

## **Encountering local inhabitants' perspectives in terms of authenticity: The example of rural tourism in Southern Germany**

### **O olhar dos habitantes locais sobre a autenticidade: O caso do turismo rural no sul da Alemanha**

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#### **Abstract**

Effects of globalisation and various standardisation processes in everyday life are currently reflected through individuals' quests for encountering authenticity. The paper interrogates in which particular ways local inhabitants evaluate rural localities with regard to authenticity by means of local architectural styles and filmic representations. Empirical findings from two qualitative studies carried out in rural Southern Germany are presented. The studies were comprised of qualitative interviews with local inhabitants and representatives in tourism, politics and heritage conservation together with a film analysis of a popular *Heimat* film shot in the Bavarian forest. Results reveal locals' critique of modern architectural styles such as "Tuscan houses" as inauthentic, whereby a link between architecture and regional identity ("archidentity") cannot be established. However, the film analysis brings forth locals' congruities between filmic representations and their lived spaces. In sum, locals' perspectives on authentication processes can contribute to re-evaluate localities that are mainly shaped by idealised images for tourism purposes.

**Keywords:** authenticity; local inhabitants; architecture; evaluation of place; film tourism; Bavaria.

#### **Resumo**

Os efeitos da globalização e dos diversos processos de normalização da vida quotidiana refletem-se na busca individual pela autenticidade. Este artigo analisa o modo como os habitantes locais avaliam a autenticidade em localidades rurais, por via da cultura local e das representações cinematográficas. Apresentam-se os resultados empíricos de dois estudos qualitativos realizados em localidades rurais do sul da Alemanha, ou seja, entrevistas qualitativas com habitantes locais e representantes das áreas do turismo, da política e da conservação do património, bem como se analisa um filme *Heimat* rodado na floresta da Baviera. Os resultados revelam que os habitantes locais consideram que os estilos arquitetónicos modernos, como por exemplo o "Tuscan houses", são inautênticos, sendo que se torna evidente a existência de um elo perdido entre a arquitetura e a identidade regional ("arqui-identidade"). No entanto, a análise do filme revela incongruências dos habitantes locais entre as representações cinematográficas e os seus espaços vividos. Em suma, as perspetivas dos moradores locais sobre os processos de autenticação pode contribuir para reavaliar as localidades que foram moldadas por imagens idealizadas com fins turísticos.

**Palavras-chave:** autenticidade; população local; arquitetura; avaliação de locais; turismo cinematográfico; Baviera.

## **1. Introduction: Globalisation, tourism trends and their implications for rural localities**

Rural localities in the northern hemisphere currently face major transformations caused by the effects of changing mobility patterns (Sheller and Urry, 2006), globalisation processes and an ageing and declining population, i.e. an exodus of, especially, younger people (Woods, 2011: 179ff.). Simultaneously, rural areas are often associated with natural and cultural amenities, which are commercialised for rural tourism and therefore provide an enormous potential for strengthening regional identity and fostering regional development. The Bavarian forest, a low mountain range area in the south-eastern part of Germany represents an outstanding example of such transformation processes. Commonly, high mountain regions or low mountain range areas are considered as tourist destinations with comparable natural amenities. Non-material and material cultural amenities such as language, traditions, habitus, way of living or the visual appearance of a village, however, can create distinct features for the attractiveness of destinations for tourists (Carrasco Gallegos 2014; Croes, Lee and Olson, 2013; Pechlaner and Schön, 2010).

Recent trends in tourism, such as Disneyfication and standardisation, commonly addressed as effects of globalisation, and the rapid pace of change could endanger the distinctiveness of rural tourist destinations; global and urban influences change established traditions and techniques and finally challenge clear and identifiable characteristics of a certain region (cf. glocality, Robertson, 1994).

Against a backdrop of the complexity of the urban as well as standardisation and artificialisation of tourist products, the tourist seeks what he or she does not have access to at home or does not find anymore; the “True”, the “Authentic”. Travel thus becomes not only a modern pilgrimage in search of the authentic (MacCannell, 1999 [1976]: 3), of unique and meaningful places and experiences, e.g. the “real life of others” (idem: 91), but is also driven by the quest to find one’s “true self” (MacNaghten and Urry, 1998) and “self-identity” (Giddens, 1991). But how to find these authentic places and experiences? According to Fillitz and Saris (2013: 9) this search is often articulated in an anti-modern process, a rejection of ongoing modernity, and the appropriation of some old traditions or, as Short (1991) puts it, a “refuge from modernity” (idem: 34).

