told that it is not our production power that

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[5] Retrieved from http://www.dr.dk/Om_DR/Nyt+fra+DR/artikler/2013/07/090853_1.htm, accessed Nov. 17, 2014.

[6] Retrieved from http://jyllands-posten.dk/kultur/musik/ECE6663051/her-er-manden-bag-tv-postkortene-til-eurovision/, accessed Nov. 18, 2014.

we are going to gain from, but our ideas, thoughts and creativity."[7] While the tourism actors seem to view the abandonment of the traditional postcard as compromising the business logic, the director of the new TV-postcards seems to argue that, and points out how, the business logic can feed off the creative logic and not the other way around. Here we have an example of how the project logics may interfere with one another in not always straightforward ways and create surprising effects.

Common for all of the activities under the creative ESC logic was an explicit focus on making room for and accepting uncertainty. In a documentary produced by DR on the creation of the TV show, which aired a few days before the ESC 2014 semifinals began, representatives from DR agreed that one should not always do the obvious thing. This line of thought can partly at least be seen as a reason for choosing the B&W Halls as the venue.[8] According to a statement made by Wonderful Copenhagen to explain the later exploding budget:

> [A]ll parties knew that the B&W halls were a difficult and risk filled choice of venue. In spite of the fact that structural expertise was used in the bidding phase, time did not allow for the preparation of an actual structural analysis and project design, which is not uncommon for larger constructions. It is characteristic for highly innovative projects that they take shape during their realization—often resulting in higher costs. (Project Company ESC 2014 LLP 2014, 8)

In this account, we see how the wish to draw together, explore and display creative resources is valued as central and works as a driver, a motivator and an end goal of the project. If the business logic can latch onto this creative logic, then good, as the new TV-postcard director suggested, but the creative logic comes first. As we shall see, this creative logic and the subsequent acceptance of risk, uncertainty and ongoing adaptation did not seamlessly combine with the overall project. First, however, we present our last project logic, which seeks to enact ESC 2014 as a public project.

Public Project Logic

With the involvement of the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Denmark, the ESC 2014 is inscribed with and organized and managed through what we term *public logic* (Dredge and Whitford 2011). Financially, the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Denmark supported ESC 2014 with over €10 million. Public money was, for instance, spent on improving the access to the privately owned parts of Refshale Island by creating new cycle paths and erecting

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[7] Retrieved from http://jyllands-posten.dk/kultur/musik/ECE6663051/her-er-manden-bag-tv-postkortene-til-eurovision/, accessed Nov. 18, 2014.

[8] Retrieved from http://www.dr.dk/tv/se/eurovision-song-contest/eurovision-song-contest-bag-kulissen-1-3, accessed Nov. 18, 2014.

lampposts. During interviews with the City of Copenhagen, we were told how they were mindful of anchoring the event to some of their existing projects, for instance to their work of promoting Copenhagen as a tolerant city. An example of this was Wonderful Weddings, an outreach sub-event primarily targeted toward homosexual couples traveling to Copenhagen for the ESC 2014.[9] Taking place at three romantic locations in town, the weddings were to mirror the city's decade-long work to promote equal rights and diversity. During our workshop, which took place after the Wonderful Weddings sub-event, the representative from the City of Copenhagen described these as a "great success" (seminar, partnering organizations, June 23, 2014).

Also public "core tasks" (du Gay et al. 2012) were linked to the ESC 2014. For instance, municipal middle-managers were encouraged to "volunteer" for ESC (during their working hours) as a means of upgrading their project and event management skills and competencies. In the case of the Capital Region of Denmark, a large school project on the Green future of Europe was initiated to create stronger ties between Danish citizens (schoolchildren in this case), Europe and the status of Copenhagen as European Green Capital 2014. The winners of the competition received tickets for one of the shows. Both of these public educational "anchorings" were conceived as successful achievements by the city and the region. This was not assessed based on systematic evaluation, but simply because it had—or at least rehearsed—how core tasks could be solved through cross-sectoral collaboration.

DR, also a public organization, worked explicitly to create connections with and between a larger public. As stated by DR's relation manager in an article explaining DR's ambitions for the TV show, "events such as [ESC 2014, eds.] are able to gather the audience, viewers, users, Danes and Europeans in completely other ways than regular TV shows. It is a very engaging event, building expectations and it has the potential to purport a strong message."[10]

The engagement of the audience as co-producers of the show was to take place through co-creation, which DR defined in the following way: "Co-creation is about gaining strength and creating a product together across groupings such as businesses and consumers or artists and audience."[11] One way to involve live and social media audiences was an ambitious social media strategy and the use of the slogan and

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[9] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z39oZFQCbe4, accessed May 9, 2015.

[10] Retrieved from http://www.dr.dk/CMS/melodigrandprix/default2.drxml?*ur=nyheder/2013/10/30160105.htm&GetData=trace=rt3, accessed Nov. 17, 2014.

[11] Retrieved from http://www.dr.dk/Om_DR/Nyt+fra+DR/artikler/2014/02/18091559.htm, accessed Nov. 18, 2014.

official Twitter hashtag, #joinus. The joining was also extended to the live shows. As stated by the head of show, Jan Lagermand Lundme:

> One of our biggest ambitions and central themes of the Eurovision Song Contest 2014 is that we get closer to each other. Therefore, we reach out to all—each and everyone who wants to form a choir or dance in the show—saying: Come join us. It's so wonderful when we can stand together and share the Eurovision Song Contest.[12]

Valuations of ESC 2014

As seen in this account of the three project logics, much extensive and intensive work within both public and private collaborating organizations was invested into creating value and values in, around and through the ESC 2014, including—to name but a few—outreach schemes, weddings and school competitions, volunteering and training, city dressing and refurbishment of the Refshale Island. So far, we have argued for the need to see the ESC 2014 as a total social phenomenon realized through (at least) three different project logics. However, as we now show, far from all of this work was made present in the valuations of the event. In the following, we turn to the question of how to value such an event as a total social phenomenon. We first show two examples of how the ESC 2014 was valued in an evaluation report and in media coverage, which display what we termed a *quantifying* and a *debunking* approach to the valuation of the ESC 2014.

A Valuation Striving to Quantify

In August 2014 Wonderful Copenhagen published the report *Eurovision Song Contest 2014: Tourist Economic Impact Analysis* (Wonderful Copenhagen 2014). In relation to our understanding of ESC 2014 as a total social phenomenon what is striking about this impact analysis is that it—in passing—actually recognizes ESC 2014 as, exactly, a total social phenomenon. The impact analyses primarily determined the "tourism economic impacts" (Wonderful Copenhagen 2014, 4) in terms of the total tourism turnover, the number of visitors attending the nine shows, the number of bed nights, the number of jobs generated and the tax revenue, and assessed the satisfaction with and perception of the ESC 2014 among the audience and local citizens. However, on top of this, it also pointed to what was termed "intangible benefits (or costs) for the local citizens" (Wonderful Copenhagen 2014, 23). We learn that these are effects, which "are very difficult to quantify, like increased happiness, proudness, social cohesion, etc. These are effects, which increase the individual utility [of an event like ESC 2014, eds.] for the citizens" (Wonderful Copenhagen

[12] Retrieved from http://www.dr.dk/Om_DR/Nyt+fra+DR/artikler/2014/02/18091559.htm, accessed Nov. 18, 2014.

2014, 23). No attempt is made at quantifying such effects in terms of economic impact.

The impact analysis, however, does seek to point to their presence in terms of benefits and costs by reporting on a survey in which local citizens in Copenhagen were asked to voice their agreement with two statements. While the first—"I am proud that an event like ESC is held in Copenhagen" (Wonderful Copenhagen 2014, 24)—is designed to determine the intangible benefits of hosting ESC 2014, the second statement—"I'd rather be without it" (Wonderful Copenhagen 2014, 24)—is designed to determine the costs. In its attempt to quantify the ESC 2014, the impact analysis seeks to make the business logic present, while pushing the public and the creative logics into the background. Not that their (potential) importance is not recognized—they are simply too difficult to quantify and thus made somewhat absent. The hosting and the values of ESC 2014 are thus assessed in terms of economic impacts.

A Valuation Striving to Debunk

A few weeks before the holding of ESC 2014, a journalist from Politiken, a large national newspaper, called up Carina, one of the authors of the present paper. The journalist had learned about our research involvement in the event and was eager to know more about some of the expected outcomes of ESC 2014 considering the high costs, which were at the time slowly becoming publically known, as confidential documents and meeting minutes were leaked and traveled to the news rooms of the Danish media. In short, was this event really financially worth it? Carina explained that she was not able to provide any of the numbers or figures, which the journalist was asking for, as our research utilized a qualitative methodology and, thus, implied a broader conceptualization of worth. Also, Carina explained that such numbers were difficult, if not impossible, to generate, especially on such a short run, as outcomes and values may take some time to manifest themselves. For instance, the measuring of intentions to travel to Copenhagen based on the event could be seen as quite speculative until the trip was actually undertaken. And then again, how might we know if the trip was actually purchased because of ESC 2014 and nothing else? Such questions resonate well with event literature, in which the difficulty of measuring impacts and outcomes are well known (Ritchie 1984). Most often such difficulties are merely addressed through attempts to refine the quantitative measuring tools (see Barad 2003 for a critique of representationalism).

Carina mentioned how another possible way of exploring the outcomes of this particular event was by way of comparison with the previous ESC event held in Copenhagen in 2001. The 2001 show, which broke even budget-wise and was therefore perceived as a

success, had, for instance, no or very little collaboration, as we learned from the interview with Wonderful Copenhagen (interview, Wonderful Copenhagen, February 17, 2014). As an illustrative consequence of this lack of collaboration, all shops in Copenhagen were closed the day before the final of the song contest, as this was a public holiday. Requests from businesses made to the City of Copenhagen to have their shops open along the pedestrian mall had been turned down. Carina pointed to how current collaboration between many different actors had enabled initiatives such as the outreach scheme, the Wonderful Weddings event and the school programs. She suggested that these new types of collaborations could be seen as a part of the explanation as to why and how Copenhagen has become one of the strongest city destinations in Europe while also scoring high in livability and sustainability indexes. Perhaps the collaboration around ESC 2014 could also be taken into account as an outcome? In other words, Carina sought to challenge the journalist's eagerness for a financial bottom line by pointing to the multiplicity of the event and how it created value and values along a number of registers.

After a long talk, the journalist expressed her thanks but said that the Politiken, the national newspaper at which she worked, angle on the story was a different one. Next day, the article headline by the journalist stated "ESC will not be a money machine for Copenhagen."[13] In the article, a Swedish professor in tourism economics stated the following: "Politicians and tourism organizations often talk about the effects of such events, but there is no scientific proof of it leading to increased tourism or jobs."[14] The claims made by the article and by the researcher in it, might be true: That in fact ESC 2014 is not a money machine for Copenhagen and most likely, making a surplus had been an ambition with the Project Company.

However, as we have attempted to show, many other kinds of value and values were created in the hybrid collaborative efforts and through the mutual commitments of the participating actors. While the organizational setup of the event was innovative in its collaborative nature, the journalist asked for a less than innovative valuation of the event. More generally, the media paid little attention to the organizational setup and the collaborative efforts and outcomes of the ESC 2014, disabling media accounts of the broader set of values that Carina outlined. So while acknowledging that "economic over-expenditure" was also an important story for the media to tell, it missed the opportunity to critically engage with the current trend of cross-sectoral collaboration and its widespread societal impacts.

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[13] Retrieved from http://politiken.dk/kultur/musik/ECE2210342/melodi-grand-prix-bliver-ingen-pengemaskine-for-koebenhavn/, accessed Nov. 17, 2014.

[14] Retrieved from http://politiken.dk/kultur/musik/ECE2210342/melodi-grand-prix-bliver-ingen-pengemaskine-for-koebenhavn/, accessed Nov. 17, 2014.

The ESC 2014 may not directly or quickly have led to more tourists, a stronger city brand or job creation; however, studying it as a total social phenomenon points to "how this economy of gift-exchange fails to conform to the principles of so-called natural economy or utilitarianism" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 69). While this could be seen as a downside, as in this valuation by the media that sought to debunk, or as simply too difficult to pin down, as it was in the valuation attempt to quantify, it could also be perceived as an opportunity to explore and enable discussions of different logics of organizing, managing and valuing, as we have done in this article. In the last, concluding section we will discuss how such logics of organizing, managing and valuing may be studied in an engaged and caring manner.

Post Festum

Post festum—latin: post (after) + festum (feast)—After the Fact

In this article we have sought to destabilize the "known fact" of the ESC 2014 being too expensive by viewing the event not only as a glitzy song contest that quickly lost its shimmer but as a total social phenomenon performed through a range of situated and interfering logics, each comprising their own definitions of meaningful exchange, status, power and domination. Understood as a total social phenomenon, the ESC 2014 became more than a fun and colorful and overly expensive party resulting in a (financial) hangover. Combining Mauss's concept of the potlatch with Law's notion of modes of ordering enabled us to go beyond the quick conclusion that the ESC 2014 was too expensive and allowed us instead to discuss what cross-sectoral collaboration entails and what kinds of value and values such collaboration might enact.

Instead of quantifying the outcomes of this collaboration or (prematurely) debunking it, we attempted to "slow down" reasoning" (Stengers 2005, 994) by engaging in the ESC 2014 with methodological care, meaning "sustained and respectful tinkering" (Heuts and Mol 2013, 125). We have sought to achieve such sustained and respectful tinkering by seeking out opportunities to learn from, discuss with and engage in knowledge collaborations *with* stakeholders, rather than, say, information retrievals *from* stakeholders (Whatmore 2003; Whatmore and Landström 2011). Through all of this we have aimed to kick-start conversations on the current trend toward more cross-sectoral collaboration within tourism and the related fields of research and innovation. One example of such knowledge collaborations was the seminar held with the partnering organizations of the ESC 2014. We will elaborate upon this seminar and its outcomes in these concluding remarks.

Caring Knowledge Collaborations

In June 2014, one month after the show, the financial and budgetary scandal of the ESC 2014 was at its highest. Dismissals and accusations of fraud, nepotism and the wasting of public funds were reported upon daily in Danish media. This is when we decided to re-contact the partnering organizations. This time we did not ask them for interviews but invited them to a presentation of our preliminary analysis, followed by a round-table discussion about the creation of longer-lasting values and effects in relation to ESC 2014. This required some persuasion as media coverage had painted a very clear picture of the ESC 2014 as a financial scandal brought about by the incompetence and inability of the partnering organizations to collaborate. After many reassuring emails and telephone conversations where we stressed that our aim was to learn from rather than to exercise criticism, we were able to welcome ten participants, representing DR, Wonderful Copenhagen, Refshale Island Property Company, the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Denmark, as well as the national tourist organization VisitDenmark, to our Copenhagen campus.

In our opening presentation to a noticeably nervous audience, we displayed an early version of the project logics and their interferences, which we have sketched out in this article. We also pointed to some emerging cross-sectoral values, which we argued had emerged in the organizing process. Perhaps relieved by an approach which explored the ESC 2014 as meaningful, the oppressive atmosphere turned into one of cautious elation. Soon, discussions started flowing across the table as stories of learning, organizational outcomes and possible longer-lasting effects were shared. As some of the seminar participants had requested that nothing from the seminar was recorded, we do not have any footage of the discussions that took place that day besides what was frantically scribbled down in our notebooks. However, what we witnessed was partners describing multiple successes of various sizes on different fronts. It is perhaps not too surprising that each organization described their own engagement in the ESC 2014 as a success, but what the participants also pointed to were unique value and values created *across* the partnering organizations. In other words, the seminar enacted a version of the ESC 2014 where it had worked as a—admittedly not unproblematic, but still valuable—way to improve skills and competencies, gain new knowledge, make connections and change and optimize current work practices across the partnering organizations.

The above account of the seminar elucidates the three lessons that we have drawn in this article based on Mauss's notion of the potlatch as a total social phenomenon. (1) The account has displayed how the ESC 2014 was not perceived, organized and interfered with as a pure business, a pure creative or a pure public project. Rather, the

partnering private and public sector organizations engaged with it as *a hybrid collaboration*. In that manner, it closely resembled a total social phenomenon such as the potlatch, which Mauss describes in his work. (2) We exhibited how the ESC 2014 as a hybrid collaboration contains not one, but many logics, three of which have been presented in the present article. We have shown how throughout the conceptualization, design, implementation and evaluation of the event, the logics each produce certain values and ways of valuing which are made present or become "othered" as they encounter valuation devices such as the media, evaluation schemes and even the present article. (3) The study of collaborative events and other similar initiatives within, for instance, science and innovation sheds light on how Mauss's concept of utilitarian economy is unable to contain or appreciate something other than a business logic and the values which it makes present. It also points to how we must improve our ability to add other ways of enacting and activating values.

To achieve this, we must become in the words of Mauss "something more than better financiers, accountants and administrators" (Mauss 1925 [2011], 75). We exemplified the dominant valuing attempts of the ESC 2014 through quantification and debunking, but also illustrated how a more engaged and caring approach gained ways for the foregrounding and elaboration of multiple kinds of value and values. By showing and appreciating how project collaborators and logics *did the ESC 2014 together*, what appeared from the start as a meaningless consumption and even destruction of (public) wealth from a purely economic perspective was supplemented by new and meaningful interpretations and, hopefully, realities.

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'Tourist Price' and Diasporic Visitors: Negotiating the Value of Descent

Lauren B. Wagner

Abstract

Marketplace exchange is implicitly both economic and social. Participants in marketplace encounters assemble into multidimensional categories of familiarity and difference, both through the material culture object for sale and through the interaction between vendors and clients within their transactions. This paper brings attention to the latter through microanalysis of one example from a corpus of recorded marketplace interactions of Moroccan diasporic visitors from Europe with marketplace vendors. This example illustrates a repeatedly observed bargaining strategy: to explicitly or implicitly claim the category of 'a son/daughter of this country' (weld/bint el-bled) as an argument to lower prices. While vendors did not straightforwardly refute this category of 'descendant', they often did respond by introducing other—sometimes seemingly contradictory—categorical differentiations they found relevant to finding a price. This article explores how vendors and diasporic customers negotiate these categories, and how categorization become significant for the emergent value of the goods under negotiation. Through turn-by-turn analysis, I demonstrate how interlocutors engage with ideas of 'Moroccanness' beyond ethnonational discourses of belonging, in that 'doing being Moroccan' while bargaining becomes a negotiation of being 'Moroccan' geographically, socially and economically, as resident in or out of Morocco.

Key words: marketplace bargaining; belonging; assemblage; diasporic tourism; service encounters; membership categorization

Value of 'Being-Moroccan'

I begin from an assertion that finding a 'right' price is an interactional achievement. The concept of 'price' may be based in classic economic notions of how a 'market' facilitates the transfer of goods between interested actors, but finding an agreed-upon value for goods requires two (social) actors to agree upon it. As a means to set value, price

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situates market functions of quality and access to information as social activities that integrate materialities of the goods as well as positionings of the social actors negotiating for them. The possible social factors in play, or at risk, in any negotiation can be extremely diverse, and often go unchallenged between actors who perform this activity on a regular basis. The context of this paper involves actors who may not be so experienced at negotiating goods for a price, and whose inexperience plays into social characteristics that are nearly constantly at risk—namely, a sense of 'belonging' in a community, perceived by individuals for whom this 'belonging' is frequently brought into question. The interactional achievement of a 'right' price, then, becomes not only an index of a functioning market, but enmeshes with other perceptual indices about mobility and social community.