Therefore, particular historical periods, cultures and purer, simpler lifestyles seem to provide an appropriate setting for a romantic or nostalgic form of the tourist gaze (MacCannell, 1999 [1976]: 3; Urry, 1990: 45; Woods, 2011: 1), which is often believed to be found within the rural context (Bell, 2006; Figueiredo, 2009, cited in Kastenholz et al., 2013; Prista, 2013; Silva, 2013).

As a result of transformation in rural localities through external and global influences, and processes of standardisation, rural localities often cannot provide identifiable local non-material and material culture, e.g. architecture, which are absolutely necessary for a successful supply of unique tourism products. Stakeholders involved in tourism affairs could ask themselves: How can we overcome these contestations and subsequently rejuvenate rural tourism destinations? What would be unique and authentic tourist products that distinguish one destination from another? For regional policy makers it could be interesting to ask if tourism is bringing forth an opportunity to strengthen regional identity and thus counteract rural decline?

This paper draws attention to local inhabitants' perspectives of authenticity. Considering this, it seems appropriate to include perspectives from all sectors of rural society – those traditionally involved with tourism and those not directly involved in tourism, such as local inhabitants, who have been under-represented in tourist studies to date. Acknowledging the latter could especially enrich conceptions of authenticity (Brida, Disegna and Osti, 2012; Croes, Lee and Olson, 2013: 17; Richards, 2007).

I want to ask, in which particular ways do local inhabitants evaluate rural localities with regard to authenticity? This includes both representations of, and practices within lived spaces of locals alongside tourist spaces. According to Hughes (1998: 19f.), the representation of spaces and places as tourist attractions engage with “the affective attachments of residents to their own localities”. Therefore, I follow Frisvoll’s argument that “authentication” is a “social process involving a complex range of elements [...] which are linked to discourses outside the consumed tourism product” (2013: 273) e.g. other aspects of the countryside (idem: 275). After this brief introduction, the paper depicts theoretical presuppositions about authenticity and tourism. The two case studies in the Bavarian forest are then presented: the first concerns notions of authenticity in terms of material culture, i.e. architecture and contestations concerning new styles of architecture, while the second study analyses locals’ notions of

authenticity within a film in a regional setting. With the example of *Eine ganz heiße Nummer/Hot Line* (Deyle et al., 2011), screened at the site of study, filmic representations are debated further. The discussion of empirical data mainly follows the research questions outlined above.

## **2. Conceptual notions and literature review**

### **2.1. Authenticity in tourism debates**

Concepts of authenticity are largely discussed in various disciplines of the social sciences because the “need for authenticity is an unavoidable by-product of civilisation and came into force in the late nineteenth century with the onset of materialist culture and consumerism” (Straub, 2012: 11). Considered as practices of consumption, even tourism stakeholders recognise the value of authenticity and thus commodify works of art, rituals, cuisine and housing that are described as authentic in terms of the criterion of whether they are made or enacted by “local people according to custom or tradition” (Sharpley, 1994: 130, cited in Wang, 1999: 350f.). Often used synonymously with originality, truth and identity, one has to acknowledge dynamics and different understandings of authenticity, and finally ongoing negotiations. Fillitz and Saris (2013), for instance, argue that research should focus on temporalities, tensions and travails of authenticity, rather than beginnings or conclusions (idem: 3). In tourist contexts, however, multiple discourses and processes of the “authentic” exist. The same is true for various types of tourists, some of whom are aware that there is no authentic tourist experience (Urry, 2003a: 11; Urry, 2003b: 121, cited in Daugstad and Kirchengast, 2013: 173).<sup>1</sup>

Regardless of the enduring and complex conceptual debate on authenticity in tourism (cf. Wang, 1999; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006), an emerging conceptual consensus towards the socio-constructive subjective understandings of authenticity can be observed (cf. Cohen, 1995; Peterson, 1997). Processes of construction of authenticity remain analytically disregarded (Cohen and Cohen, 2012: 1296, cited in Frisvoll, 2013:

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<sup>1</sup> Wang (1999) argues that authenticity is still relevant to some kinds of tourism such as ethnic, history or culture tourism, which involve the representation of the Other or of the past (idem: 350).