Drawing on 37.5 hours of recorded marketplace interactions between post-migrant generation Moroccan-origin European visitors to Morocco and locally resident Moroccan vendors, this paper uses one particularly explicit example to investigate a frequently recurring claim that diasporic visitor (DV) interactants made in the course of negotiations—namely, categorizing themselves as a 'son/daughter of this country'. Across independent participants in independent recordings, this claim to an ethnonational belonging-by-descent frequently reappeared in a similar sequential format: making the claim in concert with a request for a lower price. The claim then becomes a bargaining strategy, pointing to a seemingly widely held assumption that there would be a connection between 'being-Morocco-by-descent' and 'getting a lower price'. Yet this strategy frequently did not lead to a lower price; in fact, making an overt claim to a category can actually highlight the speaker's distance from that category, and difficulty in 'belonging' within it (Wagner 2015a). The task here, then, is to tease out what sort of logics DVs rely upon in attempting to claim belonging in an ethnonational category, and how that category has a value; that being 'of-Morocco' as a descendant, if not as a resident, might be 'agreed upon' within the process of negotiating a price.

Deconstructing these logics involves an analytic tactics of what might be called 'before category' (Sassen 2013a, 2013b). While I must present a context by setting out details and descriptions that categorize participants as 'diasporically Moroccan' within a particular historical time-space enabled by borders, labor power and debates on diversity (cf. Chattou 1998 for detailed Moroccan migration history), what I want to explore is how the notion of 'Moroccanness'—more specifically the notion of 'being-Moroccan-by-descent' as implied in the claim to be a 'son/daughter of Morocco'—becomes relevant to and takes shape in these encounters. The central crux to this shape emerges through how different interlocutors make arguments for increasing and decreasing price as an agreed-upon value.

That crux is shaped in some ways by elements that are not immediately apparent in the transcribed interaction below, but are part of the historical and ethnographic background to this site. These elements may not be directly 'causal', but their nonlinear influence on this encounter—like the simple fact of mass migration from Morocco to Europe, mentioned above—needs to be acknowledged. The first nonlinearly influential factor is the habit of this cohort to regularly visit Morocco. Many of them were raised in Europe and have visited Morocco on a regular basis—often with family, during their summer holidays—since they were children. This habit is part of what makes negotiating 'Moroccanness' relevant at all, in that these individuals are cyclically present in this 'homeland' en masse, unlike many other diasporic groups who might return less frequently (cf. Ang 2001; Stephenson 2002; Ramji 2006; Taylor 2015 on different possibilities and consequences of visitation and return).

Second, this crucial point of negotiation encounter may also be implicitly shaped by Morocco's discursive, political and economic position as a site for tourism (Hillali 2007; Minca and Wagner forthcoming). As a colony and an independent state, Moroccan spatial planning has fostered the physical space for these interactions to take place by preserving the 'old city' as a place to go shopping, and perpetuating the demand for souvenirs as an emergent and complex site themselves (Swanson and Timothy 2012; Swanson 2014). Finally, intersecting these two, this crux may also be shaped by a desire for material culture objects (which may or may not be characterized by the purchaser as a 'souvenir') that locate belongings across borders, and recreate a 'home' at a distance (cf. Fortier 1999; Savaş 2014). All of these elements are part of the environment that enables the analyzed interaction to take place, and are indirectly, nonlinearly part of how different dimensions and practices of 'belonging' become relevant in this particular site.

However, to analyze this sense of belonging using a logic that is 'before category'—that is, in this context, to avoid as much as possible predetermination by labeling what is 'diasporic', 'touristic' or 'local'—I approach this marketplace interaction as constitutive of emergent membership categorization, involving both social and material elements (Livingston 1987; Francis and Hester 2004). I focus on how participants make different threads of this complex mass of elements relevant in the practice of negotiating value (or the 'right' price) in Moroccan marketplaces, and then analyze, partially informed by ethnographic familiarity with this multilayered environment, how those threads might provide a shape to 'Moroccanness'.

Finding the 'right' price for an object becomes thus an interactional achievement located in and constituting this complex site (Schatzki 2003), reflecting economic differences, material conditions, social categorizations, and geographic dimensions that influence perceptions

of value. To frame that interactional achievement, I will first discuss dynamics of markets and marketplaces, describing my ontological and methodological approach to how geographical, material and social factors contribute to emergent agreement on value in this marketplace exchange. Then, I will walk step by step through one selected excerpt from a marketplace exchange to demonstrate how actors simultaneously negotiate the value of a good by constructing its materiality as a product of human labor, and their respective—and sometimes sharply differentiated—membership in a category of 'Moroccanness'. Focusing on value as emergent among all of these interlacing processes, this analysis indicates how different emergent potential and actual belongings in 'Moroccanness' become relevant as valuable, through the practice of negotiating this potential purchase.

Practices Making a Marketplace

Markets are social spaces. Considering markets from an economic perspective, this statement would seem to be the start of an argument (Granovetter 2005; Beunza et al. 2006; Fligstein and Dauter 2007); considering markets—or more pertinently here, marketplaces—as sites where human (and non-human) actors converge for interaction (cf. Geertz 1978, 1979; Stoller 1996; Curry 1999), it becomes a tautology.

While sociologists, anthropologists and geographers of economics have recently increased their attention to the social dynamics of markets—particularly in relation to global financial markets and new forms of technological intervention in trading (cf. Callon 1998 and followers)—there have been key interventions preceding this recent turn on the social dynamics of marketplaces, sometimes called bazaars (Khuri 1968; Geertz 1978, 1979; Fanselow 1990), as highly influential on how value is emergent in trade. The more recent work contributes many invaluable observations about the construction of tradeable objects and the mechanisms of global trading: the tangible and intangible currencies, devices and properties that emerge and are configured by a market constructed for their trade, and even the transformation of embodied practice to facilitate trade (Beunza et al. 2006). The older work is generally less concerned with the objects themselves and more concerned with the individuals, or 'middlemen', doing the trading: how their economic and non-economic relationships with one another and diverse knowledges about quality, supply and demand come to influence the process of trade.

Complementarily, each of these branches seems to take either the market and its objects or the roles of different traders as already in place, and focus attention on how the other develops under normal conditions. That is, those investigating the non-human actors of devices and markets tend to take the roles of human actors as relatively conscribed by the professional role assigned to them—regulator, broker, trader—and those investigating how human actors

engage with each other define the market space (e.g. 'bazaar'), and give a general label to the goods involved (e.g. 'commodities'). Given the dense potential complexity of a market interaction, it is entirely reasonable to enter into these discussions with some of the moving parts fixed in place. Yet, in the effort to approach this negotiation through a site ontology (Schatzki 2003) as an emergent categorization, I want to dislodge these fixities as much as possible to see how they are constituting each other through negotiations of value. In an attempt to explore how all convene to emerge in the course of interaction, I will juggle three moving parts: 1) rules understood as implicit in the geographical location; 2) semiotics and materialities of the tradeable goods under negotiation; and 3) personal and professional roles of the individual participant. In the next sections, I discuss these geographical, social and material contexts in some detail, in order to explore, in the following section, how different utterances in the negotiation might relate to how this geographic space fits in a global scope, and how this object construes both its vendor and its buyer into certain categorial logics.

Marrakech Marketplaces: Relevant Potential Categories of Shoppers

Through a cartographic lens, the shop where this interaction took place is situated in a pedestrian shopping street immediately off the central square in Marrakech, the Djemaa el Fna. That cartographic location puts us in the 'Arab world', specifically in Morocco, and in the city of Marrakech, cartographically located in this vicinity for about 1000 years. This cartographic and geographic location immediately implicates the 'bazaar'-style market referred to by Geertz (1978, 1979) and Fanselow (1990) as the context for shopping. There are many different types of cosmopolitan consumption spaces possible in the 'Arab world' (see Schwedler 2010), meaning we cannot necessarily assume that a shop in Morocco is a 'bazaar'. However, the cartographic location next to Djemaa el Fna implies the 'bazaar' format specifically because of the role of 'bazaars' as heritage in the 'Arab world'.

As the epicenter of a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the historical central square of the city of Marrakech, Djemaa el Fna and its immediate surroundings formulate a geographically precise configuration of cultural production and consumption. The map below (Figure 1) shows the outlines of the 'medina' of Marrakech that was designated in 1985 as world heritage by UNESCO, with the Djemaa el Fna marked in yellow on the original image (http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/331/multiple=1&unique_number=376). Through dense colonial and post-colonial processes of preservation and tourism, this zone is dominated by architecture, businesses, inhabitants, and users who collectively, continuously reproduce it as a consumption space for Moroccan heritage, both old and new (Wagner and Minca 2012, Minca and Wagner forthcoming). As with any central gathering place

Figure 1: UNESCO map of the protected heritage zones in Marrakech (1994)

in a city, it is not exclusively occupied by tourists or tourist-oriented consumption, but the overwhelming orientation of this zone is towards a tourism economy. This tourism economy includes both domestic and foreign tourists, but is dominated by rising numbers of non-domestic visitors, with Marrakech as the most popular destination in Morocco (Amine 2014).

The shop in question, selling original and unique painted artwork, operates from a fixed structure (i.e. not a mobile vendor in an open-air market) on one of the pedestrian-dominant streets that is linked by connecting streets to Djemaa el Fna. Its approximate location is marked by a blue dot on the map in Figure 1. The street includes shops of many different types, selling anything from nuts and dried fruits to 'Moroccan' clothing and textiles, to jewelry. Based on some simple visual observation, these shops do not resemble what might be found in neighborhood shopping streets elsewhere across Morocco, or even elsewhere in the Marrakech medina: they often include signposted written prices; many of the goods available have written labels or decoration signifying 'Morocco' or 'Marrakech'; and many of the goods are otherwise semiotically 'Moroccan', to the extent that their design style can be traced to this particular site. Otherwise, in terms of volume of foot traffic and location, simply based on its accessibility and proximity to Djemaa el Fna, this is likely one of the highest potential customer value business locations in the Marrakesh medina, and would likely command a concomitantly high rent.

Geographically, as a relationship between cartographic location, social location and semiotic materialities that might be observed here, we may conclude that this street is oriented to tourist consumers. It sells objects that are semiotically 'Moroccan' in some way, which adds to their value for non-local buyers but would not necessarily add value for perennial residents. That added value would be important to shop owners, who are likely paying high rents to have businesses in this location. Many shops use forms of commerce (e.g. signposted prices) that are not frequently found in shopping districts elsewhere in this region, setting this one apart as possibly targeting a consumer not commonly found outside of this geographic zone. Finally, it is selling predominantly non-essential goods—even the foods and textiles available could be considered luxury items and decorative for a specific audience that is interested in purchasing a 'souvenir' referring to the place from which it was purchased (Swanson 2014). While perennial residents do live in close proximity to this area, many of their daily needs are not met on this street. We can anticipate that those who are actively shopping on this street would tend to be visitors to Marrakech, whether foreign or domestic.

In line with these observations, the shop where the recorded interaction took place was selling original and possibly unique painted artwork that would fit into the category of 'souvenir'. The paintings

mostly depicted scenes of landscapes with anonymous figures that can be semiotically linked to Morocco or to Marrakech: desert landscapes with figures in traditional dress, street markets with objects recognizable as 'Moroccan' crafts, or more abstract portraits of figures in clothing referencing ethnicities and specific regions in Morocco. They appeared to be individual, original works of art, signed by a variety of artists.

This form of non-essential decoration as a consumption item further indicates how this shop would be oriented towards a non-local consumer. From ethnographic experience, I have not observed many original artworks like this hanging in households in Morocco, in comparison to other types of wall hangings like Quranic verses or images of religious sites, or likewise images of family or possibly mass-produced images of the royal family of Morocco. In fact, the presence of human figures in and of itself could be a significant indication that such artwork is intended for a non-Muslim category of client, in that many Muslims observe an interdiction on depicting the human form. Beyond that, the 'traditional' subjects of this art, and possibly the 'local' origin of its creators, indicate how it materializes a semiotic relationship between the place from which it was purchased and what it depicts that categorizes it as a 'souvenir' intended for purchase by a 'tourist' audience.

In terms of the first and second issues listed above—the role of the geographical location, and the semiotics and materialities of the goods being traded—we can develop certain links between object, time, space and experience. Beyond its emergent and contingent value as a decorative object, this artwork can have value for being purchased in this place, at this time. Likewise, it blends in to a geographically-specific experience of shopping in the 'preserved' marketplace of Marrakech, Morocco. All of these elements become part of the emergent potential value, which might be assessed at different prices by different possible customers approaching along this street. Yet, more likely than not, the approaching client who chooses to enter this shop and enquire about a price would be a non-local 'tourist', for whom the cost of this object includes the experience of buying it and the transportable semiotic materiality of the place where it was purchased.

Bargaining in the Bazaar: Creating Relationships

If, based on the geographical, social and material configuration outlined in the previous section, we can categorize the most frequent client in this shop as a 'tourist', we can then explore interactions taking place here, even before anyone begins to speak, as invoking specific categories of agents and actors—vendors, 'tourist' clients and 'souvenirs'—in how they relate value to an emergent construction. That is, before the practices of interactive communication—which are

often the data source, for this and other studies on markets—can occur, this encounter requires that human actors present themselves, taking part in creating this site of encounter in concert with emergent geographical and material conditions. Building from the previous section's discussion on geography and materiality, this section focuses on the third issue: personal and professional roles of human actors in relation to this site, and how they come to develop in concert.

Much recent work on markets concentrates on repetitive daily practices of what are usually professional actors. These markets—financial, commodity or otherwise—are often only accessible to professionals, so being present and active in them requires an acquired skill set in marketplace performance and a social network to facilitate success (Knorr Cetina and Bruegger 2002; Beunza et al. 2006; Caliskan 2007). Likewise, many of these actors are reliant on some kind of widely distributed stream of information (price charts, stock tickers) that produces a basis for setting and negotiating price, alongside whatever narrower streams of information and trust networks they might develop in competition.

Instead, this case presents one category of actor—vendor—composed of professional members who are individually engaged in practices of bargaining the value of goods every day in this location, encountering another category—'tourist' client—composed of a circulation of non-professional individuals who are each likely to be engaged in this activity rarely, possibly only once in his or her lifetime in this location. Also, in contrast to other settings, information about prices is by no means widely distributed—rather, it is often available only in face-to-face interaction, by reading posted signs at an individual stall, enquiring with an individual vendor, or being told by another client ('tourist' or 'local') an estimated price for a type of object.

These specific configurations of information flows and human encounters become key factors in how value emerges here, and constitute materially different relationships than those observed in many other market contexts. Instead of familiarity with the marketplace, its diversity of quality and costs, and the various actors in it, we have repeated iterations of vendor-client encounters, in each iteration of which information about the goods in question and about each other emerges in the course of negotiation. If we take this relationship to be between 'local vendor' and 'non-local tourist'—based only on the geographic and material conditions described above—then the main work of negotiation is in how these two categorizable actors use their limited knowledge of each other, and broadly different knowledge about the object under negotiation, to arrive at a price acceptable to both.

To delve in to how this process works, I return to Geertz's research. Following ethnographic work in the market of the Moroccan city of Sefrou (1978, 1979), he proposed a model for thinking about markets through their 'information asymmetry' and 'clientalization'. While he frames this work in contemporary anthropological style as a window into 'traditional' life, he relates his observations to contemporary economic theories about the role of 'information, communication, and knowledge in exchange processes' (1978, : 28). Arguably, these two intertwined and effectively inseparable factors—asymmetrical flow of information and preferential, long-term trust relationships between agents—can equally characterize current theories on markets as sites of human and non-human agent interactions in 'non-traditional' fora. Whatever technologies or agents may be involved, much of the activity of a market depends on agents' differential access to flows of information, and their potential for communication, collaboration, or competition as a basis for their networked relationships.

For Geertz, the information at stake included governmental regulation and public common knowledge about 'normal' prices, as well as more specialized knowledge on quality, availability or predictable scarcities that would only be accessible to well-connected experts as part of their professional skill (1979, 216-17). In tandem, clientalization referred to how the 'bazaar' operates as a communication network with uneven signaling systems that are smoothed by individual actors (1978, 31), as well as how reciprocities of obligation emerge through a tendency for repetitive exchange between certain 'adversaries' (1979, 218-19).

Geertz's model is a good starting point for the present discussion of categories not only because it is based in Morocco—specifically in a bazaar context comparable to the data here—but also because he draws conclusions on the importance of the predictable patterning of human practice to return repeatedly to the same networked connections for newly occurring goals. This notion of trust in a networked relationship is a core topic for some discussions on social functioning of markets, but not for others that prefer institutional intervention or assemblage devices as a framework for exploring markets (Granovetter 2005, Muniesa et al. 2007; see Fligstein and Dauter 2007 for more detailed comparisons). Yet all of these economic decision-making structures—whether individual humans, human-based collectivities or algorithmic technologies—tend to learn, trust and repeatedly follow the easiest pathways that can be predicted by past experience. In contexts where all participants are human professionals or purpose-built technologies oriented around a market, past experiences can be assumed to involve familiar and multifaceted

relationships between actors. As Geertz put it, '[b]azaaris are not projected, as for example tourists are, into foreign settings where everything from the degree of price dispersion and the provenance of goods to the stature of participants and the etiquette of contact are unknown. They operate in settings where they are very much at home' (1978, 31). In contrast, 'tourists', who by definition lack any familiarity with their bargaining adversary or to potential flows of information that would strengthen their position, must somehow immediately build that sense of 'home' and obtain access to information, in order to achieve 'value' in this non-repeatable bargaining interaction.

By itself, creating familiarity is a complex task of negotiating one's limited access to knowledge to determine value; communicatively, designing and creating face-to-face familiarity is an equally complex process, especially in this scenario of international—and therefore multilingual—travel. Sources from several domains point to how creating familiarity in bargaining involves specific embodied abilities in verbal and nonverbal interactional performance in different market spaces. Often, even in 'local' scenarios, these performances draw on multilingual resources, demonstrating how varying and complex social categorizations, often indexed and performed linguistically, become relevant to seeking value in marketplaces.

In Taiwan, Van den Berg (1986) frames code choice between local vernaculars and Mandarin as a key differentiation between neighborhood and upscale market spaces. (S)he concludes that shifting between codes indicates how speakers are accommodating to macrolevel characteristics of each context over individual social identity (1986, 108). French (2001), exploring contrasts between Maya and Ladina in Guatemala, likewise notes that access to dominant Spanish over one of the many Maya languages is essential to economic activity in the market. Even for speakers with fluent skills in a given language, marketplace registers can include specialized varieties of politeness and etiquette that require induction and practice in executing the genre (Khuri 1968; Lindenfeld 1990; Herrmann 2004). Kapchan's discussion on how claiming a shared religion (Islam) operates as a key bargaining tool for one buyer illustrates how—whether or not it is a specifically 'economic' category—social categorizations that emerge through communicative interaction play essential roles in bargaining value (Kapchan 1996, Chap. 2).

These manipulations of interactional resources often respond to contextually relevant social categorizations, and to individuals' goals to maximize the value of their embodied presentation as it comes into play in a marketplace.

Yet familiarity in bargaining is also complicated by the economic goals of exchange, and the presumption of an 'adversarial' relationship between buyer and seller, which presumably results in determining value to the benefit of one and detriment of the other. As much as interlocutors can implement practices intended to maximize their connection and co-membership with one another, they can also harbor categorial preconceptions on social categories that reinforce that adversarial orientation. For example, as Desforges discovers with British long-term visitors in Peru, 'monetary exchange is seen as based on pecuniary interest, it seems to mitigate against "authentic" relationships with others. When travellers are associated with money, they perceive themselves as identified as tourists, with subsequent inability to engage "genuinely" with place' (Desforges 2001, 359). That is, when financial interests are made explicit in relationships that these tourists thought were based on non-monetary bonds, the familiarity of a 'genuine' or 'authentic' engagement between actors disintegrates, and becomes categorized in terms of an adversarial relationship of 'tourist' to 'local'. While, anthropologically, exchange of value has long been recognized as key to almost any relationship (Mauss 1966; Otto and Willerslev 2013), the material format of that exchange can be vital to each party's perceptions about the texture of the relationship.

Pulling Geertz through more recent conceptualizations of markets and their devices, bargaining sits in an intersection between the management of the marketplace as a sea of information (both accessible and shadowy, institutional and emergent), the anthropological potential to build a relationship, and the economic potential to determine a price in some exchangeable form as value. None of these are extricable from the others; while price may reflect many sources of information, it does not exist outside of the buyer-seller relationship that sets a value on that particular exchange. This combination of sources does, however, enable us to imagine how claiming familiarity as 'being-of-Moroccan-descent' might be perceived to have value in this tourist-oriented marketplace, as a means to dissolve a perceived, and value-relevant, distinction between 'tourist' and 'local'.

Place of Origin versus Place of Residence: Bargaining for a Painting

Entering this interaction, we can establish how specific categories like 'tourist' or 'local' will likely be made relevant simply because it happens in this particular place, over these types of objects, and between individuals taking on these delineated vendor/client roles. We

can also establish how bargaining as part of marketplace activity involves differentials in access to information, which can be ameliorated or managed through relationships as well as through repetitive experience, and can involve skill sets, like linguistic competences, that require incremental learning through practice. However, we can anticipate that the buyer in this context has relatively little repetitive experience in making this kind of purchase in comparison to the vendor, who engages in bargaining every day as a professional. The buyer, however, may have experience in making parallel types of purchases, and may have prior knowledge or preconceptions of what the price 'should' be as a default, based on previous experience (cf. Carmon and Ariely 2000).

Likewise, the buyer may have abilities to perform linguistically and interactionally as a skilled bargainer. Yet, in this specific context of a highly trafficked tourist-oriented market, we can anticipate that a main difference between most buyers and vendors is 'place of origin'—those who are 'from here' are less likely to shop in this specific site. In fact, 'place of origin' has potentially radiating effects in all of the dynamics related to this encounter: linguistic codes and skills, access to information and a sense of social familiarity all relate to how the categories of 'tourist' versus 'local' emerge. In interviews, in fact, many participants in this project framed their experiences in purchasing items in terms of this problem of place of origin: they often felt they were given 'the tourist price', which is higher than 'the Moroccan price', and attributed that price to the fact that vendors could figuratively 'smell' that they were from Europe, or literally hear that they were speaking other languages (Wagner 2011). Clearly, then, these aspects of performance and practice are recognized by individuals themselves as being categorized in an undesirable way—being perceived of as 'non-local' when one desires to be perceived of as 'local'.

As we dissect this conversation, we can notice how these various dynamics are interwoven into the emergent development of the 'right' price. That is, we can pay attention to what the buyers consider to be a 'default' or baseline price, and what informational tools they use to argue for that price. We can observe how the vendor uses access to information and status as an experienced professional to skillfully bargain for a different price. Moreover, we can observe how, using the resources of bargaining, both buyers and vendor can position themselves categorially in relation to one another to justify their respective prices. That categorial positioning becomes particularly interesting in this case, where the potential category of 'place of origin' can potentially influence the emergence of value by shifting the relationship between vendor and client from 'local' versus 'tourist' to 'ethnonational peer' versus 'ethnonational peer'.

Methodological Orientation

My approach to this analysis is grounded in a methodological orientation towards site ontology (Schatzki 2003), or, more specifically, taking social and material expressivities as emergent, and exploring how they take shape along with each other as they emerge in iterating events. This analysis of emergence is based on the segment of conversation transcribed below, extracted from a larger project on experiences of DVs in Morocco (see Wagner 2006, 2008, 2011, 2015a, and 2015b for comparable examples of bargaining interactions). To trace how these categories emerge, I employ techniques for analyzing talk-in-interaction based on conversation analysis (CA) and ethnomethodology (Hester and Eglin 1997; Nguyen and Kasper 2009) to explore how the roles of different participants emerge through what participants 'do', turn by turn, through talk.

While most work in this subdiscipline of sociolinguistics focuses on analyzing how conversational structures function, some strands focus on the contingent and continuous emergence of social categorizations through conversational structures (Nguyen and Kasper 2009). Strictly speaking, along these lines of 'categorial systematics' (Stokoe 2012), the analysis here should rely exclusively on the different categories as continuously and emergently put into play by participants and demonstrable through a turn-by-turn analysis of the transcript. In this sense, CA sometimes paradoxically focuses on the transcript as 'objective' data, and diminishes the methods and limitations contributing to creating that transcript—from practical aspects of capturing voices (and sometimes bodies) in recorded interaction to the transcription problem of reducing many complex communicative signals to writing on a page. Like any method, this one is limited in that it can never achieve the unknowable goal of incorporating all of the factors an individual draws upon in accomplishing his or her next conversational turn. It can be extremely useful, however, because it forces attention to minute detail (more so by far than most qualitative social science in the making of transcripts; see Bezemer and Mavers 2011), and to patterns that might emerge across multiple participants whose conversations were recorded among similar circumstances.

The circumstances for recording this, and the other marketplace conversations used in this research (Wagner 2006, 2011), were thus approximately similar. In an effort to 'follow the people', I joined groups of DVs during their summer holidays for varying lengths of time (from a single afternoon to more than a week). Alongside the ethnographic and interview data gathered through this close contact, I asked some participants to wear a recording device—which was concealed, though the microphone was visibly attached to their

clothing—during their time spent shopping in markets. The person wearing the microphone agreed to be recorded; I considered vendors as engaged in 'public speech' without an expectation of privacy, and so recorded them and subsequently asked their permission to keep the recordings. In some circumstances involving larger groups, like the instance below, I had two recorders running simultaneously to later collate activity among different members. Though I had access to a video camera, collecting video data proved too intrusive, and so the lack of data on multimodal communication is a notable limitation to this analysis (though not necessarily inconclusive; see Wagner 2015b).

While the analysis below provides an extreme level of detail on how categorial elements become relevant turn by turn in the verbal sequential elements of this conversation, in contrast to most orthodox applications of CA I draw on ethnographic detail to describe the context beyond the exclusivity of the transcript. This is an attempt towards a more 'material CA', oriented to the geographical and temporal setting of this conversation, as well as the object under negotiation, along a spectrum of objects and contexts in its proximity.

Work on categorization systematics is likewise predicated on using certain contexts where specific kinds of categories (like 'gender' in speed dating (Stokoe 2012)) are implicitly relevant. I use marketplace interactions because, along the lines traced out above, categories like 'local' or 'tourist' are implicitly relevant in accomplishing this type of marketplace activity. My micronalysis of this encounter also incorporates tools employed in analyzing institutional talk (Heritage and Clayman 2010), where the professional and situational roles of different participants, as well as the place and time where the interaction takes place, are acknowledged in how those roles and places are produced, reproduced and innovated in interaction. That is, we may have some ideas on how markets work as institutions, as detailed in the preceding sections, but these individuals are also creating the market-as-social-institution in this interaction, and creating each other's roles as relevant to the geographical place and time.

My presence, of course, might play a role in how those categories are put into play. Indeed, my presence is taken into account only when it is made relevant by participants in the transcribed interactional sequence—a condition that did occur in some examples (such as Wagner 2015a), but does not in this one. The methodological focus is then on how the practical action taking place in this location—to the best extent that it can be recorded and transformed into analyzable data—might indicate how agents made relevant to this site are produced in relation to one another.

Transcript

Hicham, Latifa, her sister, and four other friends were visiting Marrakech as a group, very explicitly to have a 'holiday' in a place where none of them had been before. Amongst them, they all had family in other areas of Morocco, except for one friend of Algerian origin. After initially meeting the whole group while they were shopping one afternoon around Djemaa el Fna, I spent the entire next day, from breakfast to dinner, with them. We spent about 3 hours shopping, which included many shorter and longer interactions with vendors. The one transcribed here comes from one of the few shops where they made a purchase, which, as described above, sold original artwork.

This excerpt starts at about minute 4 of the 13 minutes Hicham and Latifa spent in this, the second shop they entered seeking to buy a painting. Latifa's price enquiry in line 2 began their second round of price requests, after they had already been quoted prices ranging from 400 to 600 dirham for paintings in this shop. I present only this minute-long excerpt of the whole bargaining encounter because it contains the most explicitly categorizational activity in the interaction, though other category-relevant elements continued to emerge as they eventually agreed on a painting and its price.

Transcription conventions:

xx	inaudible
?	intense rising intonation
,	slight rising intonation
.	intense falling intonation
/	slight falling intonation
:	Elongated vowel or geminated consonant
bold	emphasis
[	overlap
[[	simultaneous turn
(), (1.2)	less than .2s pause, pause timed in seconds
.hhh / hhh	outbreath / inbreath
(( ))	explanatory or descriptive remark
<___>	uncertain transcription
normal	language of turn initiation
italic	secondary within-turn language

Hicham, Latifa, Vendor, Vendor2; Marrakech, 14 June 2008, 1m40s (after about 5 minutes of already looking at paintings in the shop; H and L have asked prices on 2 other paintings which they found too expensive, and told V that this will be a present for L's mother)			
1	L	c'est oran:ge: saumon: rouge=	it's oran:g:e salmon: red=
2	V	=aš gulti ʿajbatək?	=what did you say you like?
3	L	ce qui est carré là, combien il peu txx	the square one there, how much could it xx
4	V	huit cent	eight hundred
5		(0.9)	
6	H	sowwəb mʿana temen mə[zyen afək ašrif	deal me a good pri[ce please mister
7	V	[ha huwa rah fih *mi*[*lle deux cents*=	[this one it's *one thou*[*sand two hundred*=
8	L	[j'ai mal au coeur eh	[I'm in shock
9	V	=rah *le prix qui est affiché mille deux cent.* [xx *toi tu as dit le prix pour l'étudiant*	=so *the price that's on the tag one thousand two hundred.* [xx *you you said the price for a student*
10	H	[na:: ((back of throat))	[na:: ((back of throat))
11	L	étudiant. [moi je suis plus que	student. [me I'm more than
12	H	[la maši hna, hna maši *étudiant(s)* [hna uled bled hna jina ḥəna bash [nfarḥ- nfarḥou bil bled	[no not us, we're not *student(s)* [we're children of the country we came here to [be hap- be happy with the country
13	L	[pire qu'etudiant, () c'est un bébé:	[worse than a student, () it's a baby:
14	V	[ḥəna *étudiant* ḥəssən min uled elbled yanni [ra baqe teyqrau mʿanduš flus. [xəṣek tsaʿdu baš yəxodi elpiyasa	[here *student* is better that child of the country because [(he who is) still studying doesn't have money. [you have to help them so they can make purchases
15	H	[hna:	[we:

16	H	[hna- hna bġina temen məzyen ʿandna elflus li- [*budget = limité* hna[, tem[en-	[we- we want a good price, we have money li- [*budget =limited* we[, pri[ce-
17	L	[c'est vous?	[it's you?
18	V	[ehn?	[huh?
19	L	[c'est vous qui ait peigné?	[is it you who painted it?
20	V	non e[h non	no e[h no
21	L	[ça c'est pas beau enh, () écoute,[combien	[that's not good enh, () listen,[how much
22	V	[les jeunes artists/[les artistes-	[the young artists/ [the artistes
23	L	[celui=là- celui=là pxx trois cent?	[that one there- that one there xx three hundred?
24		(1.2)	
25	V	[[<doucement>	[[<gently>
26	L	[[hahahahhahhhh	[[hahahahhahhhh
27	V	wa hadek *un metre*/() *carré*/	and that one *one meter*/() *square*
28	L	un metre carré	one meter square
(11.8) ((background activity – V departs looking for change for other customer))			
29	H	*ils sont qəṣheyn eh wullah*, (.7) *qəṣheyn bəzzef*/	they are *hard I swear* (.7) *really hard*/
30	L	Hicham, tu préfères celui-là toi. (.5) y a aucune [couleur	Hicham, you prefer this one you. (.5) there's no [color
31	H	[c'est pas les touristes *hna saḥa*°	[it's not tourists *us frie*°
(10.0) ((end of other negotiation in background; L discussing painting with her friend))			
32	H	šti, šti hna, hna ʿandna passeport **maġrebi**,[w ʿandna *la carte* ***nationale***[w ʿandna **kull**ši tʿaal maġreb/[() xəsna temen **maġrebi**, maḫəsnaš temen eh=	look look we, we have **Moroccan** passports,[and we have *the* ***national*** *identity card*[and we have **all** the stuff of Morocco/[() we need a **Moroccan** price, we don't need a price=
33	V	[mm	[mm
34	V	[mərḥaba	[welcome
35	V	[mərḥaba	[welcome

36	V	[[xxxxxxx	[[xxxxxxx
37	L	[[il y a pas	[there isn't
38	H	[[=((loud)) smaʿ elḥədara elhamdullah/ rah keyn eh:	[[= ((loud)) listen to the words thanks to God, there will be eh:
39	V	fin gaʿa din fi-	where are you in-
((L discussing painting with her friend; overlapping 4 turns))			
40	H	hna, raḥna ḥəna fi mərrakš fi:	we, we came here to Marrakech in:
41	V	la la fin fin katʿayšu	no no where where do you live
42	H	fransa	France
43	V	fransa fina blasa	France in what place
44	H	ḥəda l'allemagne ḥəda Mulhouse, tʿaref Mulhouse?	near Germany near Mulhouse, do you know Mulhouse?
45	V	Mulhous[e	Mulhous[e
46	L	[très loin, Strasb[ourg	[very far, Strasb[ourg
47	V	[xxx	[xxx
48	H	Strasbourg, Mulhouse, Besançon/ () *hadi hiya el-*	Strasbourg, Mulhouse, Besançon/ () *that's the-*
49	V	mər**ḥaba**. ari təmənalif.	**wel**come. give me eight thousand.
50	H	la- la/ [la/ təmənalif=	no,(.) no[no eight thousand=
51	L	[šhal temənal[if	[how much is eight th[ousand
52	H	[=*quatre cent dirham* la la walu. (.) la la la:.	[=*four hundred dirham* no no nothing. (.) no no no:.
53	V	aṭeni ***trois*** *cent*	give me ***three*** *hundred*
54	H	[[gəbila gultina *trois cent cinquante/ trois cent* rah	[[before you told us *three hundred fifty/ three hundred* that's
55	L	[[c'est xx::! trois cent!	[[it's xx three hundred
56	V	ʿaya ʿaya heyt njib fiha reduction [xx	hey hey cause I'll bring it in on discount [=xx
57	L	[trois cen[t, xxx	[three hundre[d, xxx
58	H	[šti daba xemsin dərhəm ma fiha walu,- šti daba ḥəna mlli kan jina ḥəna, katḥdəru ġir b *les cents les deux cents* makeyn ġir, ml[li kansəksiu šḥal	[you see now fifty dirham there's nothing in it, you see now we since we came here, you speak only with *the hundreds the two hundreds* there's not just, wh[en we ask how much
59	V 2	[ra mabġitiš temši lilbled nətana saḥabi	[so you don't want to come to this country of ours my friend
((several vendor voices overlapping))			

Analysis

At the outset, I can establish some roles and contexts extrapolated from some things the participants are doing, as evidenced in the transcript and supported in ethnographic interviews with these participants and in the background theory on how markets work economically and linguistically. Hicham and Latifa are a couple (supported by their collaborative participation in negotiating); between the two of them Hicham is the more fluent speaker of Moroccan Arabic (Darija) (consistent with the fact that the majority of his replies are mostly or entirely in Darija, and the majority of hers are entirely in French). He had volunteered to wear the microphone, so the data here consists of what was captured in this conversation with Hicham as the reference point for audio recording. For instance, Hicham and Latifa's five travel companions were also in the shop, and some of them were likewise engaged in enquiring about merchandise and negotiating but not recorded fully enough to be transcribed.

By examining what various participants are 'doing' in the transcript, we can easily determine that Hicham and Latifa are in a role of 'client', in that they are seeking to purchase something. Vendor 1, named as such because of his professional role as 'vendor', is the one with the rights to sell and the ability to require a price. As roles related to a linguistic genre and social institution of the marketplace or bazaar, the transcript of their conversation can then be expected to follow a basic structure, not unlike that suggested by Geertz (1979, 226), of offers, counteroffers and justifications over prices until they reach an agreed price or they each reach their limit on price without agreement.

We can also expect, following Kapchan (1996) in particular as well as other linguistic research on markets described above (e.g. Lindenfeld 1990), that marketplace negotiation involves drawing on a variety of social categorizations and skill in speech play to argue for each counteroffer. This toolbox can include any number of devices that engage the emotional performance and investments of each participant, which include their potential investment in being ratified by their adversary as belonging in certain groups or categories. So, while bargaining is functionally motivated by the economic goal of trying to reach an agreed price, it is complicated by the economic and social flows of information during this communicative activity, and by emergent social relationships that might influence flows of information or economic potential. The analysis needs, then, to examine what Hicham, Latifa and the vendor(s) do with their tools, actions and orientations in this encounter.

The first round of activity in this extract gives us some insights into a flow of information among these participants, and in particular the linguistic features which enable this flow. Prior to this segment, Hicham had made the initial enquiries on price in Darija. As Latifa and Hicham discuss their choice of colors for the painting, Vendor 1

follows up on their previous enquiry in Darija (line 2), and Latifa indicates a different painting in French (line 3). He replies with a price in French (line 4), then after a significant pause (line 5) Hicham makes a counter-argument in Darija (line 6). Vendor 1 replies to him in Darija (line 7), then continues to address Latifa's 'shock' (line 8) in French (line 9). This exchange follows a standard pattern of bargaining, starting with a price enquiry that can produce different possible counterarguments to that price. Neither Latifa nor Hicham introduce a different price offer, or other market-based information about price; rather, both of them frame their counterarguments as an emotionally distressed plea. Vendor 1 becomes the source of information on price, though he also indicates that price information is visually available on the tag (line 9).

In terms of language, the interlacing of linguistic codes does not seem to be remarkable to these interlocutors. None of them (so far) requests translations or interpretations of speech, nor indicates any dispreference for the 'norm' of code mixing that they have established. Given the broader linguistic contexts of Morocco as a former French Protectorate and of this place as a locus for foreign tourists, it is not surprising that this vendor would be competent bargaining in French (Wagner 2015a). Nor would a mixture of competences between Darija and French necessarily indicate that Hicham and Latifa were not resident in Morocco (Ziamari 2008). At this point, we cannot assume that Vendor 1 has information pinpointing where Hicham and Latifa live (though, through the material geographical configuration described above, he equally might assume that they are 'tourists'), and Latifa and Hicham do not seem to have any information beyond Vendor 1's claims about what a painting 'should' cost in this context.

The next part of this sequence demonstrates how the crux of categorizations can relate to how categorial elements are emergently, participatively linked together. Vendor 1's line 9 characterizes their previous price offer as the 'student price', which both Latifa and Hicham take up in different ways. Effectively rejecting that category as being relevant to the price for them, Latifa compares being a student to a 'worse' circumstance (line 11, line 13) and Hicham rejects the characterization of themselves as 'students' by opposing that with being 'children of this country' who 'came here to be happy with the country' (line 12). Before he finishes that claim, Vendor 1 takes up Hicham's comparison between 'students' and 'children of the country' by framing the difference in terms of 'having money' (line 14); overlapping with Vendor 1's financial comparison, Hicham requests a 'good price' related to their 'limited budget' (line 15-16).

Within this sequence, the notion of being a 'student' and of being 'children of this country' become opposing categories, hinging on a distinction of 'having money'. Hicham, in his nearly continuous talk between lines 12, 15 and 16, is drawing a connection between being

'children of this country' and a 'good price' for their 'limited budget', while Vendor 1 asserts that being a student is 'better' for this claim to penury as a reason for a lower price. While Latifa's interjection in lines 17 and 19 on a different topic cuts into this exchange, Hicham and Vendor 1 have now established a category that calls into question where Hicham and Latifa are 'from', and how being 'from' a certain place can relate to economic status.