274; cf. Vannini and Williams, 2009). DeLyser (1999) showed that authenticity is neither a final result nor a premise of travel, but instead a “pragmatic vehicle” through which visitors and tourism workers engage in conversation, interaction, and acquaintanceship with one another and the tourist site. This paper suggests a further dimension that needs to be considered within authentication processes, that is the realm of local inhabitants.

## **2.2. Rural material culture between preservation and progress**

Central to this contribution are various aspects of material culture, e.g. local architecture and reciprocal effects on authenticity ascribed by local inhabitants and tourists. This section develops core thoughts on the aforementioned aspects from the literature.

In a case study on tourism in the Mediterranean, Williams and Papamichael (1995) showed that Greek tourist destinations are only marketable if they correspond with the image perceived by foreign tourists. These representations encompass white houses with no shutters or television antennae, small craftsmen establishments, alleys for pedestrians only, etc. In this context, Römhild (2009) introduces the term “reflexive Mediterraneanisation”, which means the commodification of Mediterranean backwardness into an anti-modern aesthetic to fulfil tourists’ desires (idem: 272). Accordingly, these images can be identified in building legislation. Consequently, and despite the request of locals to be able to create their everyday-life and their homes in their own, and modern, way, Greek places turn into vivid cultural monuments with regard to architecture (Wöhler, 2011: 119). Supported by an “authorized hegemonic discourse” (Daugstad and Kirchengast, 2013: 171) on national and international levels, UNESCO acknowledges regional architectural styles or buildings (traditional rural landscapes), as national ideals of “true” or “authentic” (ibidem). These tendencies could, on the one hand, increase tourism flows through preservation practices, but on the other hand lead to spatial contestations and foster conflicts between tourists and locals (Mordue, 2009: 334).

Silva (2013) argues that tourists want to have “an experience of living by the standards of the pastoral ideal from a popular perspective, involving rustic houses”

(idem: 103). In Portuguese rural tourism (TER; *Turismo no Espaço Rural*), many tourists chose their accommodation in order to “stay in the rural ‘paradise’ [...], viewed as representative of traditional rural architecture and dwelling” (ibidem).<sup>2</sup> In a similar vein, the preference for establishments where traditional buildings have been restored for tourists is observable in Germany. The Bavarian tourism association, for instance, promotes the so called Sightsleeping® hotels, where entrepreneurs commodify historicity, e.g. in former monasteries and castles or timber-framed dwellings.

Local inhabitants simultaneously often urge for preservation. As Uusitalo and Assmuth (2013) show for a small touristic village in Eastern Finland, tensions and conflicts occur concerning the exploitation of nature, tourism development and future prospects. In many cases there is a local desire to reproduce traditional and popular culture as a source of identity (Richards, 2007: 33). Thereby, tourist visits and cultural exchanges between residents and tourists reveal situations for local inhabitants to expose cultural differences (Bourdieu, 1993) and thus achieve the reversion to old values. Similarly, Kim (2002) found that residents believe tourism to be a vehicle for the preservation and enrichment of local culture (cf. Belisle and Hoy, 1980, cited in Croes, Lee and Olson, 2013: 11).

### **2.3. Authentic filmic representations as drivers for rural tourism**

In this section I want to outline how representations, i.e. those mediated in popular German *Heimat* film, influence tourists' images of a particular destination. As MacCannell (1999 [1976]) showed, no one arrives at a tourist destination without a reason. There are numerous off-site markers – from advertisements to representations in art, literature and cinema – which “permeate our modern lives, ignite our desires and inform our expectations regarding tourist destinations” (Noy, 2009: 236). With regard to films, representations become significant for tourism issues when the audience recognises places, situations, landscapes and people through text and pictures

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<sup>2</sup> Especially the analysis of *Pousadas de Portugal*, i.e. state-owned chain of hotels for travelers seeking the nation's natural landscapes, rural traditions and historic heritage, reveals that guests expect to “experience the authenticity of Portuguese traditions and national tourists in particular show a rather folklorist imaginary of culture”, whereby authenticity is seen in opposition to the presence of modernity (Prista 2013: 116).

(Luhmann, 1997, cited in Wöhler, 2011: 73). As noted by Beeton (2010: 3), “once one moves beyond the business of film-induced tourism, post-modern epistemologies of inversion, authenticity, simulacra and play come into the equation, blurring the simplistic notions of film promoting tourism to places”.

With regard to the content of these films, nostalgia turns into a *leitmotiv* (Prista, 2013: 120). In her volume *Screening Nostalgia: 100 Years of German Heimat Film*, Ludewig (2011) traces the history of German *Heimat* films, which can be understood as films situated in an idealised regional setting. Thereby, especially new *Heimat* films deal with classic anthropological questions such as belonging and identity (idem: 9, 433), which are endangered by modernity, progress, change, uncertainty and crisis (idem: 13). In order to enable the audience to identify certain regions in Germany, particular markers are utilised, encompassing place names (toponyms), dialects or special items of clothing (idem: 364). Besides *Heimat* films, TV serials are also set and filmed in small rural communities. The proliferation of tourist activities subsequent to film production is an extremely attractive option for rural areas because it economically benefits regional development (Beeton, 2008).

Regarding the amalgam of media, tourism and space, “authenticity” is a significant concept to address (Månsson, 2010: 170). Månsson argues that “tourism is going through a mediatization process where tourism and media consumption are becoming increasingly linked to each another: the tourist gaze becomes intertwined with the general consumption of media images as tourists consume mediatized representations of places” (idem: 169). The particular motivation for visitors to come to film sites is to re-live an experience (or emotion) encountered in the film, or to reinforce myth, storytelling or fantasies (Beeton, 2010: 2).

Local’s perspective in terms of filmic representations and the creation of a quintessentially “authentic rural village” is adopted by Mordue (2009). He suggests that how places are represented as tourist attractions “engages with the affective attachments of residents to their own localities” (Hughes, 1998, cited in Mordue, 2009: 337). In this article, both representations of and practices within the lived spaces of locals alongside tourist spaces are considered. Besides referring to locals’ notions of authenticity upon filmic representations of a *Heimat* film, screened in the Bavarian

forest, I also ask for their notions of authenticity in terms of material culture, i.e. architecture and contestations concerning new styles of architecture.

### **3. Site of study and methods**

The paper presents empirical findings from two qualitative studies carried out in rural Southern Germany that are flanked by a research initiative,<sup>3</sup> investigating idyllic and contested notions of ruralities in the light of mobilities, i.e. tourism and migration. One part thereby focuses on tourism against the conflicting backdrop of staging and authenticity.

The case studies were carried out in the Bavarian forest, a destination for rural tourism in the border triangle of Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic, characterised by natural amenities and the industrial heritage of wood industry and glass manufacturing. The tourism destination encompasses six administrative districts populated with nearly 680,000 inhabitants in 2013 (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik, 2013a). In the same year, the destination recorded 7.1 million. overnight stays mainly covered by domestic tourists (93.63%, 1.6 million visitors), mainly from metropolitan regions like the Rhine Ruhr or Rhine Main areas, with an average duration of stay of 4.1 days (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik, 2013b). The main tourist activities are biking and hiking, and during the winter months, skiing. With regard to the socio-demographic structure, retirees aged 50+ and families with children predominate. Tourism developed into a key industry in the 1970s when it was encouraged as a strategy for regional development in the former borderland of the Iron Curtain. Characterised by Fordist tourist structures, large-scale holiday resorts were developed extensively and subsequently provided sources of employment and income for the local population. At the same time, large forest areas became protected in the course of the establishment of the first German National Park in the Bavarian forest in 1970. This story of success has diminished since the 1990s in the course of changing consumer preferences. Consequently, holiday homes and small scale guesthouses, especially private, family-run establishments, dropped out of the market due to an investment bottleneck (Maier,

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<sup>3</sup> The initiative is developed by the author and Stefan Kordel at the Institute of Geography, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg.



Weber and Weizenegger, 2013). Today many tourists make use of hospitality offers including wellness hotels, wooden chalets or agritourism, although the main motivations for travelling to that region are still intact nature and traditional culture and customs (Mayer, 2014). Considering the latter, the visual appearance of villages as well as architectural variations, are significant for a positive or negative evaluation by tourists.