The subsequent segment between Latifa and Vendor 1 builds in an entirely different categorizational direction, based on the object as a product of labor rather than membership in to any particular ethnonational group. Latifa is first relating the value of the painting to who has painted it in contrast to who is selling it (lines 17-23) while Vendor 1 counters, after another significant pause, by relating its value to the physical size of the painting (lines 25-28). Here, the categorization argument shifts from who the clients are, which was Hicham's principal claim, to the price of the object as a product of its labor value. Latifa links her price offer of 300 dirham (about €30) to it being 'not good' that Vendor 1 did not make this object himself, while Vendor 1 makes no direct counteroffer, instead prompting Latifa's laughter (line 25-26) and indicating the size of the painting. This paired response to Latifa's offer amounts to an outright rejection: there is no counteroffer price, only an argument characterizing the object along a different value assessment than that proposed by Latifa. Like other examples of DV bargaining (Wagner 2015a), she seems to be disregarding the labor value of Vendor 1's work as 'vendor', while also diminishing the value of the artist's creative labor in her too-low price offer.

The activity of their bargaining is interrupted by activity elsewhere in the room. In this pause, Hicham characterizes 'them' as 'hard' (line 29)—probably referring to the vendors in this shop, in reference to his own bargaining efforts and those of his friends with a different vendor in the room. Possibly in alignment with his friends, or intervening in this other negotiation, he calls out 'we aren't tourists, us' (line 31). No take-up of this comment is audible in the data, but it indicates the latency of 'being a tourist' as a category for clients in this context. Though we do not know what specific behavior prompted Hicham to distance himself and his entire group from being 'tourists', this distinction is clearly important to the multiple ongoing negotiations over prices.

The importance of this distinction to Hicham is demonstrated when Vendor 1 returns to him. Having just claimed to 'not be a tourist', Hicham continues by claiming to have 'all the stuff of Morocco' (line 32). He lists the geographical materialities of belonging linked with having a passport and national identity card—to which Vendor 1 interjects 'welcome' at the second and third steps in the list (lines 34-35)—then concludes 'we need a Moroccan price'. More

explicitly than in many other recordings, Hicham is using a logical structure (list of evidence and conclusion) to argue a connection between 'being-Moroccan' and 'getting the best price', where he characterizes 'being-Moroccan' as, among the myriad possible ways to essentialize 'Moroccanness', being a passport and identity card holder. He concludes this argument (simultaneously with Latifa's short interjection in line 37, which is not taken up by either Hicham or Vendor 1), by using an ordinary religious oath ('thanks to God') in asking the vendor to listen, perhaps seeking sympathy or affiliation (line 38).

What becomes extremely important in this negotiation, and in many others like it that were recorded for this research, is how participants' argumentation about 'being Moroccan' turns next from a distinction of ethnonational citizenship to one of place of residence. Vendor 1 does not directly or explicitly say to Hicham 'you are tourists', though perceptions of that sentiment as a reason for raising prices is often what DVs report about these encounters (Wagner 2011). Instead, he begins a series of questions about Hicham's provenance (lines 39-48). The series of questions begins with a problem-repair sequence (lines 39-41) when Hicham begins to answer the partial question Vendor 1 poses; Vendor 1 then repairs the question to the more specific 'where do you live?' (line 41); Hicham has a one-word answer, 'France'. In the successive questions on 'where in France?' and paired responses (lines 43-48), Hicham, Vendor 1 and Latifa (line 46) pinpoint a more specific cartographic location of their place of residence. The vendor concludes this sequence by again welcoming them—which may be indexing them as 'being-from-elsewhere'—and gives another price offer (line 49). Sequentially, he connects where Hicham and Latifa are 'from' (France) to the emergent value of the object over which they are bargaining.

In terms of the categorial systematics in play, we can trace, from previous exchanges up to this point, how the idea of ethnonational citizenship and belonging has changed shape as part of what might influence an agreement on price (as value) in this interaction. At first, Vendor 1 responds to Hicham's claim to be 'children of this country' along the categorial framing of 'student' that he had previously established, drawing a distinction between the two in that one has an assumed lack of wealth (student), while the other does not. Then, when Hicham reiterates his 'Moroccan' framing, by first making a claim about not being tourists (in French), then making a more explicit claim to the 'stuff' of Moroccan citizenship (in Darija), Vendor 1 responds to a systematics of being 'Moroccan'—and getting the 'Moroccan price'—by framing price through place of residence rather than ethnonational citizenship or descent. The categorization device of 'Moroccanness' is becoming defined along systematics that intersect, but do not necessarily coincide: between a descent-based

'Moroccanness' category that explicitly involves citizenship but also incorporates both Hicham and Latifa's linguistic competencies in Darija, demonstrated by their ability to accomplish this negotiation; and a place-based 'Moroccanness' category that involves living in Morocco as an additional qualification for membership. The claims Hicham makes do not meet the minimum for this systematics.

The next offer sequence repeats some of these dynamics, and finally illustrates some of the emotional stakes invested in these categorial negotiations of value. Vendor 1's price offer of 8000 (line 49) may be confusing, given that the previous price quotes were all less than 1000. It appears to be confusing to Latifa, who asks for information—'how much is 8000?' in line 51 (her only interjection in Darija so far)—while Hicham appears to recognize what 8000 means, by translating it for her (line 52) into 400 dirham. In fact, saying 8000 to indicate 400 dirham is an example of a spoken currency in Morocco (ryal) whose usage was sometimes unknown to DVs in this research, even if they were relatively fluent speakers of Darija (Wagner 2011, 2015a). Hicham's knowledge about its usage is an index of his familiarity with not only the linguistic code of Darija, but also contextual, 'local' practices of bargaining as a linguistic activity. Latifa's lack of knowledge on how to translate this 'local' usage (though she may understand already that she needs a translation of the currency and not of the number into French) highlights Hicham's access to knowledge, as he translates for her from 8000 of an unknown unit to 400 dirham rather than Vendor 1 responding to that question.

Hicham and Vendor 1 then continue debating prices as values relating to different paintings, until Hicham complains (line 58) about the scale of prices: always in the 'hundreds, two hundreds', 'since we came here'. His utterance does not definitively indicate 'here' as being a geographic or cartographic location—it could be coming 'here' to Morocco, to Marrakech, to this market, or even to this shop. Vendor 2 now enters the conversation—audibly at a distance from Hicham's microphone—in a way that characterizes Hicham's 'here' as being 'this country of ours', with an argumentative accusation about Hicham's desire to come 'here' (line 59). That response confirms Hicham's categorization as being Moroccan-from-elsewhere: addressed in Darija, but understanding Hicham's 'here' to be to the 'country', not to Marrakech or to the shop.

I have cut off the transcript at this point because this minute and a half contained the most explicit references to categorial systematics related to negotiating the value of 'Moroccanness' as the claimed category for Hicham and Latifa. The subsequent talk, however, also demonstrates how place and mobility become part of the negotiations of value. In response to this last transcribed line from Vendor 2, the conversation turns to discussions of economic hardship in France and in Morocco. Then, Vendor 1 argues for the 'logic' of his offered price

as allowing him to 'earn something' and Hicham tries negotiating a lower price by claiming hardship from the extra transport and other costs he would incur in returning to France with a painting. Once a painting is found in an agreeable object-to-price ratio for all parties, the final negotiations over it involve repetitions of some of the systematics discussed above, including negotiations about value as a function of labor of both artist and vendor, and further 'Moroccan' categorial systematics linked with Vendor 1's geographical and ethnic origins (from Agadir, a city linked with Amazigh ethnic subcategory of the Souss valley, who Hicham recognizes as having a reputation as 'hard' bargainers).

Once the painting and money have been exchanged, Hicham offers (possibly playfully) to send his boss to this shop when he visits Marrakech in the near future, if he (Hicham) can receive a commission on whatever his boss might purchase. Some of these subsequent segments relate to Hicham and Latifa's status as being 'from elsewhere', and possibly their lack of economic knowledge about labor value in Morocco, while others index something about their familiarity with social geographies of Morocco. In sum, however, they continue to reflect the difference of place of residence: there are no more explicit claims to 'being Moroccan' as itself of value in this negotiation, while differences in 'place' as value of labor or comparative prices, and as familiarity with social geography, continue to emerge.

Finally, reconsidering this conversational minute as rife with the institutional framework of the market, the categorial systematics demonstrated by this turn-by-turn analysis can integrate into the management of information access and creation of a social relationship. Being 'from Morocco' involves knowing key information, like how to correctly interpret '8000' as 400 dirham, as well as knowing how to develop sympathetic relationships in this vendor-client dynamic. While Hicham successfully demonstrates part of this relevant knowledge, he is unsuccessful in his initial attempts to create a shared membership in a common network of 'Moroccans': his various claims to 'Moroccan citizenship' generate replies that situate him as 'outside Morocco' (even while they are taking place in Moroccan linguistic forms). While he may in fact be getting a 'Moroccan' price, or at least a low price, in the final sale (purchased at 180 dirhams), he does so effectively as a 'person from France' who happens to speak Darija and has some knowledge about bargaining, rather than as a 'child of this country'.

Conclusion

Hicham's explicit request for the 'Moroccan price' reflects a specific and persistent notion, which seems to be common among many DVs who participated in this research, that a value for these saleable objects

is reserved exclusively for ratified ethnonational members of 'being-Moroccan'. His pursuit of that price only leads his interlocutors to draw on alternate systematics for differentiation. Rather than questioning his 'Moroccanness', either directly by denying his claim or indirectly by, for example, refusing to use Darija with him (cf. Wagner 2015b) both vendors index distinctions of place, pointing out that he lives elsewhere, thereby implicitly rejecting the full membership which he tries to claim and framing their price valuation for the object at hand in light of that differentiation. In other words, he does not manage to enter into the necessary relationship of familiarity as a means to a lower price.

Paying close ethnomethodological attention to how interlocutors are doing categorial work in this negotiation, alongside a piece by piece unpacking of geographic and material circumstances of the place where it happened, enables an analysis that explores value as an emergent, continuous and multifaceted operation. By privileging participants' ongoing (verbal) interpretations of each other and their material surroundings, we can interlace pervasive ideas about 'tourist' versus 'local' price, with a place where 'tourist' prices might occur, and individuals who are invested in finding and materializing the distinctions between the two. Their vested interest reverberates as well into broader circumstances of diasporic belonging in a 'homeland' and how touristic visits can contribute to building or dismantling a sense of community.

This interaction, as one of many observed during this research in which participants invoked similar structures and parallel categorial systematics, demonstrates how DVs to Morocco and marketplace vendors resident in Morocco employ very different frameworks to establish 'Moroccanness' and determine what 'value' might be negotiated through that category. While one group tends to focus on 'Moroccanness' as a shared membership, as a reason to be recognized as familiar with and therefore getting the 'right price' in this place, the other group tends to recognize 'Moroccan-living-here' and 'Moroccan-living-elsewhere' as a key distinction. In a global sense, this distinction is a salient one when it comes to questions of value for pricing goods, given that these 'Moroccans' are visiting from the same places as other 'tourists' who visit this place and buy these goods.

Despite his failure to achieve his instrumental goals, this interaction does become 'valuable' in ways that, as transcribed data representing (with given limitations) the sequence of conversation, it becomes useful to dissect how these categories are practiced in interactions between DVs and vendors in Morocco. Through detailed analysis, this particular marketplace—possibly comparable to site configurations in marketplaces elsewhere—combines into an entangled, emergent site, from its specific cartographic location and geographical history, to the different human actors and their potential forms of interaction, to the

material objects and how they can be compiled and recompiled as valuable. Most importantly, this approach prompts exploring a site as a 'before category', by forcing the detailed work of attempting to construct how agents accomplish emergent social life.

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Understanding Valuing Devices in Tourism through "Place-making"

Vasiliki Baka

Abstract

The paper explores how valuing devices and verification mechanisms such as user-generated content (UGC) websites partake in performing placeness. The findings are based upon a corpus of data including a case study at the offices of the largest user-generated travel website, TripAdvisor, a longitudinal netnographic approach and a conceptual review. Originally inspired by theorists of space we treat places as sites of becoming that are performed through everyday practices. In claiming that places become meaningful only in and through practices we stress the importance of treating rating and ranking mechanisms as generative, rather than merely reductive algorithmically produced representations. By juxtaposing traditional enactments of traveling, we are discussing how placeness has been transformed and how this has fueled a series of further revisions to valuing tourism. We conclude the paper by appreciating the multiplicity of performativity as being implicated in the algorithmic configurations on contemporary valuing devices and enacted as we read, interpret, write, imagine. It is suggested that although earlier valuing devices have evoked place-making in various ways, the rise of UGC websites has converted the travel experience into a constant negotiation process whereby both the value of places and the value of valuing devices are contested.

Key words: place-making; performativity; valuing devices; tourism practices; ranking; rating

Introduction

The paper explores the concept of place-making with the aim of explaining how the rise of emergent valuing devices such as user-generated content (UGC) websites has influenced tourism practices. Originally inspired by theorists of space, we treat places as sites of becoming that are performed through practices. In claiming that places

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become meaningful only in and through practices we stress the importance of treating rating and ranking mechanisms as generative, rather than merely reductive algorithmically produced representations. The findings are based upon a corpus of data including: a case study at the offices of TripAdvisor, a longitudinal netnographic approach and a conceptual review.

Rating and ranking of hotels and destinations has not only disturbed the established managing practices, but has performative consequences for tourist encounters. The practice of listing places on UGC websites affords an interesting opportunity to examine the nuances of *where* tourism practices take place and how they are performed differently or not due to the unique configurations of placeness. In so doing, and by juxtaposing traditional enactments of traveling, we are discussing how placeness has been transformed and how this has fueled a series of further revisions to valuation. Therefore part of the aim of this paper is to problematize the notion of place as a *sine qua non* of what we consider the "tourism product" and to contemplate how it is created and preserved once enacted.

An important distinction to note is between treating spaces from a Cartesian perspective and from a relational ontology. On the one hand, space has been perceived as a fixed territory, distinct from action; as "a container with pregiven attributes frozen in time" (Dodge and Kitchin 2005). On the other hand the relational approach acknowledges the dynamic nature of places, whereby places emerge in and through practice. According to the second stream, "places are like ships, moving around and not necessarily staying in one location" (Sheller and Urry 2006), defined through interrelationships between people and "stuff in motion", known also as the mobility paradigm. The paper draws on the relational approach and aims to interpret travel practices through the theoretical construct of place-making. As we will go on to show, places become where and when instances of traveling are enacted (in the lobby, on line, through magazines, in the imagination); it is the practice of traveling that allows us to involve them all at once and still refer to the same place. In other words, "touristed landscapes are places simultaneously perceived, formed, and reworked by activities of diverse people" (Cartier and Lew 2005, 5).

In our analysis we will use the term place, based on the assumption that it has passed through the notion of space and thus achieved a relational intimacy in practice. This is in line with Augé's idea that "the space could be to the place what the word becomes when it is spoken: grasped in the ambiguity of being accomplished, changed into a term stemming from multiple conventions, uttered as the act of one present (or one time), and modified by the transformation resulting from successive influences" (Augé 1995, 80). Spaces on their way to "places" are articulated and performed by being photographed and touristically consumed, or by being admired in personal travelers'

diaries and blogs or through daily mass media consumption in magazines, the internet and advertisements—or through a sea pebble secretly taken to be kept as a souvenir.

The question that arises from the convergence of these research interests is formulated as follows: how do valuing devices and verification mechanisms such as UGC websites partake in performing placeness? To this end, we first analyze the development in valuing devices; we travel back to the early valuing devices of the Grand Tour era: "vetturinos" and "bear leaders" and many more valuing devices between then and the UGC era. We nostalgically reintroduce the eighteenth-century "raree showmen", who wandered around with their wooden stereoscopic boxes offering people imaginative travels, and we revisit Urry's tourist gaze. We then shed light on the phenomenon of TripAdvisor as a continuation of previous valuing devices. We conclude the paper by appreciating the role of performativity as being implicated in the algorithmic configurations on TripAdvisor and other travel devices and enacted as we read, interpret, write, imagine. It is suggested that reviews and other popularity-making/co-creation mechanisms become co-constitutive of the multiple identities of the place and hence afford new kinds of place-making that absorb dichotomies such as physical-online and code space.

Theoretical Inspiration: Valuing Value and the Value of Valuing

"What counts? … What is valuable, and by what measures?" These questions posed by David Stark (2009, 6) have always been questions that we ask in one way or another in the different contexts of our everyday lives. However, Lamont (2012) emphasizes the necessity to revisit what value is and through which mechanisms it is produced: "[U]nderstanding the dynamics that work in favor of, and against, the existence of multiple hierarchies of worth or systems of evaluation (i.e., heterarchies or plurarchies) is more urgent than ever." Although it is admittedly a challenging intellectual endeavor for the various scholarly terrains to commonly agree what constitutes value and worth, what is of importance to this study are exactly the negotiations that happen during any (e)valuation process through rating and ranking mechanisms, on co-creation platforms and other ordering devices.

To this end we discuss in what follows value as a notion that has been approached from various perspectives aiming at better understanding valuation processes with the help of the theoretical constructs of performativity and place-making. Graeber (2001, 1–2), from an anthropological point of view, divides research terrains into three large sets:

- "Values" perceived in the sociological sense, that is, conceptions of what is ultimately good, proper or desirable in human life
- "Value" in the economic sense, the degree to which objects are desired as measured by how much others are willing to give up to get them
- "Value" in the linguistic sense, which goes back to the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure, and can be understood as "meaningful difference."

Seminal value-related contributions broadly fit into this typological device. More specifically, Kluckhohn (1949, 358–9) introduces "value orientations" as combinations of the desirable and the nature of the world (sociological sense); Evans-Pritchard (1940, 135) perceives values as embodied in words through which they influence behavior (linguistic sense); whereas Sahlins in *Culture and Practical Reason* (1976, 213) emphasizes the economic value as a meaningful distinction (economic sense).

In line with the "sociological sense", Marilyn Strathern refers to value as "the meaning or importance society ascribes to an object" (in Graeber 2001, 39) and in so doing she indicates the importance of making something "visible" when attributing value to it. Science, technology and society (STS) scholars (e.g. Law, Latour, Callon) as well as post-phenomenologists (e.g Don Ihde, Verbeek) emphasized a long time ago the role of instruments as inscription devices that make things (in)visible. Stark (2009, 119) in discussing the "accounts of worth in economic life" reminds us that tools count; "tools count insofar as they are a part of situated sociocognitive and sociotechnical networks." This well-grounded and much-discussed assumption has been fundamental in better understanding how calculative practices work and make a difference; or in Lamont's words, in understanding the dynamics in "multiple hierarchies of worth or systems of evaluation." By revisiting tools, formulas, algorithms, media, devices and any instruments we realize how they intervene in a performative way, rather than represent or mediate processes, which brings us to an important theoretical construct of the study: performativity.

Performativity

Performativity broadly speaking embraces how the efforts to represent a case shape it beyond mere representation and embody what they seek to describe. Originally, performativity theory roots back in "performative utterances", a concept first introduced by Austin. Austin (1975, 5–6) describes performative utterances as statements in which in saying something we do something. For instance in saying "I do" in the course of the marriage ceremony or "I name this ship the Queen

Elizabeth" when smashing the bottle against the stem we do not "describe" or "report" something; there is nothing true or false in those utterances … "When I say, before the registrar or altar 'I do' I am not reporting on a marriage: I am indulging in it" (ibid).