In order to get a deeper understanding of individuals' perspectives of authenticity in tourism, a qualitative approach was chosen. In the first case study, empirical data were collected between 2012 and 2014 and were based on twenty-four qualitative interviews, including expert interviews with representatives involved in local politics, tourism and heritage conservation, as well as semi-structured interviews with local inhabitants. The latter were selected randomly after Sunday mass or in the village square. Interviews were designed to depict narratives about rural material culture, i.e. regional architectural traditions and preservation of certain architectural styles in connection with the formation of regional identity and the consequences for visual landscape, tourism and tourism marketing. Data processing was undertaken as follows: firstly, interviews were transcribed literally and then translated into English; secondly, data were treated by qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2010) and finally rendered anonymous.

The second study is based on an analysis of the popular *Heimat* film *Eine ganz heiÙe Nummer/Hot Line* (Deyle et al., 2011), a film situated in an idealised regional setting (see section 2.3 for content of the film; see box below).

**Textbox 1: Content of the film**

**“Eine ganz heiÙe Nummer. Kein Geld. Kein Job. Aber eine geniale Idee.“  
(Hotline. No money. No job. But a brilliant idea.)**

The financial crisis comes to the Bavarian forest. With the closure of the glass factory there is a lack of economic perspective in the fictional village of Marienzell (referring to screening location Gotteszell). Even the grocery store, run by Waltraud, Maria and Lena faces insolvency. In light of the economic deprivation, their customers prefer buying cheaper goods from the discounter nearby. The three women need money and an idea to service their loan, which expires at the end of the month.

In the absence of alternatives, they decide to launch a secret erotic telephone service. They are marketing their “hotline” with self-printed flyers and the slogan “All the best from our *Heimat*”. Contrary to their expectations, they have enormous success. Additionally, it offers the opportunity to escape their inherent pressures - the village and its clerical influence. But the deterioration of rustic morals leads to investigations by the Major’s wife and the local priest. Little by little, they get wise to the “hotline” and bring the scandal to light.

Meanwhile, the glass factory could be saved if the village wins the bid to produce new windows for the cathedral of Regensburg. The precondition is that the visit of the clerical dean to Marienzell has to pass by without incident. Despite the fact that the clerical dean is a caller of the “hotline” himself and the secret has been revealed, the village wins the bid. However, after running the gauntlet, the leading characters, Waltraud, Maria and Lena flee into a self-determined life and a newly gained freedom.

Producer: Florian Deyle, Philip Schulz-Deyle, Martin Richter, Andrea Sixt

Director and Screenwriter: Markus Goller

Novel and Screenplay: Andrea Sixt

Film distributor: Universum Film

Duration: ca. 91 min.

Source: Own compilation.

The social comedy deals with topics such as financial crisis, unemployment, different moral values, ageing, faith, sexuality and friendship, which are prototypical for a society in transformation but not specific to the Bavarian forest. Attracting nearly 1.3 million cinema viewers all over Germany, it was the most successful film of 2011, and the second most successful film ever in two local cinemas of the Bavarian forest. Moreover, a large number of reviews, film critics and contributions in the local press reflect the relevance of the film for today’s society. For this paper, I analysed comments expressed by local inhabitants in social media (Facebook fan-page of film) and the regional newspaper (*Passauer Neue Presse*) between the film premiere in October 2011

and May 2013, when the film was released to free TV. Twenty comments covering the German (standard language and central Austro-Bavarian dialect) keywords real (*echt*), home (*Heimat, Hoamat*) and we/us (*wir, mia/uns*) were detected and selected for interpretation of notions of authenticity and *Heimat*. An expert interview, conducted in 2013 with a local pub owner whose pub was a location site in the film, provides a further inside perspective. Data processing of the interview was similar to the first case study.

## 4. Empirical findings

### 4.1. Inhabitants' evaluation of local architecture: The search for a lost "archidentity"?

As stated above, local culture is expressed through material features to a certain extent. This section discusses local architecture and global influences from the perspective of local inhabitants. The following quote points out a nexus between architecture and physico-geographical preconditions.

Woman: And I would say so; the architectural style is always somehow adapted to the climate. Herein the architectural style is different, because we have lots of rain, lots of precipitation and the winters are very cold. The architectural style is simply different. They use a lot of timber, because we are a region abundant in wood. *Interview with female, inhabitant of Patersdorf (IP<sup>4</sup> 4).*

The interviewee comments on the existence of close linkages between the architectural style and the climate in the Bavarian forest. Of special significance is the roof shape, where steep roofs predominate. The respondent also refers to the material traditionally used for constructing houses in this region, i.e. timber.

Since the mid-2000s, new architectural styles have emerged especially in new development areas in the rural landscapes of the Bavarian forest. Local authorities have reacted to demographic change (the exodus of especially younger people from rural areas for studying in metropolitan areas) by liberalizing local building legislation. Consequently, this has led to the diversification of a formerly homogeneous, unique architectural style. A local inhabitant assesses these tendencies – especially in the form

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<sup>4</sup> IP stands for interviewed person.

of buildings with tent roofs often addressed as “Tuscan houses” (see Figure 1 below) – against the backdrop of possible tourism implications:

They (Tuscan houses, *author’s note*) do not disfigure the area, absolutely not. [...] No, I do not think that there are influences on tourism. Concerning this, I do not have reservations. Because our people also drive to Tuscany to go on holiday there and also have to gaze upon these houses. [...] They fit in very well and are not a temporary fashion. Instead, it is a beautiful architectural style and there is nothing more to say. *Interview with male, inhabitant of Patersdorf (IP 9).*

**Figure 1: House with tent roof**



Source: Own photograph, taken in April 2014.

The respondent firstly argues from an aesthetical perspective, emphasizing that “Tuscan houses” are not perceived as disturbing elements per se, especially because people gaze upon them during holidays in Italy. Even in another spatial setting, i.e. the Bavarian forest, where architectural styles like “Tuscan houses” could be considered as non-conforming with local building cultures, he does not recognise a discrepancy towards natural landscape in this case. Accordingly, he does not make a link between architecture and locality. The majority, such as this female farmer, however, evaluates these new architectural styles as in-authentic and not appropriate for the region. She states:

We all have the same feeling. If you look upon the new development areas and you see these Mediterranean houses, they simply do not fit in here. But they are approved. I do not understand that. [...] An Italian would never think about constructing a typical, Bavarian style house in Italy. [...] I would, if my daughter wants to do so, I would say to her, try to narrow it a bit or try to consider our Bavarian architectural style with window shutters to protect the 'face' of the house. Meanwhile, the inner life can be totally modern. *Interview with female farmer, who is also politically engaged with the local council and the chamber of agriculture.*

Besides notions of authenticity, the quotation stresses the trend towards a globalisation of architectural styles in rural Bavaria. Croes, Lee and Olson (2013) show in their Aruban case study on authenticity in tourism that the traditional is equated with place (born in the region) and time (history and past), whereas foreign elements are associated with newly arrived immigrants and lifestyles borrowed from other cultures (idem: 11). Referring to Wöhler (2011), this results in the creation and establishment of anti- or parallel spaces (idem: 118). Even the interviewee recognises the desire of her daughter to build a new modern house and recommends a balancing act between history and modernity in order to preserve the view of place.

Another interviewee confirms the argument mentioned above concerning the import of material culture and the wish of inhabitants of "Tuscan houses" to live a "Mediterranean way of life" in the rough Bavarian forest. She argues:

The fact is that the original architecture gets lost. It is connected with a do-it-yourself store mentality. [...] All of them have the same product range. Obviously, this results in standardisation. Besides this, there is a desire of inhabitants to have it nicer or a bit warmer. You can fictitiously move yourself to Italy. But for sure, this blurs the whole view of place. *Interview with female, head of the information centre at the national park.*

This informant also adds a new dimension to the discussion on architectural styles. A loss of original architecture, which is explained by standardisation processes of product ranges, could be seen as a consequence of globalisation, i.e. caused by extra-regional factors. As a result, former cultural singularities of the Bavarian forest, considered as distinctive, are blurred. Furthermore a "destruction of views of places", addressed as very important for the tourist gaze is recognised by the representative for heritage conservation of a district in the Bavarian forest:

The cultural landscape – at least in these new development areas – has fully changed. [...] I am most upset, if I see tourist advertisements then, with an old farmer's house upon. [...] And the tourists come here, drive along new development areas. I do not know where I actually am. I could be anywhere in Bavaria, anywhere in Germany, anywhere in Europe. [...] This interchangeability! Because you do not have a regional identity. Everything is European, very global and everything intermingles. *Expert interview with female heritage conservation representative of district.*

Arguing for architectural standardisation in new development areas, she established a link between architecture and regional identity that is contemporarily lacking. The term “archidentity” can be used to illustrate the extraordinary interactions between the aspects architecture and regional identity, and stimulate perceptions of authenticity. However, the respondent points out that local tourism marketing still advertises with old farmers' houses, which would foster representations and tourists' expectations, which could not be matched in reality during a holiday in the Bavarian forest.