Moving on to the performativity of practices, Judith Butler is one of the first scholars to extend performativity beyond linguistic acts. She suggests "that a performative is both an agent and a product of the social and political surroundings in which it circulates" (Herman et al. 2006). Butler, having acknowledged Jacques Derrida's notion of repetition, explains that repetition "inheres even within an apparently isolated act or event" (Kirby 2006, 78) and emphasizes that when we perform practices we somehow act or think according to rule-bound settings that preexist and orientate us (with gender and identity being two key illustrations).

What lies beyond linguistic and gender performativity is Lyotard's "principle of optimal performance" which aims to capture the compromise between the "efficient" and the "truth" (Spicer et al. 2009). For Lyotard (1984, 11), performativity is "[T]he optimization of the global relationship between input and output." According to his theory, knowledge produced performatively gains legitimacy not because it is true, but "because it has a technical value associated with producing results" (ibid). This resonates with recent work by Knorr Cetina (2010) who explores the epistemics of information in the context of markets. Using examples of news stories and trading practices, she gives further emphasis to the consequentiality of performativity, framing it as "what happens through our efforts to explain what is happening." This latter concept improves our understanding of performativity in the specific context of UGC by showing how information can initiate responses irrespective of its validity—*if we assume there is a mechanism to claim validity*.

The markets have provided multiple empirical illustrations for theorists of performativity. MacKenzie highlights the ways in which financial models matter to our understanding of the economy. In particular, he explains how the Black-Scholes-Merton model has been entangled in the agency and structure of trading, rather than merely being an inert tool supporting execution: "the model was a theoretical innovation, not simply an empirical observation … its role was not always descriptive, but sometimes performative … An engine not a camera" (MacKenzie 2006, 259). Although the spatial configurations have been broadly overlooked in this context, Stark (2009, 125) notes that "trading practices are intimately tied to the deployment of traders and instruments *in the room*" and he continues by saying that the movement from the shop floor to the new-media space to the trading room was associated with "sites that were generating 'situations' by design." It is exactly this spatiality, or placeness if you prefer, that this

study wants to bring to the fore with a focus on how valuing devices perform placeness over time.

Performing Places: "Place-making"

Places here, contrary to a fixed Cartesian definition that separates them from the people visiting and inhabiting them, are always on the move, in a process of transformation. According to Hannam et al. (2006), "places are not so much fixed but are implicated within complex networks by which 'hosts, guests, buildings, objects and machines' are contingently brought together to produce certain performances in certain places at certain times." But how is place performed?

A helpful illustration to perceive the performativity of place is mapping. The act of drawing maps—the practice of mapping—is a key part of understanding the openness of the phenomena that they aim to capture. A first reading of their purpose would possibly define them as representation tools which aim to orientate their "readers" presupposing an agreed spatial reality. For example the Mercator Projection map was initially designed to facilitate nautical navigation. However, a performative approach "sees mapping as not only taking place in time and space, but also capable of constituting both" (Perkins and Thorns 2001). The performativity of the map lies in its multiple readings and departs from the starting point that we should treat it as a potential option rather than as the only and final representation. As Sullivan (2011, 102) notes, "what the map reflects is not *this* world, but an alternative one, with the map alluding to a world that will exist once the possibilities entailed in the map are performed." It is not the map that makes the place what it is but the place is made once we engage with it in following the map, in ignoring it, etc.

The ways maps—as instruments—are designed and drawn have the power to influence the places that they aim to depict and in a way potentially transform them. For instance the mapping of Africa has been debatable throughout the centuries with disjuncture between the cartography of imperialism in the eighteenth century and the cartography of colonialism in the nineteenth (Stone 1995, 226). Cartography and associated places, apart from acting as a reifying metaphor in the context of performativity, are also constitutive of what tourism and traveling are all about, namely places;[1] which brings us back to the notion of value and more precisely to valuation processes.

Valuation in this study extends beyond pricing, as the focus is on how signposts of tourism such as hotels come to be desirable and

[1] The 'place', as we will see, incorporates both the destination and the hotel.

preferable—in the sociological sense à la Graeber. Stark (2011) inspired by Dewey points to this movement away from prices:

> Whereas economists have long had time-sensitive data on price movements, we now (or will soon) have alternative (not separate but complementary) databases on the movements of prizing and appraising that register consumer attachments. These "valuemeters" will need new measures and metrics (Latour and Lepinay 2009:16). They can be quantified, but these metrics of personal value judgments need not be expressed in terms of money … These metrics are valuable precisely because they are metrics that are alternatives to prices.

This "soon" of the *alternative* valuation arrived a long time ago or has always been present camouflaged as trust, reputation and legitimacy. Value that is not economic is also made manifest in Karpik's judgment devices: "networks, appellations, cicerones, rankings, and confluences" (2010, 45–6). Networks are safety mechanisms (personal, practitioners, trade) whose knowledge minimizes uncertainty, appellations are brands, "cicerones" embrace the critics and guides that offer specific evaluations, rankings (either experts or buyers) are hierarchical arrangements and "confluences" designate sales and marketing techniques and channels.

In the context of tourism, Karpik provides examples and refers to official sources of knowledge production that partake in processes of valuation.

> The Lonely Planet series is encyclopedic in scope, practical … and supposes autonomous users. The Literary Guides … rank cultural curiosities … [Routard and Knopf] mark trails for exploration, while Michelin's Green Guides ensure the transmission of knowledge about history and civilization. (ibid, 70)

The Michelin Guides, Lonely Planet, Literary Guides and Rough Guides are among the most influential accreditation schemes. Such reputation contests are "social tests of products and organizations" (Rao 1994) that minimize uncertainty and establish organizational standing. Espeland and Sauder (2007) highlight the "reactive" and "self-reinforcing behaviors" that these mechanisms generate: "Reputational metrics and rankings are 'reactive' or performative by generating self-reinforcing behaviors and shifting cognitive frames and values over time." Power et al. (2009) also acknowledge the generativity of rankings when they note that irrespective of whether they are *true* or not they are social facts that generate actions and reactions.

But why should online ratings and rankings constitute ordering/ judgment devices of a different sort? Mellet et al. (2014) in their study of restaurant review sites as calculative devices describe the production of evaluation and note how these sites are combinations of multiple "judgment devices." This multiplicity in combination with the unique spatial configurations constitute online ranking mechanisms "ordering

devices" of special interest. Not only because of the unique affordances of the "online" but also because of the associated algorithmic configurations. It is what Gillespie (2014) describes as "the 'networked publics' forged by users and the 'calculated publics' offered by algorithms that further complicates the dynamics of networked sociality." So, algorithmically produced rankings are calculative devices in that they both organize connections, as well as establish the rules according to which these connections are to be organized (Callon and Muniesa 2005).

It is exactly this performative power that we are intrigued to uncover or in other words, what Helgesson and Muniesa (2013) describe as the reordering effects that the outcomes of valuations might have and the certain orders that the making of valuations perform. This study contributes an analysis of algorithmically powered verification processes to existing notions of performativity. As Kjellberg and Mallard (2013) nicely put it: "as world-making and sense-making activities, valuation processes partake in the ontological practices through which human and non-human entities make room for themselves in their environments." We therefore build on this stream of research and respond to Appadurai's open call to take an historical position and follow an object's "life history" as it moves back and forth between different "regimes of value" (1986, 5). After presenting the research design we will discuss the "life history" of verification mechanisms and valuing devices in tourism starting from the Grand Tour epoch up to the emergence of UGC and TripAdvisor.

Research Design

A multilevel methodology has been designed around a case study, a netnographic approach and a conceptual historical review. TripAdvisor as the largest travel UGC website has served as the unit of analysis with multiple identities embracing many groups of interest. A total of 100 semi-structured interviews were conducted comprising: 14 interviews with TripAdvisor at their headquarters in Boston and their European offices in London, 21 interviews with hoteliers, nine interviews with travel professionals, nine interviews at two hotel accreditation agencies and 47 interviews with travelers. All interviews lasted between 44 minutes and 1½ hours, followed a semi-structured format and have been recorded and transcribed.

Because of the intrinsic interplay between on line and physical while studying the device of TripAdvisor, immersion in online communities and UGC has been an important part of the study. Kozinets (2002) proposes an adaptation of virtual ethnography, netnography, as a qualitative research methodology that adapts ethnographic research techniques to study communities that are emerging on line. In this study, netnography has been adopted and instantiated in multiple ways: through being part of the TripAdvisor community; through immersion in a number of online travel communities and interaction with travelers; through communication with hoteliers who either contribute to the TripAdvisor community

and respond to users' comments or have somehow shown they are engaged with TripAdvisor. Part of the virtual immersion has been the close observation of a number of travel related sites, social media sites and blogs. However, what differentiates netnography from online data collection is the development of relationships with respondents over the course of the study.

The respondents who have been contacted on line include hoteliers, hotel managers and hostel owners and users, members of the TripAdvisor community and travelers and bloggers. Netnographic "moments" as well as physical interviews have been imported into Evernote, a software program that has served as a "camera" where files and snapshots of web pages could be captured and stored. In total 1849 notes have been imported and tagged into the database. The tagging of each note was the initial step of coding followed by a preliminary open coding procedure. After the first stage of coding, a more systematic thematic analysis was conducted. Following Attride-Stirling's (2001) coding techniques on how to build thematic networks, we produced four thematic networks with the use of "Inspiration" software. The theme that is the focus of this paper is "how verification mechanisms in travel, as valuing devices, have reconfigured placeness" (see Figure 1). The large corpus of data has helped in understanding the phenomenon under study but the story presented here centers mainly on travelers' accounts.

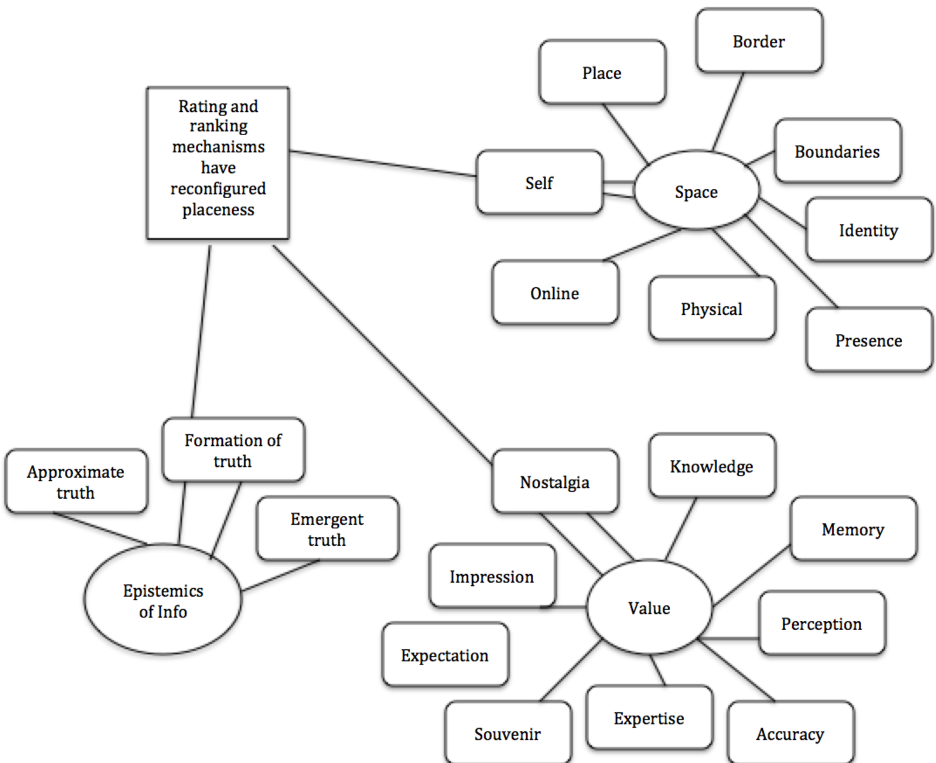

Figure 1 Coding. Theme 1: How verification mechanisms in travel, as valuing devices, have reconfigured placeness

An integral process in understanding the contemporary phenomenon of UGC has entailed looking at the historicity of tourism and the associated devices over time. Even though archival research methods mainly involve the study of historical documents, they can also be applied to the analysis of digital texts such as electronic databases (Ventresca and Mohr 2002, 848). Aiming at uncovering the evolution of tourism devices, a "conceptual review" has been conducted as a synthesis of relevant conceptual areas that contribute to a better understanding of tourism valuing devices.

To this end, a search has been conducted within the Thomson Reuters (formerly ISI) Web of Science around the term "tourism history." The subject search yielded a total of 818 articles. Of these, 30 were deemed appropriate to be included in the study. The inclusion criteria have been informed by the principle of moving away from quantitative content analysis toward more context-specific analyses such as the coding of semantic grammars (see Ventresca and Mohr 2002, 848). All abstracts have been read looking for references to the themes that have been identified through the netnographic approach. Coding and analysis followed three steps: (i) organization of the studies into categories; (ii) analysis of the narratives within each of the categories; and (iii) synthesis of the story across all included studies (Petticrew and Roberts 2006, 170). In the following section we travel back in time to unpack verification mechanisms before we look at the TripAdvisor phenomenon as it has been experienced through the case study and the netnographic approach.

Verification Mechanisms in Place: *Traveling* Back in Time

Since the time of Herodotus, Homer, Pausanias, Chateaubriand and later Grand Tourists the practice of traveling has been associated with seeking the "inner truth" through challenging personal boundaries. As Galani-Moutafi (2000) notes "they [the travelers] were constantly negotiating between the familiar and the unknown, between a here, a there, and an elsewhere." While these negotiations were happening, tourism practices were emerging, such as keeping notes, recommending places, crystallizing time through pictures and other forms, bringing souvenirs back to the homeland and many more.

The practice of the Grand Tour can probably be regarded as "the first extensive tourist movement" (Towner 1985) and the first significant accumulation of written "know how" about travels, through diaries, road books, maps, journals and letters. Young people embarked on the journey primarily to expand their educational horizons and to prepare themselves for prominent positions in society. Between 1661 and 1763 Grand Tourists kept diaries in the format of travelogues with information about the itinerary, the length of stay in centers, the total length of the tour, the method of transport, their

accommodation and impressions of the areas visited (Towner 1985). Eventually the Grand Tour evolved into what is known as tourism (Brodsky-Porges 1981).

As expected, the Grand Tour era had its own valuation devices, the "vetturini" who acted as travel guides and "guaranteed transport of the student's party and luggage, with pre-determined routing and scheduled stops" (Brodsky-Porges 1981). The *vetturini* existed alongside "bear leaders" who served as mentors accompanying young students on their journeys. Long after the epoch of the Grand Tour, tourists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries choosing accommodation would use the infrastructure available for pilgrims and merchants, mainly consisting of hostels and small inns along the road (Stretton 1924). Interestingly, assessing inns' reputations was an integral part of their travel practice. For instance, through letters later published as travelogues we discover that "The Three Kings" in Milan and the "Star" at Padua were preferred by travelers, as was the Faubourg St Germain in Paris, the Piazza di Spagna in Rome, the "Vaninis" and "Schneiderffs" in Florence and "The Emperor" and "The Red House" in Frankfurt (Towner 1985). These inns achieved reputable standing through the mechanisms in place at that point in history. Let us illustrate how such reputations became public with the use of a travelogue written before 1800 and reproduced recently (courtesy of Google Play). The author, through his reflective narration, recommends the Vaninis in Florence:

> If you should meet with anybody going to Florence, do not forget to recommend the Vaninis. We have had no dispute at partying and they behaved so as not only to merit the character of honest, but even something more that is usually meant by that word; theirs is an honourable honesty, a rare quality in hosts. I think we shall have no reason to complain of the people who keep this inn; they are women and seem much humanize and *serviable*. I break off this letter, as a tolerable supper is just served, and I am a little fatigued with the day's journey. No post quits Sienna to-night for France, so I shall take this letter with me, and continue it as I fee occasion. Sienna is five posts from Florence. (Sharp 1767 [2010])

These personal travel accounts served as an early valuing device in tourism. Other influential sources were "persons held in high-esteem" capable of minimizing uncertainty for tourists who found themselves in unfamiliar places. As Towner (1985) notes, bankers abroad often served as trustworthy sources of information about hotels, servants and places. Towner continues by narrating the role of the British embassy as a more formal authority: "The British embassy would often be the first place a tourist would visit on his arrival in a center. Some representatives like Horace Mann in Florence and William Hamilton in Naples organized assemblies and balls for the tourists,

where they could meet one another and mix with notable local inhabitants" (Towner 1985). Later we see more organized forms of valuation mechanisms, such as the emergence of published travel guides (in 1839 Karl Baedeker was the first to publish the famous European guide book).

Whereas travelogues presented information in a romantic, autobiographical way, guide books assumed the status of being "factual" (Dann 1999). As Wheeler (1986) puts it, "the subject of the travel book is the essence of 'being there', portraying places, people, events and the journey's progress"; and he goes on, "while vividness is primary, the travel book is also dynamic. The traveler arrives, leaves, keeps moving by boat, camel, horse, truck or on foot. The traveler continually notes the date and how many weeks or months have passed since he left." Moving on to modern printed guide books, the purpose and style of presentation have changed. Comments such as "luxury and elegant simplicity infuse" or "with sophistication befitting … " accompanied by price estimations and contact details typify the details one can find in travel guides.

As the lodging infrastructure develops, hotel managers attempt to standardize quality and value. The SERVQUAL scale, first introduced in the financial sector, has been adjusted to be used as a valuing device in the hospitality sector. For example, Zeithaml et al. (1990) suggest five factors of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Tangibles refer to physical facilities and infrastructure; reliability embraces the ability to provide what has been promised; responsiveness comes as the alertness to react in favor of good service; assurance is the courtesy of members of staff and empathy refers to the personalized and targeted service (Renganathan 2011). Through their inclusion into formal qualifications, the five main categories established were incorporated into the agenda for hoteliers and filtered priorities in what should constitute good service.

The adoption of "best practices" motivated efforts to develop more systematic methods of reputation making and performance monitoring. This included the standardization of different feedback mechanisms including the guest comment card, which still serves as a key management tool for hoteliers (see an example in Figure 2). Found either in the room or at reception, customers can leave their comments by filling in specific categories like quality of food, cleanliness, staff's attitude, etc. The comments are then internally analyzed and reports are produced.

		Not at all satisfied ← → Very satisfied
1.	**Overall Satisfaction:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
2.	**Value for Money:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
3.	**Front Desk/Reception Service:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
4.	**Cleanliness of Room:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
5.	**Room Maintenance:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
6.	**Breakfast Quality:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
7.	**Restaurant Quality:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
8.	**Restaurant Service:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
9.	**Bar Service:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
10.	**Pool Experience:**	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

OUR PERSONNEL

Was there a particular employee who you feel has delivered particularly outstanding service?

Name: ______________ **Department:** ______________

1. What would you consider to be the best attributes of your experience with us?

2. What would you consider as the areas that should improve for your next visit or which other service would you like to add?

Figure 2. Comment card (kindly provided by a hotel manager who participated in the study)

As part of a sector-wide effort to achieve an agreed set of standards and classification, extensive lists with criteria have been introduced and employed at a national level. VisitBritain, the national tourism agency in the UK, has recently updated the standards hotels should comply with in order to be ranked as one- to five-star premises. The categories include cleanliness, hospitality, bedrooms, bathrooms, food and service (see Figure 3). The exact mechanisms through which a hotel can achieve these percentages are explained in the reports and brochures published by VisitBritain.