Nevertheless, architecture of hotels, holiday apartments or inns is part of contesting debates, especially when talking about tourism funding. The *Amt fuer laendliche Entwicklung* (Office for rural development) is an important state-run contact institution concerning these funding issues. They can subsidise the investments of tourism entrepreneurs and give advice. Yet, the institution has no authority to commit the beneficiary of the funding to an assigned architectural style or an assigned interior design after approving the recipient's building application. Considering this, a member of the institution talks about one negatively assessed example:

Unfortunately, you cannot prohibit taste or somehow determine it. [...] That is the reason why there are these slips and all these balconies at the hotels, which are traditionally located in Upper Bavaria but not in our region here. [...] In fact, you have too little influence, when it is approved. [...] I experienced this at the company XYZ, which we subsidised; new wellness area in the house, new holiday apartment. I said what it should look like, how I imagine it...to be authentic - build up an outdoor washing tub! [...] They said: All right. But what did they construct? – Pillars...Roman Pillars! Expensive, expensive. It hurts, if you have taste and see the outcome. [...] They will never get more funding. I pushed myself in, that they got this funding. But what came from it is a shame. And even the tourists do not like it. They do not have many guests. *Expert interview with female, member of the local office for rural development.*

What was perceived as authentic for the Bavarian forest from a local's perspective, such as that of the member of the *Amt fuer laendliche Entwicklung*, was not adopted by the tourist entrepreneur. The consequence of this is that, from her point of view, there is justification for them not to be supported again by the institution. Furthermore, and this has even wider implications for tourism and hospitality management, an "in-authentic" concept is also unmasked by tourists as "in-authentic" and is avoided by them in favour of probably more authentic hospitality offers.

#### **4.2 Evaluation of representations in *Eine ganz heiÙe Nummer/Hot Line* and implications for tourism marketing**

Notions of authenticity, either negative or positive, often derive from media representations. Empirical results from analysis of *Eine ganz heiÙe Nummer/Hot Line* (Deyle et al., 2011), reveal that local inhabitants evaluate filmic representations of rural localities (material dimensions), ideas, practises and performances as mostly positive and authentic. Regarding this, they explicitly identify congruencies with their everyday life and emphasise not only the authenticity of the central Austro-Bavarian dialect but also the "Bavarian way of life":

Person 1 (male, Facebook): It is a good film, just taken from real life.

Person 2 (female, Facebook): The film is traditional. [...] But the best is that everything is so realistic. Nothing artificial or tricked. [...] This is just how it goes like here. Home is home and we are proud of it.

Person 3 (female, Facebook): I have already seen it and I have to admit that it was totally worth it. [...] Bavarian, realistic and funny.

Person 4 (male, newspaper): There should be more films like that. The Bavarian way of life, which has already fallen into oblivion by many people, is well portrayed – and the mountains of the Bavarian forest are distinctive.

Person 5 (female, Facebook): A fantastic film, which makes someone even more proud of your *Heimat*.

Person 6 (female, newspaper): The landscape images make me fall in love – but that is the truth here in Lower Bavaria! It is a shame, that we are mocked most of the time and described as dumb.

Representations of the Bavarian forest through film thus appear to contribute to a construction of regional identity for local inhabitants. *Eine ganz heiße Nummer/Hot Line* (Deyle et al., 2011) symbolises *Heimat* and could be interpreted as a particular expression of a collective identity.