Hotel	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
Overall	30-46%	47-54%	55-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Cleanliness	40%	50%	65%	75%	90%
Hospitality	30%	47%	55%	70%	85%
Bedrooms	30%	47%	55%	70%	85%
Bathrooms	30%	47%	55%	70%	85%
Food	30%	47%	55%	70%	85%
Service	30%	47%	55%	70%	85%

Figure 3. VisitBritain scores required for hotels, valid from August 2011[2]

For hospitality owners to participate in VisitEngland's[3] schemes, they have to meet some basic requirements related to number of rooms, serving of meals and bathroom facilities. Hoteliers have to pay a flat annual rate and then a member of VisitEngland (a trained expert) pays an overnight mystery visit to assess the above criteria and allocate a star rating accompanied by a detailed management report. For the participators who exceed quality of service within their star categories, VisitEngland offers "unique Gold and Silver awards" (see Figure 4). VisitEngland's report states about the awards:

> Hotels must demonstrate consistent levels of high quality in the six key areas identified by consumers as very important: A Gold or Silver award gives hotels a significant marketing advantage—they can feature the award logo on their website as well as display their award certificate at their property.

Figure 4. Gold and Silver Awards offered by VisitEngland as signposts of outstanding value.

[2] http://www.qualityintourism.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/New-Hotel-and-GA-Scorecard-2014.pdf.

[3] VisitEngland was merged with VisitBritain but it now acts separately as the tourism board for England.

Similarly, Scott and Orlikowski (2010) present in detail how the Automobile Association (AA) ranks properties. Besides being a marketing tool for hotel managers such ranking and classification mechanisms broadly inscribe expectations prior to departure and during the stay. These accreditation schemes have been in existence for over 100 years and now condition what most travelers regard as a four- or five-star hotel and set expectations for the hotel experience. For hoteliers, being a member of schemes such as the AA or VisitEngland is a recognized part of organizational sustainability. Outside the UK, there are over 30 hotel classification schemes across Europe, including systems of "stars", "letters", "crowns" and "levels." The Hotelstars Union, a body that aims at establishing a European hotel classification system,[4] arranged a meeting among the 15 members in January 2014 in Prague toward harmonizing classification standards.

The results of the aforementioned and many more inspection and assessment systems form part of the ratings produced by (national) bodies and in some cases are also included in formal publications used by travelers. All these traditional channels have played a key role in making the *value* of hotels, restaurants and destinations. The question then arises, what happened when their online manifestations appeared? Could we talk about an evolutionary transition of offline channels onto the web or would their appearance be emblematic of a more radical transformation?

The Algorithmically Powered Valuation Device Called TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor is the largest travel UGC website where people can anonymously share opinions about hotels, restaurants and attractions; a combination of click-button rating categories and user-generated free text. The click-button data is used to rank hotels and produce a numerical list through a combination of algorithms, the most important of which is the "Popularity Index." The Popularity Index produces a list of properties in a geographical location each of which is allocated a descending numerical position. This creates a novel set of relational dynamics between hotels, algorithms, members, moderators and content managers.

What began as a portal with travel information has evolved into the largest travel website with more than 375 million unique monthly visitors and over 250 million reviews. Its current status is so significant that many believe it is rapidly superseding formal sources of knowledge about travel and making traditional hotel accreditation

[4] http://www.hotelstars.eu/index.php?id=about_us.

schemes largely redundant. In 2011, UK Tourism Minister, John Penrose, announced that the official tourist board hotel star-rating system should be abandoned and websites, such as TripAdvisor, would complement any remaining traditional schemes. In an interview on the UK's Radio 4, Penrose said: "We would like to get people to use those websites rather more frequently, but also if the industry wants to carry on running a star-rating system off its own back that is absolutely fine as well."[5] The Organization of German Hotels and Restaurants, following the Hotellerie Suisse body in Switzerland, went a step further and partnered with a social-media monitoring platform to analyze reviews and ratings produced by users and algorithms.[6] The scores are then combined with professional reviews which in turn produce "a new star rating" for each property.

Much electronic ink has been spilled by bloggers and travel writers on guessing how TripAdvisor rankings work and especially on spotting grey areas of the mysterious algorithm. The TripAdvisor team provides support, so that there is a strict and thorough screening process of every single review in place to ensure quality. TripAdvisor's Director of Communications Europe said during our interview in London:

> Fortunately on our site we have very strict controls, we invest a lot of money and time, we have people reading each review to make sure it's not defamatory. So, strict controls are in place and that's the kind of day-to-day worries that show that what you are providing the consumer is good quality without compromising on the objectivity of the content.

Similarly, Steven Kaufer, Co-founder and CEO of TripAdvisor, in our interview in Boston gave his answer to how the algorithm works:

> We want our results to be as authentic as we can possibly make them. In the end of the day when you have 500 reviews its almost hard for an algorithm to go wrong but for instance a review written 4 years ago in our system doesn't carry the weight that a review written yesterday does. You know, if I told you exactly the weighting it wouldn't be meaningful to you, it's not particularly meaningful to me.

Irrespective of the extent to which the algorithms make visible stories tourists can resonate with, or in other words having in mind Knorr Cetina's "epistemics of information" irrespective of the *validity* of stories produced on line, tourists have been engaging with the TripAdvisor device as if it were a pivotal piece of their travel experience. Many confessed they do not go on a trip or visit any place without checking TripAdvisor first. They even go on to add that UGC

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[5] http://www.breakingtravelnews.com/news/article/government-to-abandon-hotel-star-rating-system/

[6] http://www.tnooz.com/article/germany-overhauls-hotel-star-rating-system-combines-pro-and-user-reviews/

has served as a life jacket: "Trip Advisor saved me from staying at a hotel in a bad location in Lisbon", says a participant in one of our interactions. Another user notes, "I don't have to go blindly on a trip. I can know just about everything I need to know or choose to know before I book."

From the hoteliers' side, it is about negotiating reality. A general manager from a hotel in Mexico aptly sums up the relationship between reality and engaging with TripAdvisor: "One must realize that irrespective of what we may think is the 'reality' … the reviewer has submitted their 'reality', and it is our goal to somehow close the *gap* if any between our intended reality and the guests perceived reality." The perceived realities as shared by others is what tourists of all ages care about. Discussions with participants of the study made clear that contemporary tourists perform meta-evaluations, in that they not only care about the places that are ranked and rated but they also have certain expectations from the valuing device of TripAdvisor as opposed to its predecessors. Below, a participant comments on the nature of content that can be found on TripAdvisor but not in "official" travel guides:

> That restaurant is great is not enough info. Do they give senior discounts? Can we wear jeans? Do they have high chairs? Would I look weird if I was eating alone? Is it a romantic place? Every sub-group has their own list of requirements. Very dynamic!

A common pattern that is found in most conversations with travelers:

> [And] this is just as important as ratings, the reviews give you details about the accommodations that you just don't get in short, summary reviews in AAA books or travel books. You might find out that there is a great bagel shop just 1/4 mile from the motel. Or that the hotel has tennis courts, and will lend you rackets. Or that during ski season, a particular resort hotel is a singles heaven, but that it's great for families in the summer.

Similarly another user commented with humor about what in his opinion travel guides fail to achieve:

> Because the travel books give one short perspective watered down to a short sentence that is often filled with ridiculous and useless comments like my personal favorite "the hotel lacked soul" now what the h*** is THAT supposed to mean? Turned out it meant the staff were rude and tried their best to rip you off, the rooms were dirty and there was no hot water. Hmm—why couldn't they have just said that?

Users contribute reviews about places in an effort to negotiate their multiple accounts and to communicate either the dark sides that cannot be found elsewhere or the bright ones that no one else cares to present:

> You read a description of a hotel on its site or other sites that are commercially linked to it and it sounds like the Garden of Eden. You check on user-generated websites and the place is a dump. Commercial sites cannot be trusted to be unbiased and objective. People always trust word of mouth endorsements a great deal. If someone tells me the new restaurant down the street is great … I will probably go and try it.

Interestingly, it is not only the disparity between official and unofficial or objective and subjective content that differentiates TripAdvisor, but it is rather more complex than that. TripAdvisor is a valuing device in its own right. It appears infinitely malleable in the hands of users/ tourists and somehow invites them to be creative in how they afford new possibilities of engagement. One of those moments of creativity was what the Community and Forum specialists described during the focus group in London, with a user seeking for updates on the construction of a hotel.

> It was on the English forum I think, somebody who was going to stay in a hotel but it was a new hotel and they hadn't finished building it yet and they were on the forum asking has anyone been there? Do you know is it finished? I'm going in 2 weeks time and I'm terrified I'm gonna turn up and it's a building site. And on the English site there was somebody who was living there who was going and taking photographs every day and putting up photographs of all the stages of the building, so that people would know whether their rooms were built yet. I just thought it was fabulous (TA focus group, Community and Forum specialists).

Users on TripAdvisor share their own realities about places and in so doing they make places. In some cases travelers have "discovered" places because of reviews on TripAdvisor or they have changed their decisions about visiting a place:

> Gotten lots of good tips on nice hotels through TripAdvisor. Found hotels I would never have found in other ways … I think that Internet has changed the choices we make and the cities we visit, said a user.

It is not only the choices and perceptions that change, but also the ways in which users engage with the mechanisms in place. Mellet et al. (2014) discuss how the emergence of a new consumer voice—online restaurant review sites—has epitomized an era of "empowerment" and "democratization." Users in our study have referred to empowerment in the form of intervention. A TripAdvisor user narrates why she contributes content about her hometown:

> My own town gets a very bad press. There are serious misconceptions that it is a dangerous city and that there are no viable attractions. I contribute to correct such negative and damaging stereotypes and to encourage people to visit my wonderful city.

The contributor is hoping to change the way that a place—her hometown—is perceived. This is what value means to her.

When participants talk about practicing TripAdvisor, they seem to ignore the dichotomy between physical and on line. They are aware of how editorial decisions in guide books and official marketing campaigns promote their specific agendas, but the algorithmic configurations become somehow invisible and the stories that accompany scores simply mingle with physical places and make such dichotomies unproductive and irrelevant. Similarly, sharing experiences with fellow travelers and consuming others' stories—reviews—has become an inseparable part of the travel experience. "My friends joke that I gain such pleasure from planning vacations that the actual trip is anticlimactic", said a user, while another summarized how the before, during and after of the travel experience mingle and become inseparable:

> Travel Experience means everything from planning to memories long after the actual event. At the moment, I'm preparing for a Fear of Flying Course. I'm doing hypnosis, I'm learning to relax. This, for me, is all part of a travel experience. I am traveling across the country to do this flying course and will be staying in a hotel for two nights. And even planning my holidays this year, looking at maps, researching trips, these are all part of the experience.

A traveler and destination expert on TripAdvisor shared in one of our online interactions how she started traveling before the feet performed the journey through the pages of National Geographic and pictures of the Eiffel Tower:

> Travel means seeing, experiencing, and learning other parts of the world, as well as a break from ordinary daily routine life. I first got interested in travel when I was 13 and still going to school. My teacher that year drew me a picture of the Eiffel Tower, and told me about the time that he went to Paris and had lunch right there on the Eiffel Tower. I also used to go to both the local public and school libraries and took books out about different countries, as well as National Geographic magazines.

Another traveler shared his version of traveling through reviewing and remembering:

> [A]lso I travel vicariously through my contributions … someone asks … where can I have a nice lunch in Buenos Aires … I start thinking … hmmm … the Café Tortoni or Café Biela … and I am mentally back sitting outside at a table … drinking a café con leche and eating a Sandwich de Miga … The questions and answers help me relive good and at times bad experiences.

Users on TripAdvisor consume places in multiple ways. They read and write stories about distant and familiar places—destinations, hotels, attractions—they interact with travelers and hoteliers and negotiate

truth, they make the invisible visible, they trust, they believe, they value, they doubt: *they make places*. As we move from the embassy and the *vetturini* to the crowd that submits reviews and scores about places, we observe how the practices of valuation have changed along with what is considered to be valued. These transformations have not occurred in a linear way, nor has any device replaced the other in any straightforward way. Somehow they all coexist while different weights are being attributed to them, which in turn influence how value is perceived. For instance, TripAdvisor stories are similar to the travel diaries of the Grand Tour and possibly the same stories that tourists write on guest comment cards. Nevertheless, they all matter differently due to the complex configurations of the broader mechanisms of which they are part. Irrespective of the specificities of each valuing mechanism, what they all have in common is the self-reinforcing behaviors they put in motion; feedback mechanisms and assessment schemes are two sides of the same coin (see Table 1 for a summary).

Age	**Valuing devices**	**Mechanisms**
Grand Tour	Diaries and travelogues *Vetturini* and bear leaders	Autobiographical travel accounts and first travel guides introduce early travel practices
1500–1600s	Letters, travelogues, personal accounts Bankers and ambassadors	Formal and informal sources shape reputations about places and minimize uncer- tainty
1893	Published travel guides	Information is presented as factual
1980s	SERVQUAL	Institutionalization of best practices
1900–	Emergence of **Michelin Guides and other** national classification systems and accreditation schemes	Formal authorities perform assessments and define standards
1990–	Guest comment cards	Feedback mechanisms in evaluating service
2000–	UGC and the crowd Ratings, rankings and algorithms	Bottom-up creation of lists, yet algorithmically configured
2004–	Hybrid systems	Experts, travelers and algorithms co-produce contemporary standards, evaluate and create expectations

Table 1. Valuing devices over the years.

But the question remains: Could we talk about an evolutionary transition of offline channels onto the web or would TripAdvisor's (and other UGC websites') emergence be emblematic of a more radical transformation? In the next section we discuss how UGC might depart from previous valuing devices and effect new kinds of place-making.

Place-making: Are Places Performed Differently as Valuing Devices Evolve?

Before we enter into our discussion of place-making and its relationship to valuation, we first need to grasp the multiplicity that characterizes performing a place through traveling. In the following published review, a user on TripAdvisor shares his/her experience:

> From the fast response of the first email contact, Sebastien and staff demonstrated how they have earned the top slot in the Angkor area. From lemongrass tea upon arrival, fun and friendly tuk-tuk transportation, stylish accommodations, relaxing garden and pool, Khmer bedtime stories, to secret gifts upon checkout! We WILL be back to this charming hotel. They exceeded our expectations by paying attention to the small details that are appreciated rather than getting distracted by the big ones that don't really matter. Thanks for a perfect weekend! (User review posted on TripAdvisor)

The above story involves multiple spatial arrangements. From a Cartesian perspective that treats spaces as geographic containers we would say that the experience started within the premises of the hotel and then transferred to the internet through the review posted as a representation. However, having adopted a relational approach, we understand the hotel as one place that is enacted in multiple ways. Hence, we claim that a separation between off line and on line, between physical territories and their online manifestations, would be a misleading bifurcation. The two interrelated enactments –which are actually one and not two—are—or is—a co-constitutive whole that becomes a place for negotiating what the travel experience is and what the place becomes in infinite ways. This infinite variety of becoming a place that has been informed since the emergence of UGC has in turn propelled us to emphasize the enactment of placeness as integral to contemporary valuation practices.

The cornerstone of the argument is that places are enacted while practicing them in infinite ways and combinations. When travelers (from Grand Tourists to modern travelers) share their experience of traveling, with or without ratings, they not only refer back to the place as it was as if it stopped becoming when they physically left it, but they keep *making* the place. By embracing this multiplicity we achieve a revised understanding of place as at once whole and multiple in practice and we give further meaning to the tourist gaze. John Urry (1990) introduces the notion of the tourist gaze to theoretically frame

the touristic experiences travelers gain while encountering sights, nature, buildings. Examples of the object of the tourist gaze include "a landscape (Lake District), a townscape (Chester), an ethnic group (Maoris in Rotorua, New Zealand), a lifestyle (the wild west), historical artifacts (Canterbury Cathedral or Wigan Pier), bases of recreation (golf courses at St Andrews), or simply sun, sand and sea (Majorca)" (Urry 2002, 51).[7] The tourist gaze reminds us of what Haraway (1991, 191) notes about eyes being "active perceptual systems, building in translation and in specific ways of seeing, that is ways of life", or if we paraphrase her, that is ways of traveling.

In other words, travelers explore places, gaze at them, inhabit them temporarily, interact with their constitutive elements: people, buildings, nature, culture, etc.—check-in on line and off line, rate them and as they practice places they recreate them in interesting ways. In this sense places on TripAdvisor and UGC websites are "open places" and undifferentiated from their physical manifestations. As incoming information is shared on line, the places are reconfigured through algorithms, and valuation is enacted in ways that have the potential to further transform another interrelated enactment of places, which is our visit to them. TripAdvisor as another enactment of the hotel as an open place has somehow absorbed the duality between physical and online. The tourist gaze has been practiced on line with different outcomes for places. Dodge and Kitchin (2004) in their analysis of electronic and physical interrelationships between code and space emphasize the becoming nature:

> [c]ode/space is constantly in a state of becoming, produced through individual performance and social interactions that are mediated, consciously or unconsciously, in relation to the mutual constitution of code/space. [T]he nature and production of code/space are never fixed, but shift with place, time, and context.

As the geographer Doreen Massey (2005, 140–1) argues we are witnessing "the way that very diverse elements that cross categories such as the natural or social come together to foster a particular 'here and now'. This is what makes places specific—this gathering of diverse entities into relation", and not the artificial dichotomies like offline-online. Practices do not happen in places but along with them, they are co-constitutive. For example a hotel as a "thing" in a territory does not mean much, until travelers visit it, take pictures of it, experience its service, interact with the staff and most recently write about it on the internet. What place means is perpetually negotiated, as with every phenomenon in a state of becoming. Simonsen notes that "places are meeting points, moments or conjunctures, where social practices and

[7] In the 2nd ed. Urry discusses how mobility and new technologies have advanced the practice of gazing.

trajectories, spatial narratives and moving or fixed materialities meet up and form configurations that are continuously under transformation and negotiation" (2008, 22). With the emergence of UGC the places where these negotiations occur have been enacted differently. What place becomes at any one time is produced through its constitutive relations. Participants in the study confirmed their experience of traveling as such.

Travelers shared about their imaginary travels through pictures and books. Having lunch on the Eiffel Tower is a strong evocation; even the act of talking about it creates the place both for the narrator and the listener. While the place is being created, the desire to visit the romantic scene and become part of it becomes more intensive. We suggest that in some extraordinary way, traveling is enacted when "listening" to a story. The travel to Eiffel Tower and many more happened while looking at pictures and the pages of National Geographic. After some time, the reader herself became part of the travel experience for other travelers when she wrote hundreds of reviews and forum posts on TripAdvisor. This discussion reminds us of Nicholas Negroponte's (1995, 165) words:

> Digital living will include less and less dependence upon being in a specific place at a specific time, and the transmission of place itself will start to become possible. If I could really look out the electronic window of my living room in Boston and see the Alps, hear the cowbells, and smell the (digital) manure in summer, in a way I am very much in Switzerland.

Imagination is thus encapsulated within (and overflows) practice while traveling is enacted in innumerable ways. Travelers can make the journey before or after the feet perform it. Travel is performed and enacted via storytelling, through narrating and listening, viewing and reviewing. The use of "listening" in the context of UGC postings functions as a reifying metaphor. Ingold explains that "to read is not just to listen but to remember. If writing speaks it does so with the voices of the past, which the reader hears as though he were present in their midst" (2007, 15). The iconic travel through stories is a performance of (re-)creation too. Solnit (2001, 72) notes that "to write is to carve a new path through the terrain of the imagination, or to point out new features on a familiar route. To read is to travel through that terrain with the author as guide." What TripAdvisor and other valuing devices achieve is the production of combinations of people and relationships that would not otherwise emerge.

Keeping the experience alive, even if only in the imagination, has been a crucial part of the travel practice. UGC and TripAdvisor do not come as a novelty out of nowhere, but instead are products of a consistent ongoing process. Even the idea of place-making, as presented here, could be traced through history to some roots in the

"Raree showmen" (see Figures 5 and 6), who wandered around offering people imaginative travels (peep shows) to places that they would never visit physically. Della Dora (2009, 336) gives a nostalgic account of the boxes Raree showmen carried:

> Boxes of all sorts: portable wooden stereo-scopic boxes, which allowed children to travel to marvellous cities they could hold in their hands; alabaster egg-shaped boxes containing sublime sceneries; dioramic boxes, carrying landscapes that changed with the variation of light …[c]ontaining illusionist panoramic paintings wrapping the visitor, offering him a real-like experience of the actual place they represented. What all these boxes shared was their hidden and yet liberating spatiality; their physical containment and their ability to take the viewer further, visually and imaginatively.

Figure 5. *The Peep Show*, oil on canvas, anon., Great Britain, *c.*1840. Courtesy of the Richard Balzer Collection.[8]

The author claims that Raree showmen have not disappeared but rather multiplied. They have taken different forms of creating placeness. Souvenirs for instance "crystallize time and space", as people try to keep moments of remembrance untouched. Travelers carry the place they visited and the memories attached within a small box or package. The idea of preserving place and time by carrying it home is in accordance with the becoming of place. As we carry places in different ways we reshape their value, when we think about them, talk, write and create images. Thus UGC is another form of

[8] More information and pictures about raree showmen, peep shows and other 'cabinets of curiosities' can be found at http://www.dickbalzer.com/Peepshows.202.0.html.

crystallizing place and time and carrying it home. What is different from the souvenir is that this sense of "placeness" is imaginatively shared and relived within a community of travelers/users. No matter whether we have chosen to carry home the practices in the format of memories or a souvenir, when we write a review on line we perform value anew and this performance in combination with a series of algorithmic configurations has further consequences for hospitality professionals.

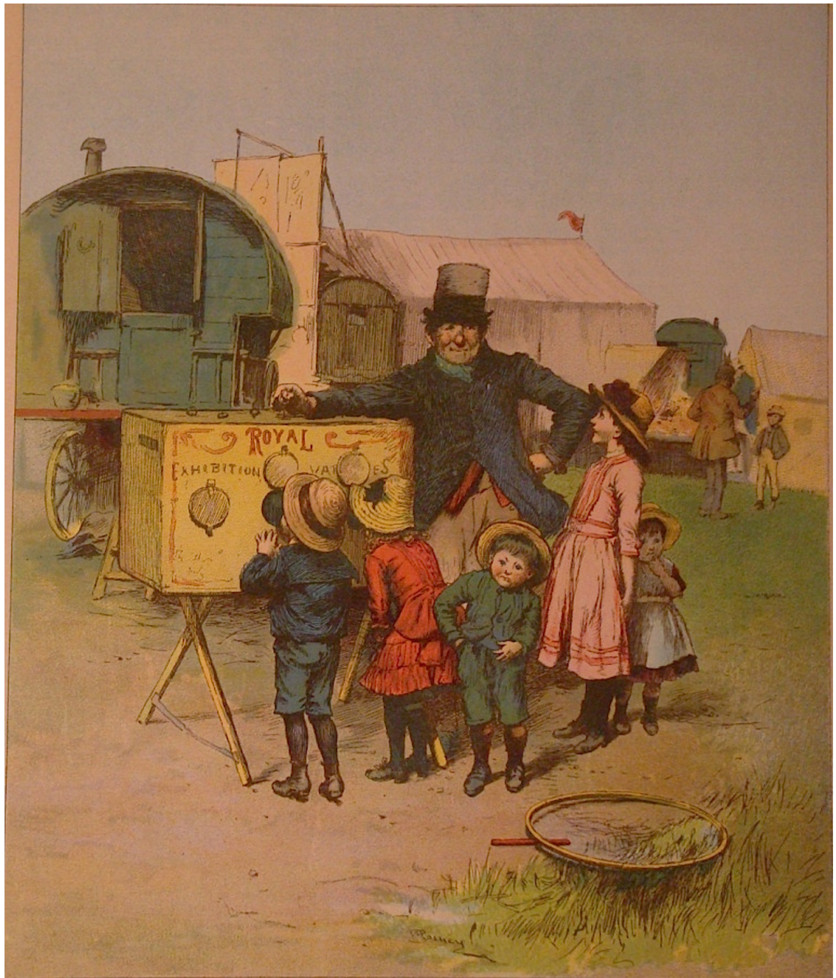

Figure 6. *Royal Exhibition*, W. Rainey, Great Britain, *c*.1900. Courtesy of the Richard Balzer Collection.

UGC, as a powerful illustration of the "epistemics of information" makes places and values irrespective of whether stories have been experienced or not; irrespective of whether travelers have actually visited the place or they are submitting fake accounts. Scott and Orlikowski (2012) in studying the relations of accountability point to the multiple evaluation principles in play embedded in traveler reviews

on TripAdvisor and emphasize that what constitutes “value” to one traveler may be different from another. In this study and earlier studies looking at the phenomenon of TripAdvisor (see Baka and Scott 2011a, 2011b) the material and discursive consequences that are entangled with the algorithmic power and the associated crowd do matter in the everyday life of professionals in the travel sector and in the long-term sustainability. In many cases hotel and restaurant managers figuring in TripAdvisor’s “Worst Lists” and in the “Horror Stories” Newsletters have been forced to prove that a review is inaccurate and even defend their business in court.

The imaginative practice of traveling has fueled a series of recognized performative outcomes for modern tourists too. Oftentimes tourists visit places to experience what has been communicated through the media. However, when performed experience does not live up to expectations there are consequences. In extreme cases, such as “Paris Syndrome”, tourists collapse and may suffer from a psychosomatic mental illness. This alarming turn of events became so notable among Asian tourists that “Paris Syndrome” now appears as a formal entry in medical journals. It is regarded as a severe case of what is commonly referred to as culture shock; during their visit to Paris individuals expect to experience the cosmos of “Amelie”, “Louvre” or the “Luis Vuitton” lifestyle, but instead find themselves assaulted by dissonant unromantic moments and rude conversations. This disappointment then manifests through symptoms such as dizziness, tachycardia, sweating, etc. Similar psychoses have been reported in other highly evoked places, for example “Jerusalem Syndrome” in which travelers become psychotic and suffer from intense religiously related mental problems after arriving in the Holy City; or “Florence Syndrome” (also known as the Stendhal syndrome), whereby tourists exposed to Florentine art cannot absorb their experiences and develop the symptoms described earlier. In this respect UGC has intensified this enactment of traveling which is evoked intensively before the feet perform the journey, and instead of providing yet another promotion platform, it has remade the place where traveling occurs. As one user and destination expert on TripAdvisor said: “My life would be rather less complicated without TripAdvisor but it would also be less fulfilling.”

The development of social media has encouraged us to talk—even more than with other media—about the generative mechanism of making places beyond seeing or flying, through different enactments such as imaging, imagining, reading, writing. Tourists of the modern age contextualize the landscape using their own terms and performatively contribute to its (re-)creation. A traveler wrote on an online community how the act of reading on TripAdvisor transformed her perception of New York, even though she had visited the place 14 times:

> I did a walking food tour of Greenwich village and Soho the last time I was in New York. I followed the advice of a local expert (on TripAdvisor) and I am sure glad I did because it was one of the more fun things I did in New York … and I have been to the city 14 times!

A simple piece of advice from a local transformed her view of a very well-known city. She therefore rediscovered New York. The power of engaging with UGC is that the knowledge that we have about a place is creatively destroyed and in a generative, performative way this recreates the place itself, as we take a decision to visit it or not, to be thrown together in it or not.

The different enactments that we are witnessing with the emergence of the internet and UGC have not brought about a whole "new" pristine era of communication and interaction, but they make differences in an ongoing world. Meyrowitz (1985) in his classic analysis refers to how television has been approached with a focus on the effects of violent or sexist content, whereas what has been largely ignored are the different ways of communicating cultural content that may lead to different social conceptions of childhood, adulthood, masculinity, etc. And he continues that we see half a picture when we merely look at what media bring into the home and do not recognize the possibility that new media transform the home and other social spheres. In a parallel way, we claim that with the emergence of travel UGC, relationships have been intensified with consequences for what it means to be a host, a guest or a great hotel at any one time and place. Earlier valuing devices have evoked place-making in various ways, yet the rise of TripAdvisor has converted the travel experience into a constant negotiation process whereby both the value of places and the value of the valuing device are contested.

The meta-evaluation process of judging the device is very much associated with the algorithmic configurations. Places are made and remade every time travelers talk, write and share but also through the associated algorithms in place that allow stories to make an impact and rankings to be created. Travelogues, guide books, travel diaries, brochures, the internet and other forms of media have also had performative implications but the devices of UGC websites invite us to talk about algorithmically powered performativity as a process in its own right. Earlier we reviewed performativity as sociological, economic and linguistic and how scholars have developed our knowledge of performativity beyond the linguistic context, as introduced by Austin. However, algorithmically powered performativity adds a further layer of complication and encourages us to question about where, when and how valuation manifests as it is (per)formatively enacted. Spatiality is revisited through a unified understanding of off line/on line, and "lateral forms of accountability" (Stark 2009, 19) are created as UGC is placed

alongside formal accreditation schemes and information from hoteliers. In the end what and who is held to be valued remains a highly contested issue. In other words, valuation happens continuously through a formative process.

Concluding Remarks

In this paper, we defined placeness by taking UGC seriously as illustrative of contemporary valuing devices and suggested that places should be treated as open and unfolding rather than as fixed territories. The paper has illustrated how places continue to develop as we perform traveling in various ways. What the place momentarily becomes is constitutive of the arrangements of relationships and interactions among diverse "elements" that cross categories in time. In this light, the value of the hotel or destination emerges as people, moods and algorithmic configurations are thrown together, and as such it is very much contingent upon space and time. The becoming of places supports the idea that places are constantly constructed and remade. Nowadays more than ever temporality reshapes our perception of places and thus their offline and online manifestations are interrelated enactments of the same unified "place."

Although valuing devices in travel have always been performative, traveling has been transformed since the emergence of UGC. Most everyday practices have been influenced by the presence of the online sphere, yet traveling is a category of particular interest as the "before", "during" and "after" are intertwined and transcend the physical and online definitions of space and code. This inseparability of the before, during and after is further intensified because of the affordances of the algorithmic configurations that have the power to make things (in)visible and hence has inspired new ways of place-making. Travelers/users experience and enact places by looking at them, by seeking for information through various channels, by posting their accounts of how they have performed traveling and by co-creating experiences to the extent that the assemblages of algorithmic structure and agency allow it.

The paper has distilled the generativity of places conceived as practices and doings. In that sense, places are practices yet also in the making; they are implicated once performed and this is an ongoing process. Not only do we experience places in everyday encounters with people and "things", but places are negotiated and performed as processes of those relationships. As people are "thrown together" in Rome or in a forum talking about Rome the borderline between physical and on line becomes meaningless and Rome emanates as a process through those interactions. Places are remade once we step on them or talk about stepping on them. This is the performativity of place-making that is enacted through imagination or is realized in the form of a decision when UGC postings along with the associated

algorithmic configurations and ordering mechanisms convince people to visit a place. Like other ordering devices, algorithmically powered and powerful generative mechanisms are highly entangled with valuation practices. Although all (e)valuation mechanisms over time are illustrative of the multiplicity of performativity, in the case of TripAdvisor and UGC value is performatively made and remade through algorithmic configurations and enacted through reading, interpreting, writing, imagining—or in other words through *place-making*.

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The Construction of Brand Denmark: A Case Study of the Reversed Causality in Nation Brand Valuation

Henrik Merkelsen and Rasmus Kjærgaard Rasmussen

Abstract

In this article we unpack the organizational effects of the valuation practices enacted by nation branding rankings in a contemporary case where the Danish government employed branding-inspired methods. Our main argument is that the use of nation branding was enabled by the Nation Brands Index via its efficient translation of fuzzy political goals into understandable numerical objectives. The Nation Brands Index becomes the driving force in a powerful bureaucratic translation of nation branding which in turn has several reordering effects at organizational level. We thus demonstrate how the Nation Brands Index permits bureaucratic expansion in central government administration as it continuously maintains and reconstructs problems solvable by the initiation of more nation branding initiatives and projects and hence more bureaucratic activity.

Key words: nation branding; measurement; reputation; risk; bureaucracy

In the aftermath of the so-called Cartoon Crisis[1] the Danish government initiated an *Action Plan* for improving Denmark's nation brand. According to an image report published by nation brand expert

[1] The Cartoon Crisis has been called "Denmark's worst international relations incident since the Second World War" (TimesOnline 2006). The crisis was caused by the publication of 12 drawings of the prophet Mohammed by the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in the fall of 2005 as it caused massive discontent and protests from and around the Arab and Muslim world. It is estimated that a total of 150 people lost their lives as a consequence of the crisis (see also Rasmussen and Merkelsen 2014 for a comprehensive account).

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Simon Anholt immediately after the crisis, Denmark's brand had suffered severe damage in Middle-Eastern countries (Special Report 2006). In 2007 the Danish government's nation brand initiative was formally established and continued until 2012. From its inception the plan's explicit goal was improving value of the nation brand and the conceptualization of the plan was heavily inspired by the notion that a nation brand can and should be actively managed (Anholt 2007).

A vital component of this managerial approach to the country's reputation is the use of branding metrics by which the nation's brand value (or "brand equity", as much branding literature prefers) is constantly monitored, assessed and compared to other nations on a ranking scale. In the case of Denmark the metrics played a crucial role, as the overall objective of the branding initiative was to advance Denmark's position on the Anholt Nation Brands Index from fourteenth place to a place in the top ten. However, the government and the Task Force in charge of the Action Plan never fulfilled this objective and in 2013 after modification of the evaluation criteria the nation brand initiative was abandoned.

In this paper we approach nation branding indices and the practice of measuring countries' reputations as a specific valuation practice where political objectives are translated into quantifiable entities with significant rhetorical appeal (see Shore and Wright 1997). Within the neoliberal transparency regime associated with new public management (NPM) especially, rankings are a principal "mediating technology" for such political translations of valuation (see Hansen and Flyverbom 2015). Thus, our aim in this analysis is to unpack nation branding indices as valuation practices by looking at how they are institutionalized in political organizations in terms of policy formulation and organizing practices.

While valuation as a social phenomenon is complex and can be studied in many ways depending on whether the focus is production, diffusion, assessment or institutionalization (Lamont 2012) we address the specific challenges and implications of assessment. The new interdisciplinary literature on valuation emphasizes the two-fold nature of valuation as both prizing and appraising (Helgesson and Muniesa 2013). While common sense might suggest that some value must exist before it can be measured—i.e. that prizing in the sense of "holding precious" precedes appraising understood as "a rating activity" (cf. Dewey 1939, 5)—it is a central observation in our study that the practice concerning the rating of nation brands is an indispensable precondition for constructing the nation brand. In other words: t*he nation brand does not exist as such. It is a product of the very instruments that seek to measure it.*

We illustrate this point by highlighting central findings from a comprehensive single case study of the Danish nation brand initiative (Rasmussen 2014; see also Rasmussen and Merkelsen 2012, 2014; for

other accounts of this case see Ren and Gyimóthy 2013; Ren and Ooi 2013). The study is based on an ANT (Actor-Network Theory) methodology that included content analysis of policy documents and extensive ethnographic field study in the Danish government administration. Specifically the study draws on three sources of empirical material: 22 policy documents; 12 interviews with civil servants within central administration and external consultants; and ethnographic observation in the nation branding task force during eight months in 2009 (see Rasmussen 2014 for details). The present article however draws only on selected results of the study as it specifically underscores the effect that the Anholt Nation Brands Index had on policy formation and policy implementation.

In addressing the effects of this specific valuation practice we argue that even when accepting the functionalist premises that dominate nation branding practices, the metrics that allegedly measure some underlying values are problematic. This argument is underscored by debates in the branding literature concerning the level of aggregation in such measurements (see next section, Theoretical Perspectives). However, our empirical observations suggest that even though bureaucrats in the Danish central administration were aware of these problems, the nation brand measurements were successful in generating new organizing practices in central government administration. Thus, we demonstrate how the nation brands index affected policy formation; that it facilitated the expansion of bureaucracy by establishing new objects of control and coordination; and finally that it institutionalized a new organizational risk sensibility towards reputational fallout. In this respect the brand metrics had significant "re-ordering" effects (Helgesson and Muniesa 2013; Kjellberg et al. 2013) in terms of imposing a new value system in parts of the Danish government administration.

Departing from an ANT methodology and the notion of a flat ontology (e.g. Callon 1986; Latour 1986) we see branding metrics as actors that operate on the same level as subjects. Thus, we do not assume any hierarchy between objects and subjects. In this sense we contest *a priori* assumptions that metrics are results of underlying beliefs and social interests (cf. Vatin 2013). While we agree with the introductory editorial of this journal (Helgesson and Muniesa 2013) that values are socially constructed, in this paper we emphasize that the practice of valuation can itself construct new social realities (see also Hacking 1990; Porter 1995).

Conversely, we do not assume any preexisting hierarchy between theory and practices. Rather than seeing the empirical findings as expressions of deeper theoretical realities where academic analysis becomes epistemologically superior to practice, we understand both theory *and* practice as two equally important perspectives on the case. This assertion is visible in the structure of the article where we begin

with a review of selected literature in order to give an account of the conceptual contexts of the Danish nation branding initiative. Thus, the literature section does not imply a specific theoretical perspective of our study.

We advance our arguments in four sections: After this introduction the second section introduces some theoretical perspectives on nation branding, aggregation and complexity in the functionalist literature that dominates nation branding practice. The third section analyses the practical institutionalization of brand metrics in the concrete policy formation process and illustrates the institutionalization of brand metrics in the policy implementation process surrounding the Danish government's use of nation branding. By pointing to how the Nation Brands Index as a measurement tool enacted its own object of measurement the final and fourth section concludes the article by emphasizing the argument concerning the reversed causality in nation brand valuation.

Theoretical Perspectives on Nation Branding, Aggregation and Complexity

Nation branding like the more general practice of place branding has received increasing academic attention over the past 20 years (Gertner 2011). While functionalist approaches dominate, often with practitioner gurus as the commonly referred to authorities, critical approaches have begun to voice important objections to the managerial ideology behind knowledge creation in the field (Kaneva 2011). However, functionalists have also pointed to serious conceptual weaknesses (Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013).

Both nation branding and place branding are heavily inspired by the concept of corporate branding (Kavaratzis 2009). This knowledge transfer from the corporate world to other domains has been labeled "the business analogy" (Collini 2012) and has also been critically approached within the literature on nation branding (Rasmussen and Merkelsen 2014). While managerial practices adopted from the corporate world have a strong appeal for policymakers (Dunleavy and Hood 1994) the models on which corporate practices are based often fail to take into account the complex environment that policymakers are facing. In much critical literature on nation branding, however, the critique is more profound and transcends problems concerning the technical adequacy of branding models. Rather, branding as a practice becomes synonymous with neoliberal ideologies of governance (Widler 2007; Stöber 2008; Kaneva 2012) where national culture and identity become the object of marketization (Jansen 2008; Kaneva and Popescu 2011).

The main arguments behind this line of criticism are that politics becomes depoliticized and that national identity and cultural differences become distorted by homogeneous managerial branding

practices (Aronczyk 2008, 2009). A recurring point of reference in these studies is Naomi Klein's redefinition of the classic critique of capitalism into a general cultural critique of corporate brands and reputations (Klein 2000). In terms of valuation practices this criticism points to how fundamental cultural values are transformed by market logics of commodification where the notion of value is redefined as the capacity for generation of monetary surplus. In this the critique of the very ability to measure brand equity becomes paramount and the underlying metrics are perceived as harmful means that enable reproduction of capitalistic structures.

While critical approaches to nation branding as a cultural phenomenon see the measurement of brand equity as a symptom of an ideological hegemony that suppresses the underlying "real" values, the functional approaches are increasingly realizing the shortcoming of the metrics behind the measurements (Szondi 2010; Pamment 2014). However, contrary to critics of branding the functionalists see further inspiration from the corporate world as a possible solution to the theoretical underdevelopment. Thus, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) propose that a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics that shape place identities needs inspiration from literature on organizational identity. Their main objection is that the complexity of places is not sufficiently taken into account in the existing place-branding literature.