But what implications may representations of local culture in film have for tourist marketing? A local pub owner, whose pub was a location and who is marketing his pub on his website as the opportunity to visit “the original screening locations of the film around the pub” (cited in Hackerbraeu-Website, n.d.) accordingly states:

Meanwhile they shot three films in our pub. One is obviously known: *Eine ganz heiße Nummer/Hotline*. [...] But we have the disadvantage – I am bound to say that on and on – it [our village, author’s remark] is called Marienzell in the film, not Gotteszell. That is a pity as regards marketing. Last year in Austria, I met a guy who told me that he went to four [places called] Marienzell. But each time it was not the film location. [...] And it is the same with our pub. All of our advertising material was an integral part of the film. But our pub is too small. It is not well-known supra-regional. [...] Certainly, there is a potential for film-induced tourism following on from the film. The Marketing working group, which has now been founded, could be a contact point to include this aspect. *Interview with male Pub owner, inhabitant of Gotteszell.*

The quotation reveals that until now no efforts were made to commercialise the film for tourism marketing and film-induced tourism. The place-images constructed through film by iconographic signifiers (Lukinbeal, 2004: 312) were not strategically commercialised via marketing performances to reproduce space (Bourdieu, 1984, cited in Mordue, 2009: 334) and thus do not re-stage the Bavarian forest as a film-tourism destination (cf. strategic geographies from film, Strüver, 2009). However, there are opportunities to bring topics related to the film to the agenda *en passant*, as *Eine ganz heiße Nummer/Hot Line* (Deyle et al., 2011) was ascribed as “authentic” and identity-establishing for rural inhabitants by respondents. Besides, those rural inhabitants who are familiar with the content of the film (especially those who acted as bit-part players in the film or were otherwise involved in the shooting), could enrich tourists’ experiences through inside information during incidental meetings. As Roesch (2010: 189f.) indicated, encounters of film-tourists with local inhabitants are very important to fulfil tourists’ desires. Thus, local inhabitants breathe life into the toured object, which subsequently becomes more immediate for them (idem: 190). Nonetheless, film-induced tourism could constitute a unique selling proposition for the Bavarian forest



and offer direct benefits, such as business opportunities and employment (Beeton, 2008: 107).

## 5. Concluding remarks and implications for hospitality management

The main objective of these two qualitative studies was to examine in which particular ways local inhabitants evaluate rural localities with regard to authenticity. This included representations of and practices within lived spaces of locals alongside tourist spaces. The paper reveals ambivalent positions towards the appearance of place concerning regional architecture of wooden-based houses on the one hand and late modern housing designs on the other. Interviewees from local institutions mostly express preservative attitudes whilst local residents' perspectives are more ambivalent and open-minded. But the majority of both groups criticises modern architectural styles as "in-authentic" and therefore inappropriate for the region. "Tuscan houses", especially, were seen as an effect of globalisation and would contribute to a standardisation of the views of places within the Bavarian forest, culminating in the loss of uniqueness for tourists. Furthermore, local people evaluate representations such as material dimensions, ideas, practises and performances in the examined film as "real" and "taken out of everyday life". They explicitly identify congruencies to rural localities of the Bavarian forest as illustrated in the film.

Since natural amenities are comparable to other low mountain range areas, and globalised tourism trends such as standardisation challenge rural tourism destinations, authentic cultural amenities<sup>5</sup> have important endogenous potential. Commodifying the latter, i.e., non-material and material culture like architecture, can contribute to rejuvenation of destinations and finally to regional development. While localities, however, are mainly shaped by idealised images for tourism purposes, local residents' perspectives can help to re-evaluate certain images. In this regard, local inhabitants could be addressed as relevant stakeholders on authentication processes that have been underrepresented so far. As Brida, Disegna and Osti (2012) show for the

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<sup>5</sup> Cultural amenities are often interlinked to discourses outside the consumed tourism product such as films (cf. Frisvoll, 2013: 273).

commodification of non-material culture, tourist entrepreneurs, wanting to provide authentic experiences of local traditions, e.g., events based on deeply rooted local customs, have to involve local residents. In practical terms, tourism boards could include them in organisation processes or provide opportunities for interactions between tourists and locals (Brida, Disegna and Osti, 2012: 85).

What consequences does this have on the architecture of tourist accommodations?

The added value is exemplified by one of the informants:

At first I wanted to build round-trunk houses, trunk upon trunk. But then the district Administrator and his team come up and say: Why are you building such a Canadian thing around us here? Build something authentic! And as he said that to me, it seemed obvious for me. We abandoned all our planning and aimed at bringing across the Bavarian architectural style and style of living much better. *Expert Interview with male tourism entrepreneur.*

To sum up, “archidentity” as a link between local architectural styles and regional identity could help tourism stakeholders to provide authentic attractions and localities. Besides this, further research on “archidentity” could focus on how local residents are attached to places.

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