The challenges of complexity in corporate branding are well known (cf. Christensen et al. 2008). Like places, corporations often face the task of managing multiple stakeholders with diverse perceptions and conflicting interests. Thus, a major unresolved question in the literature on corporate branding is whether a company has "one reputation or many" (Helm 2007). The aggregation problems behind this question are illustrated by Wartick (2002) when comparing how different brands are valued differently depending on whether the brand is perceived from a specific stakeholder perspective or treated as the mean score of all stakeholder perspectives on an aggregate level. For instance, the corporate brand as the sum of mean scores of the parameters on which the brand is measured (e.g. value for money, financial performance, employer satisfaction, ecological effects, etc.) is often perceived differently by different stakeholder groups. For a stakeholder group like the consumer, value for money is likely to be more relevant than financial performance. In contrast, for the shareholders, financial performance is most relevant. Thus, the corporate brand as an aggregate based on mean scores of all stakeholder evaluations of all brand parameters is a very simplistic and imprecise representation of the company. In line with this functionalist critique the problem of complexity has been acknowledged as a serious challenge for nation branding (e.g. Blichfeldt 2005; Anholt 2006; Fan

2006; Dinnie 2008), rendering the measurement thereof “fraught with difficulties” (Papadopoulos cited in Frost 2004, 1).

Unpacking the Reordering Effects of the Nation Brands Index

The Anholt Nation Brands Index came to play a principal role in commencing the Danish government’s nation branding initiative. Nevertheless, policy documents show that central actors in government administration were concerned about the complexity issues surrounding nation branding as a practice. This suggests that the initiative from the outset had fundamental challenges in connecting means with ends. Apart from the difficulties in establishing a clear connection between the measurement methods and the object of measurement the Task Force also faced a problem with resolving an international policy controversy with a marketing strategy. However, in the analysis we show that these challenges were resolved by a series of translations, whereby the practice within the Task Force managed to abide by different—sometimes contradictory—logics while maintaining coherency in their practice. In fact, it is a main point in our analysis that the shortcomings of nation branding made it easy for bureaucrats in the central administration to fit nation branding into their existing bureaucratic practices.

The First Translation: The Cartoon Crisis as a Reputational Problem

The Nation Brands Index was first presented to the public in April 2007 when the Action Plan was passed by parliament. In this period it served as a catalyst that helped institutionalize the concept of nation branding at policy level—particularly in contemporary policy documents such as the Action Plan. The index thus became a vital part of the policy process that positioned nation branding as the solution to the reputational problem created by the cartoon crisis.

According to Latour (1999), any policy formation process can be seen as creation of an actor network. This creation will consist of a series of stages in which a problem is first constructed in a problematization scenario. This is followed by an *interessement* where an actor offers a solution; after which, actors seek to align their translations of a given solution by *enrolling* other actors in this, creating what Callon and Latour (1981) have called a macro-actor, i.e. a particularly powerful assemblage of interests.

The index was introduced to the Danish public in the aftermath of the cartoon crisis where Simon Anholt used the polling of Denmark as a proxy for measuring the impact of the crisis on Denmark’s image (Anholt 2006). A press release from GMI (Global Market Institute) issued February 23, 2006 stating that Denmark was the most valuable nation brand measured per capita marked the beginning of this

translation. The claim was substantiated by an extensive report with calculations of the brand value of a wide range of nations. Behind this report was the British nation branding consultant, Simon Anholt. National media picked up the story as it was newsworthy stuff on the backdrop of the cartoon crisis. Shortly afterwards GMI launched another press release after publishing a special report showing how severely the Danish nation brand was damaged in Middle-East countries as a consequence of the crisis.

Following Latour (1986, 1999) the index became a central actor in a two-step process, *first*, in the problem-construction stage where it played an important rhetorical role in the *translation* of the crisis from an international policy issue into a reputational problem. This translation was by no means plucked out of the blue. Only a few weeks previously, the Minister of Foreign Affairs framed the crisis as a reputational problem: "We have to safeguard our reputation as well as the persuasiveness and integrity of our culture" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2006). This framing of the crisis was furthermore explicated by a former foreign minister stating that "Denmark's reputation has been seriously damaged" (Danish Broadcasting Corporation 2006). *Second* was in the solution stage where the translation of the crisis into a reputational problem was accompanied by nation branding as the proper solution. This happened when the rhetorical assemblage that connected the crisis to a reputational problem was successfully accepted by a broad range of political actors in Denmark who not only aligned their interpretation with Anholt's but also translated the index and nation branding as the solution to the original problem of the crisis.

The PR work effected by Simon Anholt and GMI thus played an important role in aligning the subsequent policy formulation process with the nation branding logic. From 2006 through 2007 a series of meetings took place between central government actors (i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danish Agency for Investment Attraction, Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs and the Danish Tourism Agency). These meetings resulted in a policy formulation that ultimately became the blueprint for the later Action Plan and in turn the national brand strategy to be implemented by the Task Force. Despite the skepticism concerning the adequacy of the nation branding metrics among some of these actors it is clear by looking at the final outcome that these are inscribed as a pivotal part of the international marketing policy.

Thus, the very first pages of the Action Plan evidence that this notion of surveying Denmark's nation brand is introduced as an integrated part of how to measure the plan's objectives. According to these, Denmark had to be "ranked amongst the top ten in 2015 of all the OECD countries ... in terms of awareness" (Danish Government 2007, 4). Apart from more general considerations concerning the

importance of awareness, the plan says very little about how the fulfillment of the objectives will improve Denmark's international relations. However, the major strength of the index was that it assisted in translating the Danish government's somewhat fuzzy policy goals concerning a "global marketing" of Denmark into a measureable objective. The Action Plan emphasizes the link between different policy initiatives and their reputational outcome, albeit in very abstract formulations:

> The Task Force's duty ... is to ensure the completion of successive surveys of the outside world's awareness of Denmark's strengths and competencies as well as of the results and progression of the initiatives. (Danish Government 2007, 55)

As such the index was a convenient tool for the Task Force that had been assigned to the almost impossible task of both coordinating and measuring the effects of highly different initiatives, of which many were already planned for in existing government budgets and thus adhered to existing political agendas. Measuring the coordinated effect of political initiatives ranging from education to export would not be easy; therefore the index came in handy for the Task Force.

The Second Translation: Nation Branding as Bureaucratic Practice

Operationalization of the index as an evaluation standard in the Action Plan made it a principal actor in terms of organizing and institutionalizing the Danish nation brand network. The first step was the process of *policy formation.* This phase of the nation branding initiative mostly consisted of formulating policy documents that served to establish the "rules of the game." In this phase the index helped the bureaucrats translate *their* existing bureaucratic practices into the nation branding logic. This is visible in policy documents that are dominated by branding terminology. In official documents from both the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, traditional foreign and trade policy challenges are increasingly framed as reputational issues and use a nation branding vocabulary (e.g. Danish Government 2006, 2007; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009).

In terms of practice in the ministry, however, empirical observations showed the bureaucrats continued to follow a bureaucratic *praxis* (cf. Fenton and Langley 2011) in their daily routines. When asked about this discrepancy between policy and practice, the head of the Task Force explained that informally no one within the ministry believed that Denmark could achieve the objectives connected with the index. In fact, the bureaucrats in the Task Force considered the index highly ill-suited for measuring the effects of the plan's initiatives. This conviction had been prevalent since the plan was passed in 2007 and so had the widespread skepticism concerning the application of a

nation branding framework. This is visible in the working documents that were written between the Globalization Strategy and the Action Plan. These documents echo concerns about complexity that had been voiced in the branding literature (see previous section, Theoretical Perspectives): "One cannot simply compare countries and nations with soda and soap. The differences are evident" (Danish Government 2006, 2). As a consequence of this skepticism the bureaucrats in the task force had continuously lobbied for an alternative (i.e. non-branding) method of evaluating the program within the parliamentary committee.

The reluctance towards the nation branding concept is partly explained by their professional identity: the members of the Task Force perceived themselves as bureaucrats and administrators before seeing themselves as nation branding practitioners. Thus, in the interviews, many respondents expressed ambivalence and skepticism towards the compulsory role as both bureaucrats and international marketeers given to them by the political leadership. Some of them entirely rejected the notion of working with nation branding, instead stressing that their job was to "implement and administer government policy" as one bureaucrat phrased it. And a few even dismissed the Branding Denmark Task Force as being a mere nominal construction decoupled from the "true" bureaucratic practice of ministry. These observations of the ambivalent encounter between bureaucracy and branding logics are described elsewhere as a clash of professional identities (see Rasmussen forthcoming).

That the bureaucratic logic proved resilient towards the nation branding logic is evident in how the Action Plan approached the implementation of the Danish nation branding policy. The most noticeable result was how it created new objects of bureaucratic control and coordination, i.e. new organizations. As a result of the Action Plan three new government organizations were established: the *Foundation to the Marketing of Denmark*; the *Marketing Advisory Board*; and the *Branding Denmark Taskforce*. Each organization was commissioned to coordinate and control the government's existing efforts on impression management and the marketing of Danish culture. This expansion of bureaucracy was followed by further expansions. As the central coordinating body from 2007 to 2012 the Task Force contributed to the establishment of a suite of public–private partnerships aiming at the marketing of specific Danish business sectors. As such the bureaucrats literally created the objects of their own bureaucratic control and coordination.

The actual practice within the Task Force was therefore characterized by two main translations. First, the cartoon crisis was translated into a reputational problem whereby nation branding was agreed upon as a viable solution. Then the nation branding process

was translated into a bureaucratic *modus operandi* whereby existing bureaucratic structures simply expanded into a new domain.

The Index Becomes a Continuous Generator of Problems and Solutions

Despite the successful translation of nation branding into existing bureaucratic practices (and projects) made by the bureaucrats in the Action Plan, a series of problems began to surface when from 2007 onwards the nation branding policy was implemented. One of the main problems was the systemic challenge that the use of the index as an evaluation tool presented to central government administration, as the effects of ministries' work could not be measured on the index. Most of the marketing projects under the Action Plan did not follow a nation branding logic since most of them were existing projects within investment and tourism. It was unlikely that there would be any measurable nation branding effects from the many and somewhat disparate communication activities ranging from public diplomacy to the use of events such as the COP15 conference. The consequence of this mismatch was that the Task Force was unable to produce effects that would lead to the fulfillment of the overall objective: advancing Denmark's position on the Anholt Nation Brands Index to a place in the top ten.

This mismatch between means and ends, which had been successfully camouflaged at the level of policy formation, was epitomized by the yearly release of the Nation Brands Index which in consecutive reports revealed no change in Denmark's position. Thus, the country's position on the index was scored five times during the five years the Action Plan was in effect. But despite all efforts, from 2006 to 2011 Denmark's brand continually oscillated between the index's fourteenth and fifteenth places (see Table 1).

Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index 2007-2011

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1 France	1 United Kingdom	1 USA	1 USA	1 USA
2 Germany	2 Germany	2 France	2 Germany	2 Germany
3 United Kingdom	3 France	3 United Kingdom	3 France	3 United Kingdom
5 Sweden	6 USA	4 Germany	4 United Kingdom	4 France
13 New Zealand	10 Sweden	10 Sweden	10 Sweden	10 Sweden
14 USA	**14 Denmark**	**14 Denmark**	**14 Denmark**	14 New Zealand
15 Denmark	15 New Zealand	15 New Zealand	15 New Zealand	**15 Denmark**
x Finland	16 Finland	16 Finland	16 Finland	16 Finland

Table 1. Denmark's score on Anholt-GfK Roper Brands Index from 2007–2011
Source: Danish Government (2011, 10)

The fact that the Danish brand failed to advance on the index did not present an immediate threat to the nation branding initiative or to the Task Force. On the contrary, this specific problem presented a solution for the bureaucrats. The very act of defining the consequences of the cartoon crisis as a reputational problem had positive reordering effects in terms of establishing "reputational problems" as the main driver of policy initiatives and bureaucratic expansion. Bureaucracies are problem-solving machines and therefore need problems to continue their existence. In this sense a reputation index that constantly produces new reputational risks was convenient for government bureaucrats.

Following this argument Denmark's position on the index did not make any difference at all. A low ranking would require initiatives in order to make advancements; a high ranking would require initiatives in order to consolidate the position achieved. And the recurring ratings and publication of the results served to maintain the organizational sensitivity towards reputational risk. In this sense the organizational sensitivity towards reputational risks became a generative strength of the Task Force.

Bureaucracy is Caught in Successful Translation

The Task Force did however face one major challenge. The final evaluation of the entire nation branding plan, and hence also of the Task Force, came closer. The bureaucrats found themselves in a position where they had no control over the outcome of this evaluation. The positive reordering effects of the Nation Brands Index had outweighed its incapacity for evaluating the work done by the Task Force. But contrary to the advantage of the ongoing production of reputational risks produced by the index, the lack of control was a problem that posed a real threat to the Task Force. Between 2009 and 2010 the bureaucrats therefore began advocating to the political leadership a shift to other evaluation tools. This advocacy occurred internally in the central government administration but also in annual reports where the Task Force accounted for their activities towards the public. One of the frequently used arguments put forward by the bureaucrats was that the objective was unrealistic. Here, Simon Anholt was enrolled as helper, as he had once deemed the goal of the Danish branding program "extremely ambitious" concluding that it would take an "extraordinary effort" (Danish Government 2010b, 4). The bureaucratic interpretation of this was that the administration should either have new "extraordinary" budgets or that the objective should be modified.

It was not easy to convince the political leadership. The bureaucrats found themselves caught in their own successful translation of the nation branding recipe. The Action Plan had made a convincing

argument about the importance of measuring Denmark's reputation. Hence, it was difficult for the bureaucrats to find counterarguments without contradicting the original arguments that had enabled the very nation branding initiative. Although the politicians were reluctant to change a vital part of the plan that both parties (including the political coalition in parliament) had agreed upon, the internal struggle between bureaucrats and the political leadership came to an end when the Task Force presented an alternative measurement tool in the 2010 sequel to the Action Plan (Danish Government 2010a). This finally convinced the political leadership, perhaps also assisted by the fact that despite all efforts made Denmark had not improved its position on the index and there were no indications that the nation branding initiative would be able to meet the official objective and advance into the top ten.

Consequently, in 2011 the index was finally supplemented by a so-called "impact measurement method" (see Table 2); perhaps a pyrrhic victory, as this tool's methodology is even more opaque than that of the index. The impact measurement method was thus (optimistically) aiming at correlating government funding ("input") in branding related activities and projects with long-term effects on Danish GDP growth in exports and the attraction of tourism (Danish Government 2011). However, as the nation branding initiative was terminated in 2012 the Task Force never benefitted from this victory. Thus, in the final evaluation report made by an external consultancy the gap between the plan (policy formation) and practice (policy implementation) was subject to a harsh critique (Danish Government 2012).

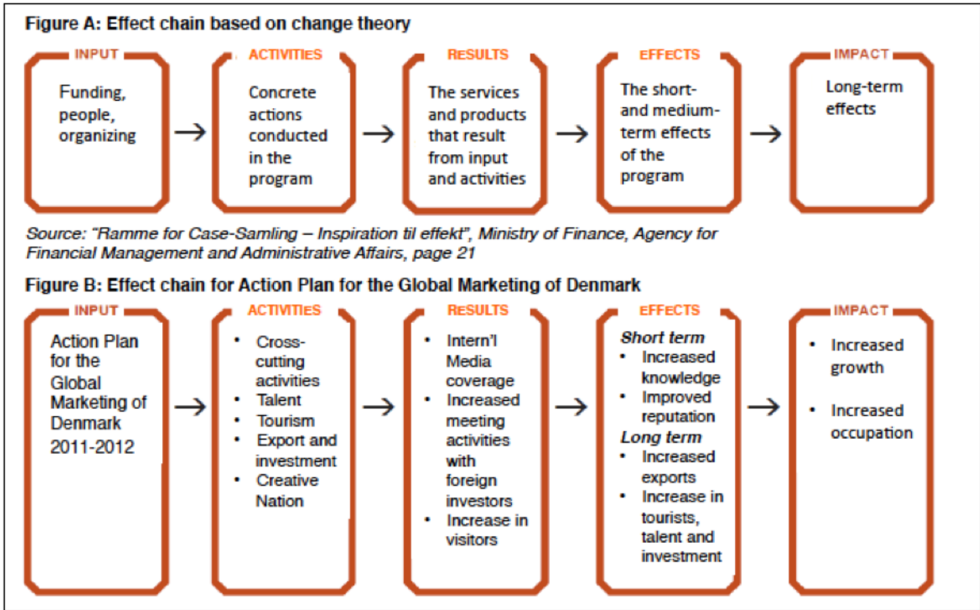

Table 2. The new "impact measurement method" devised in the last evaluation of the branding program (Danish Government, 2011, 11, our translation)

Conclusion: The Value of (e)Valuation

The termination of the Danish nation brand initiative concurred with the critical conclusions of the final evaluation where the Task Force as a coordination and evaluation unit became itself the object of an external evaluation. By emphasizing the failure to align practical initiatives with the "programmatic text" of the project, the final evaluation indicates that the bureaucrats in the task force could have been more successful if they had abided by the nation branding logic in their practice and not only in their documents.

We contest this conclusion because it is based on the underlying assumption that valuation is a practice where values are stable entities and measurement is just a matter of accuracy. From our ANT vantage point, rather, the study shows that the Nation Brands Index as a measurement tool enacted its own object of measurement. That is, the index was an indispensable actor in establishing a nation branding actor network that successfully hosted a variety of policy initiatives from the Globalization Strategy. By establishing a consistent framework for measuring the reputational effects of these initiatives (although no one in the Task Force believed in this) the Nation Brands Index successfully translated these policy initiatives into nation branding projects. Hence, our argument is that it is a mistake to think of the Danish nation brand as a stable entity that existed prior to this enactment. The Danish nation brand—understood as a managerial object—came to exist because it was *objectified* through a series of translations. In this process the Anholt Nation Brands Index—from its initial inclusion of Denmark from 2006 onwards—served as a catalyst for this process whereby the nation brand gained status as a stable object. That is, it provided a means for addressing a wide range of policy initiatives and organizing them around a reputational nation branding logic.

This observation of our study does not contradict the literature that points to how various more or less stable perceptions and beliefs about nations have always existed (e.g. Anholt 2002; Olins 2002; Dinnie 2008). But we argue that these perceptions and beliefs have little resemblance to the multidimensional aggregates on which the conceptualization of nation brands is based. Perceptions exist in the minds of people whereas multidimensional nation branding aggregates are managerial objects that exist as a series of practices. Our study shows how the practice in the Task Force was affected by the contemporary conceptualization of nation branding—at least at document level.

The nation brand gained status as a stable entity because the bureaucrats in central administration successfully translated the nation branding logic to fit their bureaucratic domain. This translation, however, came at a price. By accepting a measurement tool that was unable to measure the effects of their work, the Task Force lost control over its own future.

On the other hand, the index helped establish new organizational realities such as the Task Force and its further bureaucratic expansion. That is, the index became the driving force in creating new organizational realities as the brand was continuously enacted within this actor-network. This enactment at organization level is also visible at societal level in media discourse in Denmark from 2006 to 2014: a search in the Danish equivalent to LexisNexis shows that until 2006 only nine articles included terms such as “nation brand”, “Danish brand” or “Denmark’s brand.” And only three of them addressed Denmark as a national brand while the others focused on country of origin. In 2014 the number had grown to almost 1000, demonstrating that the term has become widely used beyond the narrow domain of specialist language in the actor-network.

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